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**THE
TRUTH**

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**RADIANT
REALITY**

Published from Srinagar, September 2007, Vol. 8. No. 09.

Despising Muslims

Some people become self-conceited as a result of their excessive worship to the point that they start disparaging and making low estimates of their fellow Muslims and their deeds, little knowing that Allah, Glorious is He, is of vast forgiveness. They do not realize that if Allah so wills, He can destroy all their deeds and consign them to Hell and send the other people who have been disparaged and underestimated to Jannah. Therefore, one should never become proud of his piety nor should one consider others of little value or good deeds, as only Allah Alone knows what is inside our hearts.

Ramadhan Special Issue

*e-mail : editor-radiantreality@islaminkashmir.org
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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.

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EDITORIAL*All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted.***The Meaning of Ramadhan**

Fasting during Ramadan was ordained during the second year of Hijrah. Why not earlier? In Makkah the economic conditions of the Muslims were bad. They were being persecuted. Often days would go by before they had anything to eat. It is easy to skip meals if you don't have any. Obviously fasting would have been easier under the circumstances. So why not then?

The answer may be that Ramadan is not only about skipping meals. While fasting is an integral and paramount part of it, Ramadan offers a comprehensive program for our spiritual overhaul. The entire program required the peace and security that was offered by Madinah.

Yes, Ramadan is the most important month of the year. It is the month that the believers await with eagerness. At the beginning of Rajab --- two full months before Ramadan --- the Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, used to supplicate thus: "O Allah! Bless us during Rajab and Sha'ban, and let us reach Ramadan (in good health)."

During Ramadan the believers get busy seeking Allah's mercy, forgiveness, and protection from Hellfire. This is the month for renewing our commitment and re-establishing our relationship with our Creator. It is the spring season for goodness and virtues when righteousness blossoms throughout the Muslim communities. "If we combine all the blessings of the other eleven months, they would not add up to the blessings of Ramadan," said the great scholar and reformer Shaikh Ahmed Farooqi (Mujaddad Alif Thani). It offers every Muslim an opportunity to strengthen his Iman, purify his heart and soul, and to remove the evil effects of the sins committed by him.

"Anyone who fasts during this month with purity of belief and with expectation of a good reward (from his Creator),

will have his previous sins forgiven," said Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. "Anyone who stands in prayers during its nights with purity of belief and expectation of a reward, will have his previous sins forgiven." As other ahadith tell us, the rewards for good deeds are multiplied manifold during Ramadan.

Along with the possibility of a great reward, there is the risk of a terrible loss. If we let any other month pass by carelessly, we just lost a month. If we do the same during Ramadan, we have lost everything. The person who misses just one day's fast without a legitimate reason, cannot really make up for it even if he were to fast every-day for the rest of his life. And of the three persons that Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam cursed, one is the unfortunate Muslim who finds Ramadan in good health but does not use the opportunity to seek Allah's mercy.

One who does not fast is obviously in this category, but so also is the person who fasts and prays but makes no effort to stay away from sins or attain purity of the heart through the numerous opportunities offered by Ramadan. The Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, warned us: "There are those who get nothing from their fast but hunger and thirst. There are those who get nothing from their nightly prayers but loss of sleep."

Those who understood this, for them Ramadan was indeed a very special month. In addition to fasting, mandatory Salat, and extra Travih Salat, they spent the whole month in acts of worship like voluntary Salat, Tilawa (recitation of Qur'an), Dhikr etc. After mentioning that this has been the tradition of the pious people of this Ummah throughout the centuries, Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi notes: "I have seen with my own eyes such ulema and mashaikh who used to finish recitation of the entire

Qur'an everyday during Ramadan. They spent almost the entire night in prayers. They used to eat so little that one wondered how they could endure all this. These greats valued every moment of Ramadan and would not waste any of it in any other pursuit? Watching them made one believe the astounding stories of Ibada and devotion of our elders recorded by history."

This emphasis on these acts of worship may sound strange --- even misplaced --- to some. It requires some explanation. We know that the term Ibada (worship and obedience) in Islam applies not only to the formal acts of worship and devotion like Salat, Tilawa, and Dhikr, but it also applies to worldly acts when performed in obedience to Shariah and with the intention of pleasing Allah. Thus a believer going to work is performing Ibada when he seeks Halal income to discharge his responsibility as a bread-winner for the family. However a distinction must be made between the two. The first category consists of direct Ibada, acts that are required for their own sake. The second category consists of indirect Ibada --- worldly acts that become Ibada through proper intention and observation of Shariah. While the second category is important for it extends the idea of Ibada to our entire life, there is also a danger because by their very nature these acts can camouflage other motives. (Is my going to work really Ibada or am I actually in the rat race?). Here the direct

Ibada comes to the rescue. Through them we can purify our motives, and re-establish our relationship with Allah.

Islam does not approve of monasticism. It does not ask us to permanently isolate ourselves from this world, since our test is in living here according to the Commands of our Creator. But it does ask us to take periodic breaks from it. The mandatory Salat (five daily prayers) is one example. For a few minutes every so many hours throughout the day, we leave the affairs of this world and appear before Allah to remind ourselves that none but He is worthy of worship and of our unfaltering obedience. Ramadan takes this to the next higher plane, providing intense training for a whole month.

This spirit is captured in I'tikaf, a unique Ibada associated with Ramadan, in which a person gives up all his normal activities and enters a mosque for a specific period. There is great merit in it and every Muslim community is encouraged to provide at least one person who will perform I'tikaf for the last ten days of Ramadan. But even those who cannot spare ten days are encouraged to spend as much time in the mosque as possible.

Through direct Ibada we "charge our batteries"; the indirect ones allow us to use the power so accumulated in driving the vehicle of our life. Ramadan is the month for rebuilding our spiritual strength. How much we benefit from it is up to us.

Hadith

Narrated Talha bin 'Ubaid-Ullah: A bedouin with unkempt hair came to Allah's Apostle and said, "O Allah's Apostle! Inform me what Allah has made compulsory for me as regards the prayers." He replied: "You have to offer perfectly the five compulsory prayers in a day and night (24 hours), unless you want to pray Nawafil." The bedouin further asked, "Inform me what Allah has made compulsory for me as regards fasting." He replied, "You have to fast during the whole month of Ramadan, unless you want to fast more as Nawafil." The bedouin further asked, "Tell me how much Zakat Allah has enjoined on me." Thus, Allah's Apostle informed him about all the rules (i.e. fundamentals) of Islam. The bedouin then said, "By Him Who has honored you, I will neither perform any Nawafil nor will I decrease what Allah has enjoined on me. Allah's Apostle said, "If he is saying the truth, he will succeed (or he will be granted Paradise)." (Bukhari)

Question & Answer

Question:

What are the Sunnahs of fasting?.

Answer:

Praise be to Allaah.

There are many Sunnahs of fasting, including the following:

1 – It is Sunnah if someone insults you to respond in a better manner and say, “I am fasting,” because of the report narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim from Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him), that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Fasting is a paradise so there should be no obscene or offensive talk or behaviour. If a person fights him or insults him, let him say, ‘I am fasting,’ twice. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, the smell coming from the mouth of the fasting person is better before Allaah than the fragrance of musk. [Allaah says:] ‘He gives up his food, drink and desire for My sake. Fasting is for Me and I will reward for it, and a good deed receives the reward of ten like it.’” Bukhaari, Muslim.

2 – It is Sunnah for the fasting person to eat suhoor, because it was proven in *al-Saheehayn* that Anas ibn Maalik (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Eat suhoor for in suhoor there is blessing.” (Bukhaari, Muslim).

3 – It is Sunnah to delay suhoor because of the report narrated by al-Bukhaari from Anas from Zayd ibn Thaabit (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said: “We ate suhoor with the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), then he got up to pray.” I said: “How much time was there between the adhaan and suhoor?” He said: “The time it takes to recite fifty verses.” (Bukhaari).

4 – It is Sunnah to hasten to break the fast because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The people

will continue to be fine so long as they hasten to break the fast.” (Narrated by Bukhaari; Muslim).

5 – It is Sunnah to break the fast with fresh dates; if none are available then with dry dates; if none are available then with water – because of the hadeeth of Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to break his fast with fresh dates before praying; if there were no (fresh dates) then with dry dates, and if there were no (dried dates) then he would take a few sips of water.

(Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi)

6 – It is Sunnah when breaking the fast to say what is narrated in the hadeeth, which is to say Bismillaah. This is obligatory according to the correct view because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) enjoined that. The words “Allaahumma laka sumtu wa ‘ala rizqika aftartu, Allaahumma taqabbal minni, innaka antaal-samee’ al-‘aleem (O Allaah, for You I have fasted and with Your provision I have broken my fast, O Allaah accept (this fast) from me for You are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing) are da’eef (weak), as stated by Ibn al-Qayyim (*Zaad al-Ma’aad*, 2/51). There is also another report: “Dhahaba al-‘zama’ wa abtallat al-‘urooq wa thabata al-ajr in sha Allaah (the thirst is gone, the veins have been moistened and the reward is assured, if Allaah wills).” (Abu Dawood, Bayhaqi).

There are ahaadeeth which speak of the virtue of the du’aa’ of the fasting person, such as the following:

(i) It was narrated from Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Three prayers are not rejected: the prayer of a father, the prayer of a fasting person, and the prayer of a traveler.” Bayhaqi, .

(ii) It was narrated from Abu Umaamah in a marfoo’ report: “Every time the fast is

Cont’d on page 29

Lesson From The Qur'an

Commentary: Mawlânâ Mufti Mohammad Shafî Sahib (RA)

Verses 106 – 107

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Whenever We abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or one equal to it. Do you not know that Allah is powerful over everything? Do you not know that to Allah alone belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth? And, you have none, other than Allah, to protect or help you.

At first, Muslims used to pray with their faces turned towards the *Baytul-Maqdis* at Jerusalem; later on, Allah commanded them to turn towards the Ka'bah. Similarly, certain other injunctions were abrogated altogether, or replaced by others. This provided the Jews and some of the associators too with an occasion to taunt the Muslims, and to say that such changes were made by the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) himself and not by Allah. Their purpose was to sow the seed of doubt in the mind of the Muslims with regard to the Holy Qur'an being a book revealed by Allah. They used to argue that if everything that Allah revealed was good, as the Muslims affirmed, why should one injunction be replaced by another? For, it would only mean that one of the two injunctions must be good, and the other evil, but no divine revelation can possibly be evil. Putting these two premises together, the Jews tried to draw the conclusion that the Holy Qur'an could not be a revealed book.

The present verse refutes this line of argument, and, in effect, points out that abrogation does not mean replacing good with evil, or vice versa, which should imply

the possibility of the presence of evil in divine revelation, but that everything that Allah reveals to His prophets is good, and that what has been abrogated is good as much as what abrogated it.

The verse declares that if Allah chooses to abrogate an injunction contained in a certain verse, while retaining the verse itself as a part of the Holy Qur'an, or chooses to remove a verse from the memories of men altogether, there is nothing objectionable in it, for Allah alone knows the wisdom that lies in His choice, and He makes these changes for the good of men. In fact, He always sends another verse or injunction better than, or at least equal to, what He has abrogated. Allah being omnipotent and omniscient, He possesses the authority to change His commandments as He likes, and He also knows what is good for men at a particular time, and makes these changes according to this knowledge. Men have no friend or helper except Allah. As friend, Allah keeps their good in view while laying down injunctions. As helper, He protects those who obey His commandments against the hostility of their foes - but if the obedient are to receive blessings in the other world greater than the harm they have to suffer in this world, the apparent domination of their foes does not really matter.

What is *Naskh*? (Abrogation)

Verse 106 speaks of Allah abrogating certain verses, or making men forget certain others. The first phrase of the verse thus covers all the possible forms in which a verse of the Qur'an can be abrogated. The Arabic word in the text is *Naskh*, which has two lexical meanings -- (1) to write, and (2) to abolish, to repeal. According to the consensus of all the commentators, the word has been employed in this verse in the second sense ~ that is, the repeal or abroga-

tion of an injunction. So, in the terminology of the Holy Qur'an and the *Hadith*, *Naskh* signifies the promulgation of an injunction in place of another — whether the later injunction merely consists in the repeal of the earlier or, substitutes a new regulation in its place. The other form of *Naskh* mentioned in this verse is that sometimes Allah made the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and the blessed Companions forget a certain verse altogether. The commentators have cited several instances of this kind of *Naskh*, and the purpose in such cases has usually been to repeal a certain regulation.

The kinds of abrogation

Making laws and repealing them to promulgate new ones in their stead is a regular and well-known practice in human governments and institutions. But in the case of man-made laws abrogation takes place sometimes because the law-makers do not understand the situation properly while making a certain law, and have to change it when they realize their mistakes, and sometimes because when a law is promulgated, it is in accord with the prevailing situation, but when quite unforeseen changes alter the situation, the law too has to be changed. But these two forms of abrogation are out of the question in the case of divine injunctions.

There is, however, a third form too. The lawmaker makes a law, knowing fully well that the circumstances are going to change in such a way that the law will no longer be suitable for the new situation; so, when the situation changes as he already knew, he changes the law too, and promulgates a new one which he had thought of at the very start. For example, a physician prescribes a medicine for a patient in view of his present conditions, but he knows that when the patient has been using it for two days, his condition will change and require a new medicine - with this realization, he prescribes a medicine suitable for that day, but two days later, when circumstances have changed, he prescribes a new one. The physician can easily give the patient

written instructions for the whole course of the treatment, with all the changes in the medicines duly indicated. But this would be putting too much burden on the already feeble patient, and there would also be the danger of some harm through a possible error or misunderstanding.

This is the only form of abrogation which can occur, and has been occurring in divine injunctions and in divine books. Every new Shari'ah and every new revealed Book has been abrogating many injunctions of the earlier Shari'ah and of the earlier Book. Similarly, within the same Shari'ah, too, it has always happened that a certain law was in force for a time, but Divine Wisdom chose to abrogate it and to promulgate another in its place. A *hadith* reported by Muslim says:

: "There has never been a prophethood which did not abrogate some injunctions." This is a principle which it should not be difficult to understand. It was only some malicious and ignorant Jews who confused the divine abrogation of injunctions with the two forms of the repeal of man-made laws, and began, in their impudence, to taunt the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) - in reply to which, as we have said, these two verses were revealed, Ibn Jarir, ibn Kathir etc.)

As for the Muslims, it was probably in their desire to avoid giving occasion to the enemies of Islam for such taunts that some from among the *Mu'tazilah* tried to explain away the whole question of *Naskh*. Logically speaking, there is a possibility -- so ran their argument - of abrogation in the case of divine injunctions, and the possibility cannot be denied on any rational ground, but abrogation has not actually occurred in the Holy Qur'an, and there is no verse in the Holy Book which abrogates another (*Nasikh*) and no verse which has been abrogated (*Mansukh*). This view is attributed to Abu Muslim al-Isfahani, but the '*Ulama*' in general have always rejected this opinion, and refuted the argument. Thus, we read in "Ruh al-Ma'ani":

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"The people belonging to all the Shari'ahs are unanimous in accepting the validity of abrogation and its actual occurrence both. Only the Jews - with the exception of their 'Isawiyyah sect have denied the possibility of abrogation, and Abu Muslim al-Isfahani has denied its occurrence, for he says that it is rationally possible, but has not actually taken place."

Imam al-Qurtubi says:

"It is essential to understand the question of abrogation, and great benefits flow from such an understanding, which no scholar can dispense with, and no one can deny abrogation except the ignorant and the dull-headed."

In this connection, al-Qurtubi has related a very illuminating incident. The fourth *Khalifah* Sayyidna 'Ali (RA) saw a man preaching in the mosque. He asked the people what the man was doing. On being told that he was preaching, the blessed *Khalifah* said: "He is not doing anything of the sort, but only announcing to the people that he is such and such a man and the son of such and such, and asking them to recognize and remember him." Calling the man to his side, he asked: "Do you know the injunctions which have been abrogated and those which have abrogated the earlier ones?" When he confessed that he did not, the *Khalifah* turned him out of the mosque, and ordered him never to preach there.

It is not feasible to cite here all the sayings of the blessed Companions and their immediate Successors (Tabi'in) which affirm the actual occurrence of abrogation in the case of injunctions laid down by the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith. Some of these have been quoted, along with the evidence for the authenticity of the reports, in the commentar-

ies of Ibn Jarir and Ibn Kathir etc. and in "Al-Durr al-Manthur". As for the reports less strongly authenticated, they are just innumerable. That is why there has always been a total consensus of the 'Ulama' on the question of Naskh, except for Abu Muslim al-Isfahani and a few others from among the Mu'tazilah who have denied the actual occurrence of abrogation -- but Imam Razi has, in his commentary, exposed in detail the hollowness of their opinion.

The terminology of the Naskh

It is also essential to keep in mind a certain distinction in the use of the word Naskh as a technical term of the Shari'ah. The technical sense of the word implies changing an injunction, and replacing one injunction by another. Now, this change may consist in repealing an injunction altogether and replacing it by another (for example, fixing the Ka'bah as the Qiblah — the direction towards which Muslims turn in their prayers -- instead of the Baytul-Maqdis); the change may equally consist in retaining an injunction but adding certain condition and provisions to it. The 'Ulama' of the early period of Islam have used the word Naskh in this general and comprehensive sense which includes the total repeal of an injunction as well as a partial change in an injunction with the addition of certain conditions, provisions or exceptions. That is why the 'Ulama' of the earlier period have indicated some five hundred verses of the Holy Qur'an which, according to them, have been abrogated.

But, according to the 'Ulama' of a later period, only that change is to be called a Naskh which cannot in any way be brought into consonance with an earlier injunction. Obviously, this approach greatly reduces the number of abrogated verses. For example, there are, according to al-Suyuti, only twenty such verses. Later on, Shah Waliyyullah, seeking to bring the abrogated injunctions in consonance with the earlier injunctions, reduced the number of abrogated verses to only five — these being the cases where later injunctions would not

be made to correspond with the earlier ones without far-fetched interpretations. This effort is highly commendable, because the basic postulate behind an injunction is its permanence, while abrogation goes against this postulate, and hence it is not proper to posit abrogation in a verse laying down an injunction which can, in some justifiable manner, be shown to be still valid.

But this effort to reduce the number of abrogated verses does not, and cannot in the least imply (As the 'modernists' have been all too impatient to believe) that the presence of abrogation is in any way -- may Allah forgive us for reproducing a blasphemy - a shortcoming or defect in the Holy Qur'an or Islam, that the 'Ulama' have for the last fourteen hundred years been trying to remove it, that the ultimate inspiration came to Shah Waliyullah whose extraordinary achievement lies in having reduced the number of abrogated verses to five, and that now one may wait for a few geniuses who would bring the number down to zero.

To adopt such an approach towards the question of "Naskh" is no service to Islam or to the Holy Qur'an (To which pretends the whole tribe of self-styled scholars, researchers, "experts in Islamic studies" and "revivificateurs of Islam.") nor can it obliterate the profound investigations into truth of the matter made by the blessed Companions, their Successors, and the 'Ulama' of the generations that followed them during the last fourteen hundred years, nor can it stop the recriminations of the enemies of Islam. In fact, all it would do is to furnish a weapon to the present-day traducers of Islam and those who wish to rebel against Islam, who would now be saying that what the 'Ulama' of the Islamic Ummah have been maintaining on the subject for the last fourteen hundred years has finally proved to be wrong. May Allah forbid such a thing! If this door is opened, it would let in all kinds of disorders, and all the injunctions of the Shari'ah would come under suspicion. Then, is there any guarantee that the results of this "modernistic" research would not turn out to be wrong tomorrow!

We have come across certain recent writings in which an attempt has been made to revive the argument of Abu Muslim al-Isfahani.

Such writers begin with the assumption that the Arabic word *Ma* in verse 106 is not a relative or adverbial pronoun signifying "whenever", or "whichever" but a conjunction implying "if that introduces a conditional clause; so, they translate the first phrase of the the verse not as "*whichever verse We abrogate*", but as "*if We abrogate a verse*", and say that the statement pertains to a supposition or to an imaginary situation as do the phrases beginning with the Arabic word *Law Q : if*) - for example: لو كان فيهما آلهة : "If there were in the sky and the earth another god beside Allah" (21:22) or إن كان للرحمن ولد "If the All-Merciful had a son" (43:81). On this basis, they argue that abrogation is possible, but has never actually occurred. Such writers, we are afraid, do not show an intimate knowledge of Arabic grammar, for there is a great deal of difference between a condition suggested by the word *Ma* and the imaginary situation introduced by the conjunction *Law*. Moreover, it is on the basis of this verse itself that the blessed Companions have affirmed the occurrence of abrogation, and have even cited many instances. So have their Successors and all authentic Commentators. In view of such unanimity, the new-fangled interpretation cannot be acceptable. Even Shah Waliyullah, in reducing the number of abrogated verses, has never thought of denying the fact of abrogation. In short, all the authentic and authoritative 'Ulama', from the days of the blessed Companions down to our own day, have always affirmed not only the possibility, but also the actual occurrence of abrogation. This has been the position of all the 'Ulama' of Deoband too, without any exception. The injunctions with regard to abrogation are too many and too intricate to be discussed here -- they properly belong to the books on the Principles of Jurisprudence.



Lesson From The Bukhari Sharief

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

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Chapter 9 : The saying of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), Probably an informant may comprehend more than that who has heard directly from its source.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

The scholars of Hadith have given different reasons as to why Imam Bukhari has chosen this title for this chapter, viz.,

1. One should not hesitate to learn from one who is below his rank in the level of knowledge.
2. The student may be knowing more than his teacher.
3. One can take the Hadith from one who only knows the Hadith but has not understood it himself, may be the listener understands it better than the narrator.

Hadith No. 66

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Narrated 'Abdur Rahman bin Abi Bakra's (RA) father

"Once the Prophet was riding his camel and a man was holding its rein. The Prophet asked, "What is the day today?" We kept quiet, thinking that he might give that day another name. He said, "Isn't it the day of Nahr (slaughtering of the animals of sacrifice)" We replied, "Yes." He further asked, "Which month is this?" We again kept quiet, thinking that he might give it another name. Then he said, "Isn't it the month of Dhul-Hijja?" We replied, "Yes." He said, "Verily! Your blood, property and honor are sacred to one another (i.e. Muslims) like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this month of yours and in this city of yours. It is incumbent upon those who are present to inform those who are absent because those who are absent might comprehend (what I have said) better than the present audience."

Comments

Ibn Abas says that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) delivered this sermon while riding a camel during Haj. In order to make the Sahaba to realize the significance of the honour and sanctity of Muslims, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) first made them to keep in mind the sanctity of very important things in Islam like the day of Nahr (slaughtering of the animals of sacrifice), month of Dhul-Hijja and the Holy city of Makkah. This sermon was delivered by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) while performing Haj riding a camel. It is said that the man holding the rein of the camel was either Hadhrat Bilal or Umru bin Kharija or the narrator himself i.e., Abu

Bakra, as per Ibn Hajr.

Lessons from the Hadith

1. It is permissible for a teacher to sit at a higher place while giving any lesson as Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was riding on a camel.
2. Exhortation for preaching Deen, those who have learnt should teach those who have not.
3. It is not a must that a preacher should be more knowledgeable than his audience.
4. The honour, life and property of a Muslim is sacred for all other fellow Muslims i.e., it is Haram (strictly forbidden and a grave sin) in Shari'ah to cause harm to a Muslim in terms of his honour, life or property. The honour of a Muslim gets harmed by backbiting or false allegations.

Chapter 10 : The knowing of a thing precedes the words and deeds, according to the saying of Allah : "So know (O Muhammad) there is no god but Allah" (47:19). So Allah started with knowledge.

And that (religious) scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets, they inherited knowledge, one who obtained it (knowledge of Deen), obtained great fortune. And one who treads the path with intention of seeking knowledge, Allah makes his path to Jannat easy. And whoever gains it is lucky to follow the path to seek (religious) knowledge. Allah will lead his way to Paradise. Allah said: "It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves fear Allah". And Allah said: "But no one will grasp their meanings except those who have knowledge". (29:43). (And also Allah's saying): "And they will say: Had we but listened or used our intelligence we would not have been among the dwellers of the blazing fire (67:10). And Allah also said: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?"(39:9) And the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes him comprehend the religion and of course knowledge is attained by learning". Abu Zarr pointing towards his neck said: "If you put the sword on this (my neck to kill me) and then I think that, before this sword could work, I can say even one sentence which I had heard from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), I would surely say it. And the saying of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), "It is incumbent upon those who are present to inform those who are absent". And Ibn Abbas said: "Be Godly-wise, scholarly, juristic". And it is said that a good instructor is the one who starts teaching people simple subjects of knowledge before teaching big (difficult) ones.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

The title chosen by Imam Bukhari for this chapter is that the knowledge pre-

cedes both the words (قول) as well as the deeds (عمل). For both words as well as deeds the perfect intention (Niyyat) is an essential prerequisite and this is possible only after having the correct knowledge.

In this Chapter Imam Bukhari has quoted some verses of the Qura'n, some Ahaadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and some statements from Sa-haaba to emphasize the importance and excellence of acquiring the knowledge. He has not quoted any Hadith in this *Baab* or chapter, the reasons for that are same as mentioned in other chapters where he has quoted no Hadith.

Verse quoted by Imam Bukhari

Know, therefore, that there is no god but Allah (47:19)

In this verse the seeking of knowledge is first mentioned and then the deeds like seeking the forgiveness of sins etc. are mentioned. By getting this verse here Imam Bukhari wants to prove his point that the acquiring of knowledge precedes the words and deeds.

Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants, who have knowledge. (35:28)

In this verse Allah Ta'ala says that the knowledgeable people only fear Allah. Having the fear of Allah is a feeling which one earns only after getting the knowledge. Secondly the Taqwa or fear of Allah is a highly desired thing in Shariah. It is acquired only after getting knowledge, which also shows the significance of knowledge.

But only those understand them who have knowledge.(29:43)

They will further say: "Had we but listened

or used our intelligence, we should not (now) be among the Companions of the Blazing Fire!" (67:10)

"Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? (39:09)

These verses also clearly show the excellence of knowledge and the Ulema.

Ahaadith quoted by Imam Bukhari (RA)

And the Ulema are the heirs of prophets

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They inherited knowledge – one who got a portion from it he got abundant).

This is a part of a Hadith which is quoted on the authority of Hadhrat Abu Dharda by Imam Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Abu Dawood. Some people question the authenticity of this Hadith, as Imam Bukhari has mentioned it here and also in his *Tarikh-i-Kabeer*, that adds to its authenticity, though he has not termed it Hadith. In this Hadith the Ulema have been described as the inheritors of Prophets. We know that the Prophets are the greatest people on earth. This greatness of Prophets is not because of wealth or kingship etc., but because of the knowledge of Reality which prophets had been given by Allah better than any one else. The Hadith says "They inherited knowledge", it shows that the greatness of Prophets is because of knowledge only and that any one who gets greatness from the Prophets is again because of knowledge.

One who travels on the way desirous of acquiring knowledge, Allah makes his way to Jannat easy.

This Hadith is quoted by Imam Muslim on the authority of Abu Huraira, it is also reported on the authority of Abu Dharda with some difference in words. Imam Bukhari has quoted it in his *Ta'leeqat*

i.e., in *Tarjamatul baab*. This Hadith indicates as to how much Allah (SWT) likes the bondsman to acquire knowledge. One who does so Allah makes his way to *Jannat* easy, that is he gets the successfulness in performing the righteous deeds which in turn pave his way to enter *Jannat* with ease.

And Allah's apostle (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that one with whom Allah wants to do good, He gives him the understanding of Deen).

This Hadith is quoted on the authority of Hadhrat Mu'aawiya, Imam Bukhari has termed it as a Mursal Hadith in the coming chapters. This Hadith says that if some one is given the understanding of Deen, it clearly shows that Allah is doing good with him. Allah gives the understanding of Deen to His beloved ones only.

And the knowledge is got by learning.

This is the part of same Hadith which is quoted by Tabarani on the authority of Hadhrat Mu'aawiya. Knowledge comes through proper learning from the teachers: This Hadith tells us that the knowledge comes through proper learning from the learned teachers and not alone by self study. One self studied teacher once said that he has not shaved his head for 40 years because Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has forbidden from it, and quoted the Hadith:

Here in this Hadith the word is "*Hilaq*" with the *kasra* of letter '*Laam*', which is the plural of "*Halqatun*" which means to sit in a circle in a gathering, since this man had not read from any teacher so he was reading the letter '*Laam*' with the '*Nasab*', which means 'to shave head'.

Statements of Sahaaba quoted by Imam Bukhari (RA)

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And Abu Zar said," if you put sword at this, pointed towards his neck, and I think that I can convey a word, which I have heard from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), before you will use it(the sword at my neck), I will definitely convey it").

Dharmi has quoted this statement of Abu Zar. Abu Zar was very strictly following the principles of Shariah. He used to rebuke people for living luxurious life. Ameerul Mumineen Hadhrat Usman asked him to leave Madina. He then went in seclusion at Rabdha and died there only. Once he came for Haj and was teaching people Shariah at Minah, some one told him that he was not supposed to do that, and it was at this occasion that he made above quoted statement.

- " "

And Ibne Abbas said,"Be Godly- wise, scholarly, jurist.

Rabbani (Godly) is derived either from Rabb(Lord) or from *Tarbiat*(Nurturing), if it is taken from Rabb, then it means 'to be pious or Godly' and if it is taken from *Tarbiat*, then it would mean 'to be from those scholars who nurture others with knowledge'. Some say that it means those scholars who perform righteous deeds after acquiring knowledge. Hukma' are those who have been given the real understanding of Deen, Ulema are those who have been given the knowledge of Deen with the fear of Allah and the Fuqaha are those who as per Hasan Basri are:

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Faqih is one who is ascetic in the world, has perception of his Deen and is persistent in the worship of his Lord).

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Ramadhan and Community Health

Dr. Muhammad Karim Beebani

Fasting in the month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam enjoined upon Muslims by almighty Allah as mentioned in verse 183 of chapter 2: **"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may learn self restraint."**

Reduced Crime and Higher Morale

The enormous impact of Ramadan on a Muslim society is seen from the fact that as compared to the other months, the number of all sorts of crimes and the magnitude of corruption, indecency, vicious behaviour and immoral acts are all reduced markedly. The rate of crimes in Muslim societies is already lower than other societies and it declines even more in the holy month of Ramadan.

Violence and crime impose a great burden on the health budget of any country. As a matter of fact in most developed countries they supersede the expenditure and agony caused even by the road traffic accidents. In a Muslim country like Saudi Arabia the crime rate is already much lower than other countries and it becomes minimal in the month of Ramadan.

Fasting is not just the act of refraining from food and water; rather it is a devotion to fulfill the religious duties as well as to behave in a manner which is harmless to others, so that even if someone incites a person to quarrel, he has to pacify him by acting upon this saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), **"Fasting is a shield or protection from the fire and from committing sins, if one of you is fasting, he should avoid quarrelling and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him he should say I am fasting."**

In another Hadith, Allah's Apostle says, **"Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving food and drink."**

Although such good teachings of Islam are not confined to the month of Ramadan alone, yet they are best observed in this month. Hence, one can notice a great fall in the crime rate, violence, loss of working days due to offensive injuries and a great reduction in the cost of medico-legal expenditure which has a pronounced effect on the health budget of a given community.

There is no doubt in saying that the number of offensive injuries and trauma cases reported to the emergency rooms in a Muslim country is far less in the month of Ramadan than in any other month. Ramadan, in other words, is a training period for the Muslims in which the foundations of a subtle character are laid whose gains can also be seen round the year and this has a positive effect on the morale of the whole society.

Happiness and Reduced Stress

Now, to come to another blessedness of Ramadan. In today's stressful time when every third person is suffering from a psychological problem even though it might be a mild depression, the advent of Ramadan means an era of happiness and felicity for all Muslims.

Social insecurity is the root cause of today's psychological chaos and bereavement. Ramadan, in contrast, is a month of optimum social interaction and familiarization with each other. Mosques are thronged with worshippers, people invite intimate friends to iftar, shopping centers are packed with crowds and Eid offers a rainbow of joyous moments, although the real happiness which the believers derive comes from the fulfillment of Allah's order about which He says that fasting is for Him alone and He will pay its reward.

Ramadan has its own culture, a glimpse of which can be seen at Iftar when the whole family joins together to dine. Al-

lah's apostle (pbuh) says, "There are two pleasures for the fasting person: one, at the time of breaking his fast, and the other at the time when he will meet his Lord. Then he will be pleased because of his fasting."

Not surprisingly, due to the decreased stress the human body's steroid level, which is raised in stress and anxiety, has been found to be decreased among Muslims in the month of Ramadan.

Cleanliness

Cleanliness is the hallmark of Islamic virtues. Although according to Islamic teachings, a good Muslim offering his prayers regularly is supposed to be neat and tidy, in the month of Ramadan personal cleanliness among the Muslims reaches its peak. I need not mention that a high level of cleanliness in the days of Ramadan will deter infections. The zeal to offer prayers in Ramadan continues in other days as well, more and more people form the habit of offering prayers regularly, which by itself is a spiritual and health package for Muslims.

Hadith

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "Fasting is a shield (or a screen or a shelter). So, the person observing fasting should avoid sexual relation with his wife and should not behave foolishly and impudently, and if somebody fights with him or abuses him, he should tell him twice, 'I am fasting.'" The Prophet added, "By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, the smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allah than the smell of musk. (Allah says about the fasting person), 'He has left his food, drink and desires for My sake. The fast is for Me. So I will reward (the fasting person) for it and the reward of good deeds is multiplied ten times.'" (Bukhari)

Why Fasting is Prescribed

Mawlana Sheikh Zulfiqar Ahmad

*The fast is for Me and I am its reward
[Hadith Qudsi]
O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed upon you as it was prescribed on those before you so that you may learn self-restraint [2:183]*

Why Fasting is Mandatory

The glorious verse above clarifies why Muslims are required to fast. Allah neither wishes to punish His subjects nor starve them because neither of these benefits Him. Further examination of this verse reveals that fasting builds righteousness and humility.

The Wisdom Behind Fasting

Cultivation of righteousness and humility is the wisdom behind fasting. A Companion once asked Hadrat Ibn Ka' ab (RA) the meaning of righteousness (taqwa), and in reply Hadrat Ibn Ka' ab (RA) asked, "Have you ever walked a dangerous and thorny path?" The questioner said yes. Then, Hadrat Ibn Ka' ab (RA) asked him how he would traverse such a path. The Companion answered, "I gather all my loose clothing around me and hold it tight so that nothing gets entangled or torn, and thus I walk very carefully." Hadrat Ibn Ka' ab (RA) answered that this is the very definition of righteousness, to protect oneself at every moment in life so one does not slip and fall into sin.

Fasting in Ramadan is one means to protect oneself and keep oneself righteous. Fasting is not merely abstinence from food and drink, but all the organs of the body must be in a state of fasting. The fast of the eyes is not to look at what is forbidden; the fast of the tongue is not

to lie and slander and likewise, every organ must stay away from wrong. A Muslim in Ramadan must be in a state of fasting from head to toe.

The Pinnacle of Fasting

The pinnacle of a fast is not realized until a Muslim fasts from head to toe. A person might abstain from food and drink, but during the course of the day or month, he slanders someone else or even steals from someone. This is why the Messenger (S) of Allah said that some people gain nothing from fasting but hunger.

Etiquette of Fasting

There are different types of fasts and each requires certain etiquette. One type is the fast of the common people that is to simply abstain from food and drink. Another type of fasting, observed by a special class of people closer to Allah 4@5, requires abstinence not only from food and drink, but also requires keeping the organs away from anything that is sinful, such as controlling the tongue from backbiting and slander.

It is obvious that Muslims must always strive for the second type of fasting and be in a complete state of fasting.

Hunger and Thirst

Fasting serves to build righteousness and elevates the righteous even higher. Consequently, those who obey Allah and abstain from sin during their fasts do not feel the intensity of hunger and thirst during the day as do those who unfortunately fail to stay away from sin.

Abstaining from Backbiting

Throughout the Prophet' s jfb lifetime, Allah, presented circumstances and examples to serve as lessons for the Muslims to follow.

Two women were fasting and came near to death because of sheer hunger. This problem was presented before the Messenger (S) of Allah who advised

that the women should rinse their mouth, which they did. Thereafter, the women vomited small pieces of meat. These women were astonished because they had not eaten anything because they were fasting. The Messenger (S) of Allah revealed that the women had been guilty of backbiting during their fast, a sin synonymous with eating dead flesh. Allah preserved this incident in time so that future generations may learn a lesson from it.

A Shield for Faith

In the event that someone who is fasting encounters someone quarrelsome or one who would lead them down a bad path, the fasting individual should say the words "I am fasting" three times. This will serve as a shield for safeguarding his faith and the fast will *Insha Allah* be regarded as a successful one by Allah.

Various Purposes of Fasting

Fasting has been ordained to cultivate righteousness in mankind. A child may want candy, but knowing its harmful effect a mother will refuse to indulge the child, not because she wishes to see her child cry but for the child' s own good. Likewise, Allah does not wish suffering upon those who fast, but ordains it so that they may become righteous and pure. The command of fasting does not benefit or take away from the glory of Allah \$& but is only for the benefit of those who fast.

Fasting and Medical Proof

Fasting not only has spiritual benefits but it also has immense physical benefits as well. The medical community acknowledges that regular fasting flushes poison from the body, thus purifying it.

The bathrooms in the luxurious homes of certain wealthy individuals alone cost more than the entire home of a poor family. If it were not for the holy month of Ramadan, such wealthy people would be oblivious to the suffering of the

poor and hungry. By ordaining the fast, Allah blessed mankind in that at the end of a day without food and drink, one can perhaps gain some insight into the daily life of the homeless and hungry.

Tending to Neighbors and the Sick

Hadith literature records that a man shall be raised on the Day of Judgment and Allah will say, "I was hungry. Yet, you did not feed Me. I was sick but you did not visit Me."

The man will say in astonishment, "O Allah, You are the Supreme Creator above all such needs and ailments such as hunger and sickness. How could I have fed you or visited. Then, Allah will say, "Back in the world, your neighbor at one time was hungry and sick but you failed to tend for him. If you had fed him and looked after him in his time of need, it would have been as if you were feeding Me."

It will only be then that this man will realize the tremendous reward of empathy towards his fellow human beings. Today the worst feuds occur between neighbors because people remain ignorant of the rights of neighbors. At one time the Messenger (S) of Allah said that Hadrat Jibril (AS) used to bring so many revelations regarding the rights of neighbors that the Messenger Jj of Allah thought that the neighbor would be included in the last will and testament of the deceased.

A Strange Turn of Events

Two brothers were very fond of each other but their wives did not get along. One of them invited his brother and sister-in-law to dinner and laid the table in front of them. However, when the host's wife found out she angrily took the plate from in front of her brother-in-law and said, "We are not feeding this man!"

This woman's saddened but quick thinking husband tried to salvage the situation and said to his brother, "Once

I too was at your house and you placed food in front of me. One of your chickens ran across the room and tipped the curry. Hence I could not enjoy the meal. I could have been angry at that time but controlled myself, so please do not be angry now if my wife hastily took away the plate."

His brother calmed down and said, "Surely I can extend you the same courtesy that you showed for my chicken." Hence, a potentially dangerous situation was defused very quickly because of the brothers' love and pure intentions towards each other. In contrast, if parties have bad intentions from the start, then it is easy for minor quarrels to become long term feuds.

Good Character

It has been narrated in hadith that the Messenger (S) of Allah came to teach humanity to humanity. Among the lessons of good character that the Messenger (S) of Allah brought is good will and etiquette towards one's neighbor.

This is something that has been relatively forgotten nowadays.

Living as brothers and sisters and as neighbors has become virtually alien to us, but we need to remember that neighbors are merely a mirror image of ourselves.

The True Purpose of Fasting

The true purpose of fasting is to value the tremendous blessings of Allah and realize that a large percentage of people in the world do not have what we take for granted every day. Hopefully a person will carry this realization throughout his or her life and become a better person and member of the community.

People rarely ponder upon the blessings of Allah that they are showered with every single day. Before wheat bread is served for a meal, a seed is sown into the ground. This seed is then nourished by the sun and the rain before it grows big enough that a farmer can reap it.

The wheat is then cleaned and sold in the market where it is bought and cooked as wheat bread. Indeed, it is unfortunate that people do not ponder upon these miraculous events that bring this food to their table nor do they thank Allah for this blessing.

A Fascinating Tale

Hadrat Fazal Ali Quraishi (RA) would plough, sow, and reap his own fields. He would bring the harvest home where both he and his wife would prepare the wheat to be cooked and made into bread. The bread would then be served to the students in Hadrat's madrasa.

Hadrat Quraishi had a strong work ethic and insisted on doing everything himself. As part of his noble habit, he was constantly in a state of ablution, as was his household. One day, Hadrat served the meal as usual in the madrasa and the seekers sat down to eat. Hadrat used to address his seekers as *faqir*, and so he said, "Oh Faqirs, for the bread that is before you, a field had to be ploughed and this was done in a state of *wudu* (ritual purity). Next, a seed was sown and cultivated, all in a state of *wudu*. The wheat was then reaped, cleaned and cooked, all in a state of *wudu*. Now that it is before you, my only hope is that you eat it in a state of *wudu*."

Etiquette of the Meal

Every morsel that a person consumes comes through many different routes as detailed above. Allah, likes the person who respects and values His blessings.

The Messenger of Allah used to eat with great humility, giving food proper respect. He would not eat like the arrogant who eat while walking and slouching. He would sit down for a meal with the humility of a servant in front of his master, and would value every morsel as a blessing from Allah

Warning Signs For the Wise

A millionaire once posted an advertisement in a newspaper promising a huge sum of money to the doctor who could treat his illness so that he would be able to eat a bite on his own. This person was a millionaire with apparently every material thing at his disposal. Yet, health was not on his side to the extent that he could not even eat by himself.

Being healthy enough to sit up and eat is a tremendous blessing on its own that people take for granted. We need to realize the greatness of these blessings and to be grateful to Allah gi.

A Story From Hadrat Sulayman's

Allah had given Hadrat Sulayman (AS) kingship over humankind, jinn, the animal kingdom and all the forces of nature. One day, Hadrat Sulayman (AS) supplicated to Allah that he wanted to invite all creation to a feast and wanted no food to go to waste. Allah readily permitted this and so Hadrat Sulayman (AS) commanded the jinn to start preparing the food for such a feast.

The jinn toiled at giant cauldrons for years and kept storing the food until such a day that Hadrat Sulayman (AS) became satisfied that there was enough food for all of Allah's creation. Then, he once again requested permission to invite the guests and Allah gave him permission for this. Hadrat Sulayman asked whether he should invite the land creation first or the creatures of the sea, and Allah suggested the sea creatures since the sea was very close by.

A fish swam up and opened its mouth, into which the jinn started emptying the food. This fish was so large that it alone consumed everything that had been cooked. Allah's creation is so awesome that it baffles the imagination.

Certain fish are so large that airplanes have been reported to have mistaken them for airstrips and actually attempted landings. Once, I was flying from France to another country and as the air-

plane rose and crossed over water, I saw a fish swimming thousands of feet below that seemed the size of a car. I marveled at what the actual size of the fish must be if it appeared as big as a car from such a height.

So the fish that the jinn were feeding still had its mouth open even though the jinn had fed it the entire feast. Hadrat Sulayman (AS) was amazed and exclaimed to the fish, "You ate so much!" To this, the fish replied, "O Beloved of Allah, I bear witness that Allah feeds me every day three times what you have fed me today!"

Distribution of Sustenance (Ri'zq)

Allah does not forget to provide for humankind despite the millions of other species that make up creation. Hence people should be grateful rather than complain when given such food that may be distasteful, because Allah could have easily overlooked such a tiny portion of creation such as humankind in the distribution of sustenance (*rizq*). The purpose of Ramadan is to develop gratefulness for Allah's blessings so that man may become humble and righteous

Hadith

Zainab bint Jahsh reported that Allah's Apostle (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) got up from sleep saying: There is no god but Allah; there is a destruction in store for Arabia because of turmoil which is at hand, the barrier of Gog and Magog has opened so much. And Sufyan made a sign of ten with the help of his hand (in order to indicate the width of the gap) and I said: Allah's Messenger, would we be perished in spite of the fact that there would be good people amongst us? Thereupon he said: Of course, but only when the evil predominates. (Muslim)

Islamic Finance

Justice Mawlana Taqi Usmani (DB)

The Islamic banks have overlooked this basic requirement of Islamic banking and there are no visible efforts to progress towards this transaction even in a gradual manner even on a selective basis. This situation has resulted in a number of adverse factors :

Firstly, the basic philosophy of Islamic banking seems to be totally neglected.

Secondly, by ignoring the instrument of Musharakah the Islamic banks are forced to use the instrument of Murabahah and Ijarah and these too, within the framework of the conventional benchmarks like Libber etc. where the net result is not materially different from the interest based transactions. I do not subscribe to the view of those people who do not find any difference between the transactions of conventional banks and Murabahah and Ijarah and who blame the instruments of Murabahah and Ijarah for perpetuating the same business with a different name, because if Murabahah and Ijarah are implemented with their necessary conditions, they have many points of difference which distinguish them from interest-based transactions. However, one cannot deny that these two transactions are not originally modes of financing in Shariah. The Shariah scholars have allowed their use for financing purposes only in those spheres where Musharakah cannot work and that too with certain conditions. This allowance should not be taken as a permanent rule for all sorts of transactions and the entire operations of Islamic Banks should not revolve around it.

Thirdly, when people realize that income from in the transactions undertaken

by Islamic banks is dubious akin to the transactions of conventional banks, they become skeptical towards the functioning of Islamic banks.

Fourthly, if all the transactions of Islamic banks are based on the above devices it becomes very difficult to argue for the case of Islamic banking before the masses especially, before the non-muslims who feel that it is nothing but a matter of twisting of documents only.

It is observed in a number of Islamic banks that even Murabahah and Ijarah are not effected according to the procedure required by the Shariah. The basic concept of Murabahah was that the bank should purchase the commodity and then sell it to the customer on deferred payment basis at a margin of profit. From the Shariah point of view it is necessary that the commodity should come into the ownership and at least in the constructive possession of the bank before it is sold to the customer. The bank should bear the risk of the commodity during the period it is owned and possessed by the bank. It is observed that many Islamic banks and financial institutions commit a number of mistakes with regard to this transaction:

Some financial institutions have presumed that Murabahah is the substitute for interest, for all practical purposes. Therefore, they contract a Murabahah even when the client wants funds for his overhead expenses like paying salaries or bills for the goods and services already consumed. Obviously Murabahah cannot be effected in this case because no commodity is being purchased by the bank.

In some cases the client purchases the commodity on his own prior to any agreement with the Islamic Bank and a Murabahah is effected on a buy-back basis. This is again contrary to the Islamic principles because the buy-back arrangement is unanimously held as prohibited in Shariah.

In some cases the client himself is made an agent for the bank to purchase a commodity and to sell it to himself immediately after acquiring the commodity. This is

not in accordance with the basic conditions of the permissibility of Murabahah. If the client himself is made an agent to purchase the commodity, his capacity as an agent must be distinguished from his capacity as a buyer which means that after purchasing commodity on behalf of the bank he must inform the bank that he has effected the purchase on its behalf and then the commodity should be sold to him by the bank through a proper offer and acceptance which may be effected through the exchange of telexes or faxes.

As explained earlier Murabahah is a kind of sale and it is an established principle of Shariah that the price must be determined at the time of sale. This price can neither be increased nor reduced unilaterally once it is fixed by the parties. It is observed that some financial institutions increase the price of Murabahah in the case of late payment which is not allowed in Shariah. Some financial institutions roll-over the Murabahah in the case of default by the client. Obviously, this practice is not warranted by Shariah because once the commodity is sold to the customer it cannot be the subject matter of another sale to the same customer.

In transactions of Ijarah also some requirements of Shariah are often overlooked. It is a prerequisite for a valid Ijarah that the lessor bears the risks related to the ownership of the leased asset and that the usufruct of the leased asset must be made available to the lessee for which he pays rent. It is observed in a number of Ijarah agreements that these rules are violated. Even in the case of destruction of the asset due to force majeure, the lessee is required to keep paying the rent which means that the lessor neither assumes the liability for his ownership nor offers any usufruct to the lessee. This type of Ijarah is against the basic principles of Shariah.

The Islamic banking is based on principles different from those followed in conventional banking system. It is therefore logical that the results of their operations are not necessarily the same in terms of

profitability. An Islamic bank may earn more in some cases and may earn less in some others. If our target is always to match the conventional banks in terms of profits, we can hardly develop our own products based on pure Islamic principles. Unless the sponsors of the bank as well as its management and its clientele realize this fact and are ready to accept different - but not necessarily adverse - results, the Islamic banks will keep using artificial devices and a true Islamic system will not come into being.

According to the Islamic principles, business transactions can never be separated from the moral objectives of the society. Therefore, Islamic banks were supposed to adopt new financing policies and to explore new channels of investments which may encourage development and support the small scale traders to lift up their economic level. A very few Islamic banks and financial institutions have paid attention to this aspect. Unlike the conventional financial institutions who strive for nothing but making enormous profits, the Islamic banks should have taken the fulfillment of the needs of the society as one of their major objectives and should have given preference to the products which may help the common people to raise their standard of living. They should have invented new schemes for house-financing, vehicle-financing and rehabilitation-financing for the small traders. This area still awaits attention of the Islamic banks.

The case of Islamic banking cannot be advanced unless a strong system of inter-bank transactions based on Islamic principles is developed. The lack of such a system forces the Islamic banks to turn to the conventional banks for their short term needs of liquidity which the conventional banks do not provide without either an open or camouflaged interest. The creation of an inter-bank relationship based on Islamic principles should no longer be deemed difficult. The number of Islamic financial institutions today has reached around two hundred. They can create a fund with a mixture of Murabahah and Ijarah instruments the

units of which can be used even for overnight transactions. If they develop such a fund it may solve a number of problems.

Lastly, the Islamic banks should develop their own culture. Obviously, Islam is not restricted to the banking transactions. It is a set of rules and principles governing the whole human life. Therefore, for being 'Islamic' it is not sufficient to design the transactions on Islamic principles. It is also necessary that the outlook of the institution and its staff reflects the Islamic identity quite distinguished from the conventional institution. This requires a major change in the general attitude of the institution and its management. Islamic obligations of worship as well as the ethical norms must be prominent in the whole atmosphere of an institution which claims to be Islamic. This is an area in which some Islamic institutions in the Middle East have made progress. However, it should be a distinguishing feature of all the Islamic banks and financial institutions throughout the world. The guidance of Shariah Boards should be sought in this area also.

The purpose of this discussion, as clarified at the outset, is by no means to discourage the Islamic Banks or to find faults with them. The only purpose is to persuade them to evaluate their own performance from the Shariah point of view and to adopt a realistic approach while designing their procedure and determining their policies.

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Miniature knowledge

It is said that here Imam Bukhari means the knowledge of offshoots or branches of *Deen*.

کیار علم

Great knowledge

It is said that here Imam Bukhari means the knowledge of roots or principles of *Deen*.

Fasting in Ramadan

Ramadan (Sawm) is one of the five pillars of Islam. In this month, Allah Subhana Wa Taala (SWT) has made compulsory that the fasting should be observed by day, and he has made the 'Taraweeh' by night a 'Sunnah'. Fasting is to abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and conjugal relations during the daylight hours.

Prophet Muhammad Sallahu alaihi wasalam (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that "Allah (SWT), the Majestic and the Exalted, said: All actions a human being does are for himself except fasting. It is done for My sake, and I will give a reward for it and the reward of good deeds is multiplied 10 times". (Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim)

Fasting earns great reward as clearly stated in the above Hadith. When Allah rewards an action as purely His, then the reward is limitless. Whoever performs any virtuous deed in this month shall be rewarded as if he has performed a 'Fardh' (obligatory performance) in any other time of the year. Whosoever performs a 'Fardh', for him shall be the reward of seventy 'Fardh' in any other time of the year.

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "There is a gate in Paradise called Ar-Raiyan, and those who observe fasting will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection and none except them will enter through it". (Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim)

Ramadan is an annual training programme to refresh us for carrying out our duties towards Allah (SWT). Fasting develops self-control and helps us to overcome selfishness, greed, laziness and other faults. This month of patience gives us an opportunity to experience for ourselves what it is like to have an empty stomach. This develops our feeling for the poor and hungry people. Fasting teaches us to control the love of comfort. If difficulty is experienced in fasting, one should bear it cheerfully and not complain. Should we feel fa-

tigued at the time of Taraweeh, this too should be borne with fortitude.

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "When the month of Ramadan starts, the gates of mercy are opened and the gates of Hell are locked and the devils are chained". (Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim)

In this month, the rebellious 'Shayateen' (Satans) are chained, so as not to provoke those evils which they normally do during months other than Ramadan. A question may arise here that, when the 'Shayateen' are chained, how it is that we still do see evil committed? The reply is that evil may not necessarily be caused by the rebellious 'Shayateen'. People have for eleven months lived in obedience to 'Shayateen' whims and wishes, and so performing evil deeds instigated by them becomes second nature. Consequently, evil is being done in and out of Ramadan.

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Every servant of Allah (SWT) who observes fast for a day in the way of Allah (SWT), Allah (SWT) would remove, because of this day, his face farther from the Fire of Hell to the extent of seventy years' distance". (Sahih Muslim)

Fasting is the way to piety and the fear of God. Fasting narrows the food and blood arteries. They are known to be canals of the devils, hence fasting reduces their insinuation. It further weakens carnal desires, thoughts and temptations of disobedience.

Fasting enhances bodily health. It gets rid of contaminated matter, eases the stomach, purifies the blood, eases the working of the heart, brightens the spirit, refines the soul and disciplines the character. When an individual fasts, his soul is humbled and his carnal desires are dispelled.

ETIQUETTES OF RAMADAN

During the month of Ramadan, the

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to apportion to Ramadan a degree of worship that was not set aside to any other month. The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) spent his time in remembrance, recitation, learning and providing advice and training. His nights were spent in supplication and humiliation unto His Lord, seeking His help, support, victory and guidance.

Sehri

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Eat a little before dawn (Sehri) as there is blessings in taking meal at that time". (Sahih Bukhari & Sahih Muslim)

Many people are deprived of this great reward because of their own laziness. Even though there be no food, then one date should be eaten or a drink of water taken. The period before dawn is considered blessed because it is in the last third of the night, the time of divine descent and forgiveness. It is another special time when prayers are accepted.

Iftaar

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "The people will remain on the right path as long as they hasten the breaking of the fast (Iftaar)". (Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim)

It is established that the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to hasten to have a meal after the setting of the sun. Usually he had dates or water because something sweet was most agreeable for an empty stomach.

Recitation of Al-Qur'an

Allah (SWT) says in Al-Qur'an, "Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (Between right and wrong)". (2:185)

Al-Qur'an is life, spirit, salvation, happiness, reward and recompense. It is a divine teaching, a constitution and eternal

wisdom.

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Read the Al-Qur'an for surely it will be an intercessor for you on the Day of Judgement". (Sahih Muslim)

The Qur'aan will say: 'I prevented him from sleeping at night, so allow me to intercede for him.'. Therefore, it is essential for the person fasting to recite the Qur'aan much during these blessed days and honorable nights.

Oral hygiene

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) chewed siwaak while fasting." (Tirmidhi)

It is recommended to take care of the mouth, teeth and gums all the time, and more so during fasting. This can be achieved by the use of siwaak, a special stick or root (from Arak tree) that is used to cleanse the teeth and strengthen the gums.

"The breath of the observer of fast is sweeter to Allah (SWT) than the fragrance of musk". (Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim)"

Charity and generosity

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Every person will be in the shade of his charity on the Day of Judgement, until all matters are settled between the people".

Ramadan is the month of charity. The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was naturally the most generous of people and he used to be more generous than ever in the month of Ramadan. Allah (SWT) has given you, so Muslims should try to give generously in Ramadan, both sadaqah (optional charity) and zakat (obligatory charity). Every time a servant of Allah (SWT) gives something in charity Allah (SWT) eases his physical, spiritual and mental conditions. And he expands for him his sustenance. Sadaqah does not only have to be money. It can also be a good deed—such as helping another person—done for the sake of Allah and without ex-

pecting any reward from the person. Even a smile is considered charity in Islam. Most Muslims pay their zakah during Ramadan because the reward is so much greater in that month. Wealth is like water, if its flow is obstructed it becomes brackish, and if it flows, it becomes sweet and fresh.

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Whosoever feeds a fasting person or gives a fasting person a single date or a sip of water, in order to break the fast, for him there shall be forgiveness of his sins and emancipation from the fire of 'Jahannam' (hellfire), and for him shall be the same reward as for him (whom he fed)".

The way for repentance

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "What a loss it would be for one to witness Ramadan and not gain from it forgiveness".

By this the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) meant the person who in Ramadan, the month of blessings and righteousness, who still spends the days in sin and disregards his duties, thus he doesn't gain forgiveness. If he cannot gain Allah (SWT)'s pleasure in Ramadan, then when will he do so? The way to seek Allah (SWT)'s pardon for his sins is to fulfil his obligations in Ramadan as enjoined by Allah (SWT) such as fasting, offering 'Taraweeh' prayers and repentance on past sins. Those who are sincere with Allah (SWT) will find that all their sins throughout the year will be forgiven in Ramadan, if they avoid major sins. Even the fish in the sea seek forgiveness on their behalf until they break their fast.

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) termed the first 10 days of Ramadan as the period of Mercy, whereby Allah (SWT)'s mercy is showered on the believers. Those who express their gratitude to Allah (SWT) for his bounties, receive them in large measure. The Al-Qur'an says, "If you are thankful, I will surely grant you more". The second 10 days of Ramadan is when forgiveness is granted to the believers

as a reward for the fasting during the first part. The last 10 days of Ramadan brings immunity from 'Jahannam' (Hell). In this month, you should endeavour to perform three things in great number:

1) 'Kalima Tayyiba' (Laa ilaha illa hu muhamadur rasulullah). If the seven heavens, the earth and all its occupants were placed in one pan of a scale and this 'Kalima' on the other, the 'Kalima' would outweigh everything.

2) 'Istighfaar' (Beg for Allah (SWT)'s forgiveness). Whoever says a great deal of 'Istighfaar', Allah (SWT) opens a way out for him from all difficulties and releases him from sorrows.

3) Beg for entry into Paradise and seek refuge with Allah (SWT) from the fire of 'Jahannam' (Hell).

Taraweeh

The Messenger of Allah said: "Whoever observes night prayer in Ramadan as an expression of his faith and to seek reward from Allah, his previous sins will be blotted out". (Sahih Muslim)

The Ramadan nightly prayer (Taraweeh) has a special merit over other nights. No one should neglect Taraweeh without a good reason, for it is part of physical and spiritual training, for its observation soon after Iftar insures timely and proper digestion of food. Besides, there are spiritual rewards awaiting the observers of this prayer.

THE WISDOM BEHIND FASTING

Fasting in Ramadan is not merely physically restraining from the obvious food and drink, but the total commitment of the servant's body and soul to the letter and spirit of fasting.

- 1) The fast of the self, means to be free from all carnal desires.
- 2) The fast of the mind is avoiding thoughts about things other than Allah.
- 3) The fast of the hand is not touching/taking what does not belong to it.
- 4) The fast of the nose means not sniffing or smelling unlawful things.

5) The fast of the feet is not going places where sinful acts are propagated.

6) The fast of the eye is to prevent it from seeing forbidden things.

7) Allah (SWT) says in Al-Qur'an, "Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be mindful of their chastity; this will be most conducive to their purity. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be mindful of their chastity, and not display their charms (in public) beyond what may (decently) be apparent thereof; hence let them draw their head-covering over their bosoms' (24:30-31)

8) The fast of the tongue is guarding against lying, backbiting, slandering, reviling, abusing others, cursing, indecent conversation, swearing and false evidence. The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe.

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Whoever does not give up backbiting, lying speech (false statements) and acting on those lies and evil actions etc, then Allah (SWT) will not accept his fasting".

9) The fast of the ears is not to listen to idle talk, gossip, lyrics and notes that contain obscene and indecent things. Listening to the Al-Qur'an bears the fruit of faith, guidance, light and prosperity. It fills the heart with wisdom, tranquillity, intimacy and contentment. It is a source of protection from the dangerous, deviant and sinful thoughts. Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "In backbiting, both the backbiter and the one who listens to it are equal partners in sin".

10) The fast of the heart means casting out from it the love of worldly things and by emptying it of all corrupt material such as, false beliefs, evil suggestions, filthy intentions and degenerate thoughts.

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "There is a piece of flesh in body which, if it be wholesome, the whole body will be healthy and which, if it be diseased the whole body will be diseased. Truly it is the heart".

The believer's heart abstains from pride and egotism because it breaks its fast. Egotism is when the individual sees himself as perfect and better than others. The cure for this self-importance is to look at one's faults and short-comings, thousands of sins and misdeeds that one has committed, wrongs that one has done and forgotten, but knowledge of which are with Allah.

Allah (SWT) says in Al-Qur'an, "do they, perchance, envy other people for what God has granted them out of his bounty? (4:54)

The heart of the believer fasts and abstains from envy as it lowers righteous deeds and stops its progress toward Allah (SWT).

AVOIDANCE OF THINGS THAT CONTRADICT THE SPIRIT OF FASTING

Allah (SWT) says in Al-Qur'an, "Eat and drink (freely), but do not waste: verily, He does not love the wasteful!" (7:31)

Some people who fast waste money on meals both at the beginning and the breaking of the fast in Ramadan. They prepare food enough for a crowd of people consisting of numerous dishes. Then, at the end of this, they only eat a little and throw the remainder into the refuse. This is contrary to the great teachings of Islam.

There are other people who fill the stomach with delicious foods at "Sehri", so that one does not feel hungry until "Iftaar". When opening their fast, they indulge in excessive eating and drinking. This however, defeats the purpose of fasting, one of which is to empty the stomach of all contaminated material by reducing the intake of food.

Many people spend their fasting hours sleeping. As a result it seems as if they did not fast. The wisdom of fasting is that the one who fasts should experience the pangs of hunger and savour thirst in order to gain the pleasure of Allah (SWT).

There are also people who make no effort to do good for themselves by giving charity. They do not honour their tables

by allowing others to break their fast with them.

PRAYERS OF A FASTING PERSON

The prayer of a fasting person is never refused. The final hour before the setting of the sun is one of the greatest hours of the day. It is related that the prayer of a fasting person is accepted at the time of breaking the fast. Therefore submit before Allah (SWT) all your needs. However Muslims are generally so absorbed in eating that we neglect this opportunity

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said "During each day/ night of Ramadan Allah (SWT) sets free great number of souls from Hell. For each Muslim, during each day and night, at least one prayer is certainly accepted".

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) informed us that when a fasting Muslim prays for anything from Allah (SWT), he definitely receives one out of the following three things: He gets exactly what he asked for. Or Allah (SWT) either removes from his path some great calamity in exchange for what he desired. Or the reward for that which he prayed for is stored for the Hereafter.

Therefore, prayer is indeed very important, and to neglect it at any time is a matter of great loss. Should Allah (SWT) find that granting us what we beseech from Him is in our welfare and interest, He grants it, otherwise not. It should be borne in mind that there are certain conditions under which prayers are accepted, in the absence of these, prayer may be often rejected. When 'Haraam' is consumed, the prayers are not accepted. A person who fasts and breaks his fast with "Haraam" food, is like a sick person, who takes medicine as a cure, but also adds a little poison, which destroys him.

LAILAT-UL-QADR (NIGHT OF POWER)

Allah (SWT) says in Al-Qur'an, "There is a night in the month which is ..."better than a thousand months". (97:3)

The night of "Laylatul Qadr" is described as being greater in blessedness and spiritual virtue than a 1,000 months. Therefore fortunate is that person who attains the full blessings of this night by spending it in the worship of Allah.

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Seek Lailat-ul-Qadr in the last ten nights. If one among you shows slackness and weakness in the earlier part of Ramadan, it should not be allowed to prevail upon him in last week". (Sahih Muslim)

Allah has concealed the exact date of the Night of Power so that we would double our efforts during the last ten days. He is also testing the serious and the non-serious. The seriously interested person will search for the night late and in the early hours until he or she attains it, regardless of the hardship

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Whoever stands in prayers and worships on the night of Power, with complete faith and sincere hope of gaining reward, all his previous sins are forgiven". (Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim).

It is recommended to seek the night and spend it diligently in devotion, including night Sunnah prayers (Tahajjud) and recitation of Al-Qur'an. This citation indicates that regardless of whether a person knows the night or not Allah will grant forgiveness for previous shortcomings.

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to exert himself in devotion during the last ten nights to a greater extent than at any other time. (Sahih Muslim)

During this time, he limited his contact with people and intensified his supplications and prayers to Allah (SWT). The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did this in order to attune his heart even more with Allah (SWT) and to free his mind from the concerns of the world.

Of the days of Ramadan, the last ten days are the most meritorious for the acts of recitation of Al-Qur'an, nightly Sun-

nah prayers, etc., which weigh heavily on the scale of deeds, (mizaan).

With the start of the last ten days of Ramadan, Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to work hard and used to offer Salaat (prayers) all the night, and used to keep his family awake for the Salaat (prayers). (Sahih Bukhari)

FASTING IN SHAWWAL

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Whoever observes the Ramadan fast and follows it with six days of fast in Shawwal, it is as if he has fasted Dahr (the whole year)". (Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim)

Shawwal is the tenth month in the lunar calendar. The first of Shawwal is Eidul Fitr. After the festivity of Eid it is recommended to observe six days of fast. This fast may be observed continuously non-break, or it may be observed one day at a time.

Hadith

Thauban reported that Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: Allah drew the ends of the world near one another for my sake. And I have seen its eastern and western ends. And the dominion of my Ummah would reach those ends which have been drawn near me and I have been granted the red and the white tree - sure and I begged my Lord for my Ummah that it should not be destroyed because of famine, nor be dominated by an enemy who is not amongst them to take their lives and destroy them root and branch, and my Lord said: Muhammad, whenever I make a decision, there is none to change it. Well, I grant you for your Ummah that it would not be destroyed by famine and it would not be dominated by an enemy who would not be amongst it and would take their lives and destroy them root and branch even if all the people from the different parts of the world join hands together (for this purpose), but it would be from amongst them, viz. your Ummah, that some people would kill the others or imprison the others. (Muslim)

Before the Sand Slips Away

Muhammad ash-Shareef

Imagine that you are on the beach. You are four years old. The camp leader has told you that you have five minutes to build a great castle.

"Quickly," your three year old Ameer tells you, "the sand here is too soft. Run closer to the water and get better sand!" Off you run and grab, with your tiny hands, as much sand as you can hold. But, as you run back, plop, plop, plop, you feel the sand slipping through your fingers. You can do nothing about it. In your haste, all the sand has slipped away. Bang. The competition is over. This is the analogy of our lives. This is the analogy of our time in Ramadan.

For many living in Western countries, Ramadan is passed daily with 9 to 5 jobs or school - nights where we may or may not go for Taraweeh. A peak at the TV (may Allah protect us) and the night is over. Back to work where all around us people are eating and drinking from crystal water fountains. Blink. Ramadan is over.

The question of the hour is: how do we take full advantage of this gift of Allah? This is our topic, before the sands of Ramadan slip away.

How many years have we been fasting Ramadan? 10 or 15 or 40 years? Are we 10 or 15 or 40 times better? Or, does it seem like we have arrived back at the drawing board every time Ramadan comes around? All acts of worship are for our own benefit! Don't do it and harm befalls you, which is the way life was programmed.

Ramadan is no small matter. It is one of the pillars of this Deen of Islam - without it one's Islam would not be complete. In this month, Rasul Allah - sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam - would intensify his

worship of Allah ta'ala. In doing so, he laid the foundation for his Ummah after him to emulate.

Ibn AlQayyim – rahimahullaah – wrote:

“From his blessed guidance – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – in Ramadan is that he used to intensify and diversify his actions of worship. So, for example, Jibreel used to rehearse the Qur’an with him during the nights of Ramadan. When Jibreel would visit him, he would intensify the amount of Sadaqah that he would give. He was the most generous out of all people – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – and Ramadan was the time when he was most generous. In Ramadan, he would fill his time with Sadaqah, treating people kindly, reciting Qur’an, performing Salah, remembering Allah, and performing I’tikaaf.” – from the book 'Zaad AlMa'aad'

Observers described the way Allah’s Messenger– sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – gave like Ar-Reeh AlMursalah, like the blessed wind. Why? The blessed wind, as they knew it, was a wind that brought coolness to everyone – no one was denied its blessing. The blessed wind, additionally, was not lazy in bringing its goodness to the people. It would come swiftly to all. This is how Rasul Allah – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – was described, and this is how our service to humanity should be: swift and encompassing. Bi idhnillah.

Below are ten ideas to and help make the most of Ramadan – before it slips through our hands.

Idea one: Compound Your Siyaam!

If you told your financial broker that you just want to keep money in the bank and save it, he would say, “You are wrong.” “Invest it in the stock market. That way your money will be compounded – you will earn multiple times what you put in.” So now I ask the question: Wouldn’t you love to get two times the reward of fasting Ramadan? How?

Zayd ibn Khaalid AlJuhanee narates that the Prophet – sal Allaahu alayhi

wa sallam – said,

“Whoever gives a fasting person (food) to break his or her fast, he (the one feeding) will get the reward equivalent to the (fasting persons) reward – without diminishing anything from the reward of the (fasting person).”

How do we do this? Ask any Muslim relief agency if they have a feed a fasting person program. Subhan Allah, you may find that it only costs \$1 to feed a person! So, for \$30 you could come out of Ramadan having doubled your reward.

And, we should not forget the needy in our city. We think that in a ‘modern’ western country or city there are no needy people. That is not true. There are many needy families that are waiting to be discovered. Ask around and you will find a gold mine of people to help, in your own backyard.

I speak about Washington, DC. If one was to have a food drive, all the food could go to needy Muslim families in DC and still not be enough! I’ve seen this with my own eyes. How blessed it would be to get the youth that just hang out in the back of the Masjid during Taraweeh to take on this task. Organize the collection of the food and distribute it. It can happen! It just takes a leader with vision to set this up for the youth and all the good people who want to make a difference.

Idea two: Operation Guide the Youth

Often in Ramadan, there are khaati-rah, words of wisdom, halaqahs and reminders, all geared to the adults praying Taraweeh. The youth, it seems, are being disrespectful by talking in the back of the masjid.

“Shhhhhsh!” someone shouts at them. “Listen or go outside (and we prefer if you just go outside)!” So, quietly they sneak out of the Masjid and chat and chill all Ramadan. How Eman boosting is that? Remember, Allah commands that you protect your wife and children also.

Try this: Just like there are things for the adults, we could have Ramadan ac-

tivities and reminders geared specifically for the youth. And, it need not be 'in' the Masjid. Let's say the youth like to chat and chill outside in the parking lot. Why not organize the activity there? Yes, on the basketball court or in the parking lot. Have a 5-minute Khatirah, play games with them, and give them some noble projects to complete in Ramadan.

Again, making a difference like this needs a leader with vision, one who recognizes that the youth are his or her responsibility. I pray that person is you!

Idea Three: Turnoff TV Month

Every parent knows that when they want their child to do well in their studies they tell them, "no TV." If this is for Dunya, then how about someone who wants to excel in Ramadan?

"Fasting and the Qur'an will come and testify on behalf of the 'Abd on the Day of Resurrection. The Fasting will say: O my lord, I denied him food and desires, so allow me to be a means for him to enter paradise. And the Qu'ran will say: O my Lord, I denied him sleep at night so allow me to be a means for him to enter Paradise. And (he will be entered into paradise) because of those two."

– Musnad Ahmad

Try this: Announce in your household that Ramadan is the official turnoff TV month. Be an example for others and do fun and rewarding things instead. Visit people, take on a Ramadan feeding project, increase yourself in knowledge, etc. Turn off the TV and turn on life.

Idea Four: Dua' Time

Ramadan is the month of making dua' to Allah, an essential compliment to fasting. Rasul Allah – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – said, "There are three persons dua' that will be accepted (by Allah). The fasting person, the oppressed one, and the traveler."

Try this: Make a list of all your goals in life. Make a section for your a) personal goals; b) spiritual goals; c) economic goals; and d) contribution goals. Every day during

Ramadan, take out your list and make dua' to Allah to grant you the tawfeeq to accomplish your goals. Insha Allah, you will attain your goals with hard work, both during and after Ramadan.

Idea Five: Parent Appreciation Month

We all know that the one who wakes us up for Suhoor is our mom. I know it was for me. If not for her alarm clock, her early morning cooking, her motherly love to go and wake everyone up ... well, let's just say our iftars would have become our suhoors. If you are living away from your parents, you know what I'm talking about. Remember the hadith of the person who doesn't reach Ramadan with forgiveness? The end part of the Hadith says they found their parents in old age and they were not a means for him to enter Jannah!

So, why not announce it loud and clear this month, "Thank you Mom! Thank you Dad!" Let's take care of them this month with extra calls, extra hugs, and extra love.

Idea Six: Masjid Power Hour

During Ramadan, why not spend a few more moments in the Masjid before taking off. This could be done after Fajr or after Asr. Sit back, grab a Qur'an and remember Allah. As your time in the Masjid increases, bi idhnillaah, your love and heart attachment will increase. Make this your personal Masjid power hour.

Idea Seven: Bad Habit Buster

Many people already do this. They may have a smoking problem or a TV addiction. When Ramadan comes around they say, "I'm going to train myself to stop smoking or to stop watching excessive TV by abandoning it throughout Ramadan."

So, you don't have a smoking problem huh? Everyone has a bad habit and everyone has a recurring sin they pray they could desist from. Make Ramadan the training month by telling yourself to go without this sin for the entire month. Then,

if Allah grants one Tawfeeq to complete the month, one should continue to pray to Allah to keep them away from the sin after Ramadan.

Idea Eight: The Gift Groove

Have you ever noticed how beloved a bottle of perfume is when it is handed out by a little four year old Muslim? Everyone loves a gift.

Why not take this a step forward? Go to your local Islamic bookstore and request a bulk purchase of some beneficial Islamic materials, something in the \$1 range. Then, hand it out to everyone that comes to your masjid. Bi idhnillaah, you will find for the little effort one may put, people all throughout Ramadan will be learning from the gift.

Idea Nine: Ramadan Muslims, Convert!

It is true that on the first day of Ramadan, the number of Muslims in the local Masjid multiplies considerably. And, it is a sad moment on the first day after Ramadan that the Masjid attendance drops significantly. This idea is Operation No More Ramadan Muslims. We want people all year long!

Ibn Abbas l'tikaaf: A man came to Ibn Abbas while he was doing l'tikaaf in the masjid and asked him for his assistance. So, Ibn Abbas stood to leave and people around him warned him, 'but you are in l'tikaaf'. He replied, "To assist my brother in fulfilling his need is more beloved to me than to perform l'tikaaf for 2 months in the Masjid of Rasul Allah – sal Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam." Try this: Make a 'compassion crew' that reaches out specifically to Ramadan Muslims. Extra special attention is showered on them and roles of responsibility are delegated to them so that they can participate more in the Masjid. Invite them to special Iftars where they are the center of attention.

With this extra attention and responsibility, bi idhnillaah, every month will be Ramadan for them and the masjids will be full all year.

Idea Ten: Home Halaqah

Muslim families often keep their worship for the Masjid, but why not make Muslim family time at home. It could work like this: After Taraweeh or Asr, the family gathers together for 15 minutes. There are many things you could do in your Halaqah, the main thing is that you set time aside for it.

For example, each family member may recite a few verses of Qur'an. Or, one of the kids can read a story of the Sahaabah so that all family members can be reminded. Or, each family member can speak about the blessings of Allah upon them and what they have in their lives for which they are thankful.

Just 15 minutes for the home Halaqah. For the entire family, bi idhnillah, it will be a spring of Eman.

Ten ideas to enhance your Ramadan:

Idea one: Compound Your Siyaam!

Idea two: Operation Guide the Youth

Idea Three: Turnoff TV Month

Idea Four: Dua' Time

Idea Five: Parent Appreciation Month

Idea Six: Masjid Power Hour

Idea Seven: Bad Habit Buster

Idea Eight: The Gift Groove

Idea Nine: Ramadan Muslims, Convert!

Idea Ten: Home Halaqah

The past saw Muslims that spent their nights of Ramadan awake praying to Allah. It saw days where people, for the sake of Allah, went thirsty.

They knew that this season may never return on them and they heard Allah's words "Ayyaman Ma'doodaat"– a limited number of days. Don't let the sand of Ramadan slip away.

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broken Allaah has people whom He ransoms." Ahmad.

(iii) It was narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri in a marfoo' report: "Allaah ransoms people every day and night – i.e., in Ramadaan – and every day and night the Muslim has a prayer that is answered." Bazaar.

The Inner Secrets of Fasting

Imam Ibn Qudaamah (RA)

Know, that in the fast (Sawm) is a special quality that is not found in anything else. And that is its close connection to Allah, such that He says: "The fast (Sawm) is for Me and I will reward it." [Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

This connection is enough to show the high status of fasting. Similarly, the Ka'bah is highly dignified due to its close connection to Him, as occurs in His statement:

"And sanctify My House." [Soorah al-Hajj:26]

Indeed, the fast is only virtuous due to two significant concepts:

The first: It is a secret and hidden action thus, no one from the creation is able to see it. Therefore riyaa' (showing off) cannot enter into it.

The second: It is a means of subjugating the enemies of Allah. This is because the road that the enemies (of Allah) embark upon (in order to misguide the Son of Aadam) is that of desires. And eating and drinking strengthens the desires.

There are many reports that indicate the merits of fasting, and they are all well known.

The recommended acts of fasting

The pre-dawn meal (suhoor) and delaying in taking it are preferable, as well as hastening to break the fast and doing so with dates.

Generosity in giving is also recommended during Ramadaan, as well as doing good deeds and increasing in charity. This is in accordance with the way of the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam).

It is also recommended to study the Qur'aan and perform I'tikaaf during Ramadaan, especially in the last ten days, as well as increasing upon the exertion

(towards doing good deeds) in it.

In the two Saheehs, `Aa'ishah said: "When the (last) ten days (of Ramadaan) would come, the Prophet would tighten his waist-wrapper (izaar), spend the night in worship, and wake his family up (for prayer)." [Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The scholars have mentioned two views concerning the meaning of "tighten his waist-wrapper (izaar)":

The first: It means the turning away from women.

The second: It is an expression denoting his (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) eagerness and diligence in doing good deeds.

They also say that the reason for his (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) exertion in the last ten days of Ramadaan was due to his (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) seeking of the Night of Al-Qadr (Lailatul-Qadr).

An explanation of the inner secrets of fasting and its characteristics

There are three levels of fasting: The general fast, the specific fast, and the more specific fast.

As for the general fast, then it is the refraining of the stomach and the private parts from fulfilling their desires.

The specific fast is the refraining of ones gaze, tongue, hands, feet, hearing and eyes, as well as the rest of his body parts from committing sinful acts.

As for the more specific fast, then it is the heart's abstention from its yearning after the worldly affairs and the thoughts which distance one away from Allah, as well as its (the heart's) abstention from all the things that Allah has placed on the same level.

From the characteristics of the specific fast is that one lowers his gaze and safeguards his tongue from the repulsive

speech that is forbidden, disliked, or which has no benefit, as well as controlling the rest of his body parts.

In a hadeeth reported by Al-Bukhaaree:

"Whosoever does not abandon false speech and the acting upon it, Allah is not in need of him leaving off his food and drink." [Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, Abu Dawood, at-Tirmidhee and Ibn Maajah]

Another characteristic of the specific fast is that one does not overfill himself with food during the night. Instead, he eats in due measure, for indeed, the son of Aadam does not fill a vessel more evil than his stomach.

If he were to eat his fill during the first part of the night, he would not make good use of himself for the remainder of the night. In the same way, if he eats to his fill for suhoor, he does not make good use of himself until the afternoon. This is because excessive eating breeds laziness and lethargy. Therefore, the objective of fasting disappears due to one's excessiveness in eating, for what is intended by the fast, is that one savors the taste of hunger and becomes an abandoner of desires.

Recommended Fasts

As for the recommended fasts, then know that preference for fasting is established in certain virtuous days. Some of these virtuous days occur every year, such as fasting the first six days of the month of Shawaal after Ramadaan, fasting the day of `Arafah, the day of `Aashooraa, and the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram.

Some of them occur every month, such as the first part of the month, the middle part of it, and the last part of it. So whoever fasts the first part of the month, the middle part of it, and the last part of it, then he has done well.

Some fasts occur every week, and they are every Monday and Thursday.

The most virtuous of the recommended fasts is the fast of Dawood (`alayhis salaam). He would fast one day and break his fast the next day. This

achieves the following three objectives:

The soul is given its share on the day the fast is broken. And on the day of fasting, it completes its worship in full.

The day of eating is the day of giving thanks and the day of fasting is the day of having patience. And Faith (Eemaan) is divided into two halves - that of thankfulness and that of patience. [Note: the hadeeth with a similar statement is unauthentic, see adh-Dha'eefah: 625]

It is the most difficult struggle for the soul. This is because every time the soul gets accustomed to a certain condition, it transfers itself to that.

As for fasting every day, then it has been reported by Muslim, from the hadeeth of Abu Qataadah, that `Umar (radhiallahu `anhu) asked the Prophet (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam): 'What is the case if one were to fast every day?' So he (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) said: "He did not fast nor did he break his fast - or - he did not fast and he did not break his fast." [Saheeh Muslim]

This is concerning the one who fasts continuously, even during the days in which fasting is forbidden.

Characteristics of the most specific fast

Know that the one who has been given intellect, knows the objective behind fasting. Therefore, he burdens himself to the extent that he will not be unable to do that which is more beneficial than it.

Ibn Mas`ood would fast very little and it is reported that he used to say: "When I fast, I grow weak in my prayer. And I prefer the prayer over the (optional) fast.

Some of them (the Sahaabah) would weaken in their recitation of the Qur'aan while fasting. Thus, they would exceed in breaking their fast (i.e. by observing less optional fasts), until they were able to balance their recitation. Every individual is knowledgeable of his condition and of what will rectify it.

There were a slight modification to the article by the editor, such as the exclusion of the couple of statements.

Reaping the Benefits of Ramadhan

Dr. Ali al-Tamimi

In the month of Ramadaan it is very important that we spent a few moments to understand some of the wisdoms and lessons that we can learn from this month of fasting.

Unfortunately, many Muslims come in to this month and they are as a companion of the Prophet, Sallallahu Alaihi Wasalam, said: "Let it not be that the day that you fast and the day that you break fast be equal." Meaning, one's behaviour, attitude and outlook are the same whether one fasts or not, i.e. fasting has no effect upon that person. This is why we need to reflect on some of these lessons.

LESSON 1: Gaining Taqwaa

Allaah legislated fasting for gaining taqwaa, "O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed upon you as it has been prescribed upon those before you, so that you may attain taqwaa." (meaning of SoraatulBaqarah (2):183) Taqwaa in this case means to make a shield between oneself and Allaah's anger and Hellfire. So we should ask ourselves, when we break our fasts, 'Has this fasting day made us fear Allaah more? Has it resulted that we want to protect ourselves from the hellfire or not?'

LESSON 2: Drawing closer to Allaah

This is achieved by reciting and reflecting on Al-Qur'aan during night and day, attending the taraaweeh prayers, remembering Allaah, sitting in circles of knowledge and, for those who can, making 'umrah. Also for those who can, making l'tikaaf (seclusion) in the last ten nights of Ramadaan, so as to leave all worldly pursuits and seclude oneself in a masjid just thinking of Allaah, so as to bring oneself closer to Allaah (SWT). When one sins, one feels distant from Allaah. That is why one might find it heard to read the Qur'aan and

come to the masjid. However, the obedient worshipper feels closer to Allaah and wants to worship Allaah more, because he is not shy from his sins.

LESSON 3: Acquiring patience and strong will

Allaah has mentioned patience more than seventy times in the Qur'aan and has commanded patience in more than sixteen ways in His Book. So when one fasts, and gives up one's food and drink, and one's marital sexual relations for those hours, one learns restraint and patience. This Ummah needs men and women that are strong willed, who can stand upon the Sunnah and the Book of Allah and not waver in front of the enemies of Allaah. We do not need emotional people, who just raise slogans and shout, but when the time comes to stand upon something firm, they cannot do so, they waver.

LESSON 4: Striving for Ihsaan (righteousness and sincerity) and staying away from riyaa' (showing off)

Ihsaan means to worship Allaah as if one seeks Him, and even though one does not see Him, He sees all. Hasan al-Basree said, "By Allaah, in the last twenty years, I have not said a word or taken something with my hand or refrained to take something with my hand or stepped forth or stepped back, except that I have thought before I have done any action, 'Does Allaah love this action? Is Allaah pleased with this action?' So when one is fasting, one should gain this quality of watching oneself and also staying away from riyaa' (showing off). That is why Allah said in a hadeeth qudsi, "Fasting is for Me and I reward it." (al-Bukhaaree) Allaah singles out fasting from all other types of worship saying, "Fasting is for Me", because no one knows whether

you are fasting or not, except Allaah. For example, when one is praying or giving charity or making tawaaaf, one can be seen by the people, so one might do the action seeking the praise of the people. Sufyaan ath-Thawree used to spend the nights and the days crying and the people used to ask him, "Why do you cry, is it due to the fear of Allaah? He said, 'No.' They said, "Is it due to the fear of the Hellfire?" He said, 'No. It is not the fear of Hellfire that makes me cry, what makes me cry is that I have been worshipping Allaah all these years and doing scholarly teaching, and I am not certain that my intentions are purely for Allaah.'"

LESSON 5: Refinement of manners, especially those related to truthfulness and discharging trusts.

The Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him) said, "Whoever does not abandon falsehood in word and action, then Allaah (SWT) has no need that he should leave his food and drink." (al-Bukhaaree) What we learn from this, is that we must pay attention to the purification of our manners. The Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him) said, "was sent to perfect good manners." (Maalik) So we must check ourselves, are we following the behaviour of the Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him)? For example: Do we give salaam to those we don't know and those we do know? Do we follow the manners of Islaam, by telling the truth and only telling the truth? Are we sincere? Are we merciful to the creation?

LESSON 6: Recognizing that one can change for the better

The Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him) said, "Every son of Adam sins and the best of the sinners are those who repent." (Ibn Maajah) Allaah provides many opportunities to repent to Him and seek His forgiveness. If one was disobedient they can become obedient.

LESSON 7: Being more charitable

Ibn `Abaas said, "The Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him) was the most charitable amongst the people, and he used to be more so in the month of Ramadaan when Jibreel used to meet him on every night of Ramadaan till the end of the month..." (al-Bukhaaree) The Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him) said, "He who gives food for a fasting person to break his fast, he will receive the same reward as him, without nothing being reduced from the fasting person's reward." (at-Tirmidhee)

LESSON 8: Sensing the unity of the Muslims

The Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him) said, "... Those of you who will live after me will see many differences. Then you must cling to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided khaleefahs. Hold fast to it and stick to it." (Aboo Daawood) In this month we sense that there is a possibility for unity, because we all fast together, we break fast together, we all worship Allah together, and we pray Salaatul-'Eid together. Therefore we sense that the unity of Muslims is possible. It is possible for Muslims to be a single body, but this will only be achieved when obedience is only to Allaah and His Messenger.

LESSON 9: Learning discipline

The Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him) made us adhere to discipline and strictness, strictness that does not lead to fanaticism or going outside the bounds that Allaah has laid down. One cannot knowingly break the fast before the sunset, as this will not be accepted by Allaah. Muslims should learn to be very strict in their lives, because they are people of an important message, which they mold their lives around.

LESSON 10: Teaching the young to worship Allaah

It was the practice of the people of

Madeenah, that during the fast of `Aashooraa (which is now a recommended fast of one day) to get their children to fast with them. When the children would cry of hunger and thirst, their parents would distract their attention by giving them some sort of toy to play with. The children would break their fast with their parents. (as mentioned in al-Bukhaaree).

So the young should be brought to the masjid and they should pray with their parents, so that they are able to get into the habit of becoming worshippers of Allaah. If one does not encourage children to fast when they are young, they will find it very difficult to fast for thirty days at the age of puberty. This is why the Prophet (may Allah send His blessing and peace upon him) said, "Command your children to pray at the age of seven and beat them at the age of ten (if they do not pray)." (Haakim)

LESSON 11: Caring for one's health

Fasting has many medical benefits and it teaches Muslims to take care of their health and too build strong bodies. The Prophet (may Allaah send His blessing and peace upon him) said, "A strong believer is better and is more beloved to Allah than a weak believer, and there is good in everyone." (Muslim)

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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.

Saviours of Islamic Spirit

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi (RA)

Sheikh ul Islam Izz ud

Izz ud-din in the Battlefield :

These were the days when the dissensions among the Muslim monarchs had again created a situation favourable to the Crusaders who unsheathed their swords to take an offensive against Mansurah in Egypt. Izz ud-din accompanied the forces sent to retrieve the city from the Christians. A chronicler of the time, Ibn al-Subki, writes that Izz ud-din's prayer for the success of Muslim forces was readily answered by God. The reinforcements of the Crusaders could not reach them as their ships were taken by a gale, which submerged, quite a few of them.

The Mongols had also started raiding and plundering Muslim territories by then. Once there was an imminent danger of Mongol invasion of Egypt but the Sultan and his commanders were so disheartened that they could not muster courage to face the Mongol hordes. Izz ud-din encouraged the Sultan to fight the Mongols. He even assured the Sultan of his success against the Mongols. At last the Sultan agreed to his suggestion but as he was facing paucity of funds he sought the advice of Izz ud-din about raising the necessary finances through loans from the businessmen. Izz ud-din, however, advised: "First bring the ornaments your women-folk and those of your dignitaries and nobles have in their possession. These are all prohibited by the Shariah and should be used for meeting the expenses of this expedition. And, if you still need the money, then you can raise it through loans." Surprising though it may seem, the king and his nobles brought out without a demur all the jewellery and valu-

ables they possessed as the Sheikh had directed. The riches so brought forth was enough to meet the expenses of raising an adequate force to face the Mongols who were defeated by the Egyptian army as predicted by Izz ud-din.

An still more surprising incident of the Sheikh's life described by the historians relates to his insistence upon auctioning those dignitaries of the Sultan's court whom he held to be the property of the State exchequer, since they happened to be slaves who had not been emancipated in accordance with the provisions of the Shari ah. These chiefs of the State were recruited as royal levies from the Turkish memluks or slaves but had risen to the positions of authority and wielded great influence on the government of Egypt. One of them even held the post of a minister to the Sultan. Izz ud-din pronounced the juristic-opinion that these chiefs were still slaves in accordance with the rules of the Shari ah, and should be treated as such until they were formally emancipated. The population of Egypt immediately ceased cooperating with such chiefs and dignitaries who were placed in such an invidious position that they had to call upon the Sheikh and to enquire what he proposed to do with them. Izz ud-din, however, told them plainly that he would sell them in a public auction on behalf of the State treasury and thereafter they would be emancipated as provided by the Shari ah. They appealed to the Sultan who also tried, as the annalists have recorded, to placate Izz ud-din but he remained adamant. During the discussion on the subject the Sultan told Izz ud-din that he should not concern himself with the affairs of the State and also said something, as it has been reported, which was taken ill by Izz ud-din. The Sheikh returned to his house and announced his decision to leave Egypt immediately. The news spread like a wild fire in Cairo, and an overwhelming majority of its population decided to follow Izz ud-din and migrate with him. The matter was brought to the notice of the Sultan who was also told that if Izz ud-din went away from Egypt, his

kingdom would also come to an end. Extremely worried by the fastly deteriorating situation, the Sultan himself went to bring Izz ud-din back to the city, who had by then left it with a large section of its inhabitants. The Sultan had at length to give in to Izz ud-din who was allowed to auction the chiefs. The memluk minister, however, still tried to dissuade the Sheikh but, failing in his efforts, decided to slay Izz ud-din. He went with his entourage, sword in hand to the house of Izz ud-din and knocked at the door. The son of Izz ud-din, who came out to answer the call, went in and told his father what he had seen but the Sheikh calmly said, "My son, your father is not lucky enough to be slain in the way of God." Izz ud-din came out without the slightest trace of fear on his face. As soon as the minister saw Izz ud-din, he was overtaken by a flutter and the sword fell from his hand. With tears in his eyes he again humbly repeated the question, "My lord, what do you want to do with us." "I will auction you", was the Sheikh's reply. "And where will you spend the sale proceeds," the minister demanded again. The Sheikh replied crisply, "On the welfare of Muslims". The minister asked again, "Who will collect the sale-price" Izz ud-din replied, "Myself". The minister at last agreed to be sold by the Sheikh who auctioned him along with other memluks. As a mark of respect to the position held by these dignitaries, the Sheikh fixed a higher price for each and asked them to deposit the sale-price. The money thus collected by Izz ud-din was spent on welfare projects while the chiefs were granted their warrant of emancipation. The historian Ibn al-Subki writes : "Such an incident was never heard of earlier about anyone."¹ This is perhaps the only example of its kind recorded by history about the deference and veneration ever accorded to any scholar.

Izz ud-din and the Kings of Egypt:

Egypt witnessed quite a few political upheavals during Izz ud-din's stay in that country. When he arrived in Egypt, a monarch of Salah ud-din's dynasty, al-Malik

al-Saleh Najm ud-din Ayyub was ruling over the country. He was succeeded by his son al-Malik al-Mu azzam Turan Shah after whom the Turkish Chiefs seized the reigns of government. They too held Izz ud-din in a high esteem while the celebrated Turk Sultan al-Malik al-Zahir Baibers was especially devoted to the Sheikh. It was on the advice of Izz ud-din that Baibers invited Abul Qasim Ahmad, the uncle of the last Caliph Mu'tasim billah who had escaped the massacre by Mongols, to Cairo in 659 A.M., and acknowledged him as Caliph under the title al-Mustansir billah. The first to take the oath of allegiance was Izz ud-din; next came the Sultan Baibers followed by the Chief Cadi Taj ud-din, the principal Sheikhs and nobles.

Moral Rectitude:

Izz ud-din was as much celebrated for his generosity, kindness and humanity as for his profound knowledge and piety. The Chief Cadi Badr ud din ibn Jamaah relates that when Izz ud-din was still in Damascus, a slump in prices once overtook the market. As the prices of groves had suffered a steep fall, the wife of Izz ud-din gave him an ornament to purchase a grove so that they might spend the summer in it. Izz ud-din sold the ornament and gave over the sale proceeds in charity. Later, when his wife asked if he had purchased the grove, Izz ud-din replied, "Yes, but in the Paradise. I saw many poor people in great distress and so I spent the money on them." His wife thanked God for the good act of Izz ud-din.

Cadi Badr ud-din has also written that Izz ud-din gave as freely when he was poor as when he happened to be rich. If he had nothing to give to a beggar, he would part with a portion of his turban.

Izz ud-din was equally courageous and truthful against his own self as against the kings and nobles. Ibn al-Subki and al-Suyuti write that once during his stay in Egypt. Izz ud-din made a certain mistake in the juristic-opinion given by him. As soon as he came to know of his mistake, he got an announcement made that the people should

not act on that opinion since it was wrong.

Ibn al-Subki relates that Izz ud-din had also been favoured with the inner enlightenment. His fearlessness, disregard for worldly power, fame and riches and, above all, the unflinching faith and trust in God showed that he had attained the sublimeness of spirit. As Ibn al-Subki records, Izz ud-din was a disciple of the famous spiritual mentor, Sheikh Shahab ud-din Suharwardy who had authorised him to guide others in the mystic path. Izz ud-din had also had the opportunity of meeting and remaining in the company of another reputed mystic, Sheikh Abul Hasan Sazli.

Righteousness :

Izz ud-din preached and acted on the Qur'anic dictum commanding to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, no matter what dangers and hardships one might have to face for it.

In one of his letters addressed to the Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf he wrote :

"What we claim is that we are partisans, friends and helpers or rather the troopers of Allah, and no one can lay a claim to be a combatant unless he is willing to expose himself to danger."

In Izz ud-din's view the knowledge and eloquence of a scholar constituted his two weapons which should be fully utilized in the fight for righteousness. In his another letter to the Sultan he wrote :

"God has enjoined upon us to strive and fight for His religion. Just as you have your swords and lances for your arms, we have our knowledge and parlance ; and as it does not befit you to sheathe your sword, similarly we cannot hold our tongue against the innovators and dissenters, apostates and sinners."

Izz ud-din considered it imperative for the scholars to be ever willing to face dangers in the discharge of their sacred obligation and enjoin the right course, cost what may. Thus, he vehemently disagreed with those religious scholars who did not consider it lawful to expose themselves to avoidable dangers.

His commentary on the Qur'anic verse : ".....and be not cast by your own hands to ruin" amply bears out his point of view in this regard :

"To risk one's life for the honour and dominance of the Faith is permitted by the Shari'ah is rather enjoined on all able-bodied persons to wage war in the way of God and fight the infidels. So it is lawful to expose oneself to danger, under the provisions of the Shari'ah, for enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong. However, if anyone feels that he might lose his life in the venture, the command loses its obligatory character for him but it nevertheless remains a commendable act. Thus, they are definitely wrong who think that it is not lawful to risk one's life for the purpose. In short, if anybody gives preference to his Self over God, He will give preference to others over him; if anybody seeks the pleasure of God at the cost of offending others, God will not only bless him but also make others to be pleased with him. And if anybody, on the other hand, wants to gratify others by displeasing God, he will be displeased with him and also cause others to be disappointed with him."

"An Arab poet has rightly expressed the same idea in this verse :

"I won't care howsoever troublesome my life may be, if I were only to gain your love; may thou be pleased with me even if this annoys the whole world." Izz ud-din lived up to his ideal and never hesitated to sacrifice his hearth or home, life or honour for what he believed to be the correct and righteous path enjoined by the Shari'ah,

Writings of Izz ud-din:

He was an erudite scholar, broad-minded jurist and a successful teacher. In penmanship too, he was equally celebrated, his two most well-known works being - al-Qawa'id al-Kubra and Kitab Majaz al-Quran. Ibn al-Subki writes about these books:

"These books of Izz ud-din mark him as an outstanding scholar of profound

knowledge in religious sciences."

Izz ud-din later summarised both the above mentioned books. Ibn al-Subki has also praised his two other books entitled Shaja-ratul-Ma'arif and Ad-Dalayel ul-Mut'alikah bil Malaykah wal-Ins. In addition to these writings one more book of Izz ud-din by the name of Maqasid us-Salat was widely read during his own life-time. Thousands of its copies were made out by the people. Izz ud-din also left a voluminous collection of the juristic-opinions pronounced by him which is regarded as a valuable collection of legal precepts according to the Shafeite school of jurisprudence. Izz ud-din was perhaps the next scholar after al-Ghazali in Islam who set forth to define and delineate the objectives of the religious observances and the benefits accruing from the performances enjoined by the Shari'ah. In the introduction to his famous treatise Hujjat Allah il-Baligha, Shah Wali Ullah Muhaddith of Delhi, the greatest authority on the subject, has acknowledged his debt to the three earlier masters viz. al-Ghazali, Abu Sulaiman Khattabi and Izz ud-din.

Death of Izz ud-din :

Izz ud-din died in the eighty-third year of his age on the 9th of Jamadi al-Awwal, 660 A. H. Al-Malik al-Zahir Baibers, the then king of Egypt, accompanied the funeral of the Sheikh along with the dignitaries and chiefs. The King was very much aggrieved that the Sheikh's death was destined to occur during his reign.

Witnessing the mammoth funeral procession passing by the side of the royal Castle, the King said to one of his councillors: "My kingdom would have been nowhere if this man had decided to oppose me. He had verily won the hearts of the people."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Give to a beggar even if he comes on a horse." (Mota Imam Maalik)

Eid Prayers

Justice Mawlana Taqi Uthmani

Before Going to *Eid* Prayer

The following acts are prescribed as *Sunnah* at the beginning of the day of '*Eid-ul-Fitr* before proceeding to the *Eid* prayer:

1. To wake up early in the morning.
2. To clean one's teeth with a Miswaak or a brush.
3. To take a bath.
4. To put on one's best available clothes.
5. To wear perfume.
6. To eat a sweet food, preferably dates, before the *Eid* prayer.
7. To recite the following *Takbir* in the low voice while going to the '*Eid* prayer:

Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar La Ilaha Ila Allah Wa Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar Wa Lillahi Alhamd

Sadaqat-ul-fitr

Sadaqat-ul-fitr is an obligation for every Muslim, male or female, who owns 613.35 grams of silver or its equivalent, either in the form of money, ornaments, stock-in-trade, or in the form of some goods or commodities beyond one's normal needs. Every person who owns such an amount has to pay *Sadaqat-ul-fitr*, not only on behalf of himself but also on behalf of his minor children. The prescribed amount of *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* is 1.75 Kilograms of wheat or its value in money. This amount is prescribed for paying *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* for one person only. If a person has some minor children, the same amount has to be paid on behalf of each one of them separately. The following points must be remembered concerning the payment of *Sadaqat-ul-fitr*.

1. *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* is obligated on each adult male or female separately, and the relevant adult person himself is responsible to pay it. The husband is not required

to pay *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* on behalf of his wife nor is the wife supposed to pay it on behalf of her husband. Similarly, a father is not bound to pay *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* on behalf of his adult children or vice-versa. However, if the head of the family, by his own free will, wishes to pay *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* for each one of the members of his family, he should seek their authorization for that purpose. In this case the *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* paid by him will be valid on their behalf. If he did not pay the *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* on behalf of any of the members of his family, he will not be responsible for it. Rather, it is the duty of every adult member of the family to discharge his own obligation or to request the head of the family to pay it on his or her behalf.

2. It is a *Sunnah* that the *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* is paid before performing the '*Eid* prayer. It can also be paid before the '*Eid* day, but it is not advisable to delay it up to the performance of '*Eid* prayer. However, if a person has failed to pay on its proper time, he should pay it as soon as possible, whereby the obligation will stand discharged.

3. The *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* is not necessary on behalf of a child who was born after the break of dawn in the '*Eid* day, nor is it necessary to pay *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* on behalf of a person who dies before the dawn of the '*Eid* day.

4. *Sadaqat-ul-fitr* should be paid only to a person who is entitled to receive *Zakah*.

The '*Eid* Prayer

The second obligation on '*Eid* day is to perform the '*Eid* prayer. Some rules in this respect are mentioned hereunder:

1. The '*Eid* prayer is *Wajib* (obligatory) on every male Muslim.
2. The '*Eid* prayer can be performed

any time between the *Ishraq* and *Zawal*.

3. It is preferable that the 'Eid prayer is performed at an open field and not in a mosque. However, if, it is difficult for any reason to perform it in an open field, it can also be performed in a big mosque.

4. It is not advisable to hold the 'Eid prayer in every mosque, rather it is preferable that the people from several small mosques get together to either perform it in an open field or, in its absence, in a big mosque which can accommodate a large number of people.

5. No *Nafil Salah* can be performed before the 'Eid prayer, neither in one's home, nor at the place of 'Eid prayer. Similarly, *Nafil* prayer cannot be performed after the 'Eid prayer at the same place. However, it can be performed after one comes back to his home.

6. The 'Eid prayer has neither *Adhan* nor *Iqamah*.

How to Perform 'Eid Prayer

The 'Eid Prayer has two *rak'ah* to perform in the normal way, with the only addition of six *takbirs*, three of them in the beginning of the first *rak'ah*, and three of them just before *ruku'* in the second *rak'ah*. The detailed way of performing the 'Eid prayer is as follows:

The *Imam* will begin the prayer without *Adhan* or *Iqamah*. He will begin the prayer by reciting *takbir* of *Tahrimah* (*Allahu Akbar*). You should raise your hands up to the ears, and reciting the *takbir*, you give a little pause during which you should recite *Thana'* (*Subhanak Allahumma.....*). After the completion of *Thana'* the *Imam* will recite *takbir* (*Allahu Akbar*) three times, and after reciting each *Takbir* (*Allahu Akbar*) in a low voice, you should bring your hands down and leave them earthwards. But, after the third *takbir*, you should set them at the level of your navel as you do in the normal prayer.

After these three *takbirs* the *Imam* will recite the Holy Qur'an, which you should listen quietly. The rest of the *rak'ah* will be performed in the normal way.

After rising for the second *rak'ah*, the *Imam* will begin the recitations from the Qur'an during which you should remain calm and quiet. When the *Imam* finishes his recitation, he will recite three *takbirs* once again, but this time it will be before bowing down for *ruku'*. At each *takbir* you should raise your hands up to the ears, and after saying "*Allahu Akbar*" bring them down and leave them earthwards. After these three *takbirs* have been called and completed, the *Imam* will say another *takbir* for bowing down into the *ruku'* position. At this *takbir* you need not raise your hands. You just bow down for your *ruku'* saying, '*Allahu Akbar*'. The rest of the *Salah* will be performed in its usual way.

Khutbah: The Address of 'Eid-ul-fitr

In this *Salah*, *Khutbah* is a *Sunnah* and is delivered after the *Salah*, unlike the *Salah* of *Jumu'ah* where it is *Fard* and is delivered before the *Salah*. However, listening to the *Khutbah* of 'Eid *Salah* is *wajib* or necessary and must be heard in perfect peace and silence.

It is a *sunnah* that the *Imam* begins the first *Khutba* by reciting *takbirs* '*Allahu Akbar*' nine times and the second *Khutbah* with reciting it seven times.

Note: The way of 'Eid prayer described above is according to the Hanafi school of Muslim jurists. Some other jurists, like *Imam Shafi'i*, have some other ways to perform it. They recite *Takbir* twelve times before beginning the recitations from the Holy Qur'an in both *rak'ah*. This way is also permissible. If the *Imam*, being of the *Shafi'i* school, follows this way, you can also follow him. Both ways are based on the practice of the Prophet, *Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam*.

Hadith

Yahya related to me from Malik from Abu Hazim ibn Dinar from Sahl ibn Sad as Saida that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "People will remain in good as long as they are quick to break the fast." (Maalik)

Lailatul Qadr

(The Night of Power)

Crowning Glory

Laylatul Qadr is the crowning glory of the holy month of Ramadhaan. 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 (Jibraeel) 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 Ramadhaan:

"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

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(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 Ummat 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 Ramadhaan 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 Ramadhaan 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 Ramadhaan.

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 Ramadhaan"** (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 Muhammad (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) advised her to recite:

Al-laa-hum-ma in-na-ka 'afoowan

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The Aadaab of Mulaqaat

The guest should immediately notify the host if he has no intention of eating there for some reason or the other. It should not happen that the host prepares food and then all goes to waste. This will cause much grief to the host who underwent inconvenience and laboured to make hospitable arrangements for the guest.

The guest should inform the host of his whereabouts so that the latter (host) does not have to search for him when meals are ready to be served.

The guest should not accept anyone's invitation without the consent of the host.

The guest should not interfere in the arrangements and system of the host. However, there is nothing wrong if the host assigns an arrangement or an act to the guest.

The guest should never adopt a demanding attitude or tone. He should tender his wishes with humble request.

*If the guest is on diet, **he should inform his host immediately on arrival.** Some persons exhibit ill-manners in this regard at the exact time of eating when the food has been served.*

The guest should not ask the host for something, for perhaps the host is unable to fulfil the request and is thus put to shame. (Necessities are excluded.)

The guest should leave a little food over so that the host does not think that maybe the food was not enough and the guest has not eaten sufficiently. This will put the host to shame. (This does not mean that the guest should leave some of the food in his plate uneaten. He should clean the plate with his fingers. This is Sunnah . Some food should, however, be left in the serving utensils.)

*Do not accompany an invited person to his host's residence. **The host, merely out of shame may be constrained to ask you to remain for meals while in actual fact he has no intention of doing so.** This causes difficulty to the host. Some persons very quickly accept such instant invitations which are made by coincidence. The host may feel belittled if he does not ask you to remain for meals.*

*Do not inconvenience the host nor put him to shame by making a request at the time of departure. **The time for fulfilling your request may be too less and the host will suffer shame by not being able to satisfy the guest.***

If several varieties of food are served, the guest should taste a bit of every variety. This is a right which the host has over the guest. However, if the guest is ill or on a prescribed medical diet, then this will be an exception.

*Do not initiate an intricate topic while eating. The talk should be light, otherwise the pleasure of the food will be destroyed. **While eating, the greater part of one's attention should be directed to the food.***

It is not permissible for a guest to give any food to a beggar or anyone else (i.e. from the food which the host has served). Similarly, if so me food is presented in a utensil, it is not permissible to eat from the utensil. Remove the food into own utensil. However, if the form of the food will be destroyed by emptying it in another utensil, then it will be permissible to eat from the utensil in which it was sent, e.g. pudding.

When going to a place for some work, etc, and while there you go to meet an acquaintance, then immediately inform him of your staying arrangements so that he does not gain the impression that you are his guest.

*The Ulamaa should be extremely careful when going to eat at the place of their host. They should not impose on the hospitality of the host by taking along with them a group of **friends / students / Mureeds.***

This blessed month.

**All deeds of the seed of Adam
are for him but one**

Oh Lord of this blessed month

**We praise you for Ramadhan
and for the kitab You revealed therein
to guide us to the light**

**Ya Rabb, give us the imaan
to stand in prayer that mighty night**

**Let our siyam benefit us more
than mere hunger and unquenched thirst
and by Your Grace, the ayaat of Qur'an
each day we shall rehearse**

**May we be restrained from the evil deeds
and from evil in what we say**

**May we know and understand
and implement the Prophet's way**

**What joy was there when believers saw
the Hilal, the crescent moon**

May we all emerge from this month, Insha'Allah muttaqun.