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CONTENTS

Volume No.36 | Issue No.05

The Thoughts	<i>Repent or Wrath</i>	3
Final Revelation	<i>Al-Faatihah (the Opening)</i>	4
Way to Salvation	<i>Deeds that are only for Him</i>	9
Islamic	<i>In Allah we Trust</i>	13
Islamic	<i>Blessings of Sunnah</i>	17
Islamic	<i>Protection from Evil Eye</i>	20
Islamic	<i>Don't be Apologetic</i>	22
Dwellers of Jannah	<i>Hadhrrat Abu Zarr</i>	24
Reversion Towards Truth	<i>Allah's Plan Prevails</i>	28
Health & Science	<i>Unveiling the Divine Processes</i>	30

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REPENT OR WRATH

A heartbreaking incident of insulting the Holy Quraan, once again, occurred a few days ago in Sweden, a country in Europe that claims superiority of civilization. During the Islamic festival of Eid al-AdhHaa, Salwan Momika, a 37-year-old Iraqi Christian refugee, waved two Swedish

flags and blasts the country's national anthem in front of the Stockholm Central Masjid. He then desecrates the Holy Book of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) – Quraan -- repeatedly by tearing it up and lighting it on fire.

The Times of Israel reported that Salwan stomped on the Islamic holy book, filled some pages with bacon and set several others alight.

And all this was done with the permission and formal information to the government of Sweden.

This was not the first such incident. Started in USA by Terry Jones, a Christian Pastor who burned Quraan in a Church on March 2011, the dirty move was picked up by Salwan Momika. A few days ago, Salwan Momika had committed this heinous act in a two-man rally outside the Turkish Embassy after Salaat ul Jumu'ah (Friday Prayers). Even at that time, the Swedish government gave them permission for this highly offensive act.

In January this year, too, Stockholm police had authorized the burning of a Quraan near the Turkish Embassy in the city by a far-right Danish politician and anti-Islam provocateur Rasmus Paludan.

Stockholm police, later in February, denied two applications for Quraan-burning protests, not in view of sanctity of Divine Scripture but citing the assessments from the Swedish Security Service that such acts could increase the risk of terror attacks against Sweden. But a court later overturned those decisions, saying police need to cite more concrete threats to ban a public gathering. The Swedish police disclosed that there is no law prohibiting the burning of holy books.

What is the real cause of these sinister events?

Some have described it as an attempt to blackmail Turkey for not blocking Sweden's entry into NATO. While Associated Press said the person who disgraced the sacred Book of Muslims declared his intention was based on "an act that displayed his feelings about the Quraan".

The events triggered a series of condemnations in the Muslim world but for non-Muslims the sanctity of religious acts, religious icons and religious objects has no space. Their secular views are as much embedded in their thought process that they fell no sorry when making mockery of their own prophets. So, when they treat Quraan as a word of human being – ant the Word of God – they have no regrets. But even then, they should respect the sentiments of millions Muslims around the globe.

The other aspect of the issue relates to us – Muslims. We believe that the Holy Quraan is the Word of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) sent down through the Last and Final Prophet Hadrath Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) for human kingdom to follow and practice in daily life, both at individual and collective levels. Our life, however, does not reflect the fact that, at least, "we" believe it as the best manual for ultimate success in this world beside Aakhirah (Hereafter). This is unfortunate aspect of status of the Quraan we hold.

Non-Muslims treat the Holy Book as normal book and the Muslims have made it irrelevant for them. Muslims as well as non-Muslims are not responding to the Holy Book, Quraan, properly as Quraan really deserves. Consequently, both of them should either repent or face the wrath.





Al-Faatihah سورة الفاتحه (The Opening)

This Soorah (Chapter) is Makkan, and comprises of seven Aayaat (Verses).

The Merits and Peculiarities of the Soorah

This Soorah of the Holy Quraan possesses a number of merits peculiar to it. Firstly, the Holy Quraan begins with it; the prescribed Salaah (Prayer) begins with it; and even in the order of revelation this is the first Soorah which was revealed to the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) in its complete form. Some Aayat of the Soorah Iqra (al-'Alaq), al-Muzzammil and al-Muddaththir had no doubt been revealed earlier, but the first Soorah to be revealed in a complete form is no other than this. Certain Sahaabah (Companions) of the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) have reported that this was the first Soorah to be revealed. Most probably they had meant that no Soorah had been revealed in a complete form before this. Perhaps that is why the Soorah has been named as 'Faatihatul Kitaab'

(The Opening of the Book).

The other important peculiarity of the Soorah is that it is, so to say, the quintessence of the Holy Quraan, and the rest of the Quraan is its elaboration. The Soorah may thus be delineated for two reasons. Firstly, all that the Holy Quraan has to say is, in one way or another, related to either of the two themes, Faith (Imaan) and virtuous deed (al-'Amal al-Saalih), and the basic principles of the two have been Soorah Al-Faatihah indicated in this Soorah (See Rooh al-Ma'aani and Rooh al-Bayaan). That is why authentic Ahaadeeth (Traditions) give to this Soorah such titles as "Umm al-Quraan" (Essence of the Quraan), "Umm al-Kitaab" (Essence of the Book), "Al-Quraan al-'Azeem (Glorious Quraan).

Secondly, this Soorah gives a special instruction to the man who begins the recitation or the study of the Quraan -- that he should approach this book with a mind cleansed of all his previous thoughts and opinions,

WaSallam) has said that no important work receives the blessings of Allah, unless it is begun with His name. According to yet another Hadeeth, closing the door of one's house, putting out the lamp, covering a vessel, should all be done with the recitation of **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ** Bismillaah. The Holy Quraan and the Ahaadeeth repeatedly instruct us to recite this Aayah while taking food, drinking water, performing the Wudhoo (Ablution), getting on a carriage or getting down from it (See Qurtubi).

By instructing man to begin everything with the name of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa), Islam has given to the whole of his life an orientation towards Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) so that he may, with each step he takes, renew his allegiance to the covenant with Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) that nothing he does, not even his very being can come into existence without the Will and the Help of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). Thus, all the economic and worldly activities of man, each movement and gesture becomes transformed into an act of worship. (This is the only way in which human life can, to use a word dear to modern cultural anthropology, be sacralized in any meaningful sense of the term – Translator) How brief is the action, which consumes neither time nor energy, and yet how immense is the gain -- it is a regular alchemy, transmuting the profane (Dunyaa) into the sacred (Deen); a disbeliever eats and drinks just as a Muslim does but in saying **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ** Bismillaah(as he begins to eat, the Muslim affirms that it was not in his power to obtain this little morsel of food which has passed through innumerable stages from the sowing of the seed to the reaping of the grain corn and which has during this process required the labors of the wind, the rain, the sun, of the heavens and of the earth, and of a thousand men -- and that it is Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) alone who has granted him this morsel of food or this draught of water by making it go through all these stages. A disbeliever goes to sleep, wakes up and goes about as much as a Muslim. But while going to sleep or waking up, the Muslim mentions the name of Allah, renewing his relationship with Him. Thus his economic and worldly needs and activities acquire the nature of the remembrance of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa), and are counted as acts of worship. Similarly, in saying **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ** Bismillaah(while getting on to a carriage, the Muslim testifies to the fact that it is beyond the power of man to produce this carriage and to procure it for him, and that it is only the infallible and divinely-created order of things that has brought together from all the corners of the world -- the wood, the steel and other metals -- which have gone into the making of the carriage, as well as the mechanics who have given a particular shape to these components, and the driver -- and finally put all these into the service of

man who can make use of the labor of this army of the creatures by spending a few coins. And even these coins have not been created by him, it is Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) himself who has provided the complex ways and means of earning them. Veritabily, **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ** Bismillaah(is the legendary philosopher's stone which transmutes, not copper, but mere dust into the purest of gold.

فلله الحمد على دين الاسلام وتعليماته

So then, all praise to Allah for the religion of Islam and its teachings.

Ruling

Before beginning to recite the Quraan, it is Sunnah to first say:

اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم

I seek refuge with Allah from Satan -- the accursed

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

I begin with the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

And during the Tilaawah (the recitation of the Holy Quraan) as well, saying **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ** Bismillaah' at the beginning of each Soorah, except the Soorah al-BaraAh (al-Taubah), is Sunnah.

Commentary

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ Bismillaah: This phrase is composed of three words -- the letter 'Baa' اسم 'Ism' and 'Allah' الله. The preposition 'Baa' has several connotations in Arabic, three of which are appropriate to the occasion. All the three are applicable here:

- (1) Contiguity, or the close proximity between one thing and the other;
- (2) Seeking the aid of someone or something;
- (3) To seek the blessings of someone.

The word اسم 'Ism' has many lexical and intellectual nuances of meaning, the knowledge of which would not be essential for the average reader. It is sufficient to know that this word is translated in English as 'Name'. The word, 'Allah' الله is the greatest and the most comprehensive of the Divine names. According to some Ulamaa, it is الاسم الاعظم al-'Ism al-A'zam' the 'Great Name'. (According to Hadeeth الاسم الاعظم al-'Ism al-A'zam' carries with it such a benediction that a supplication is granted when this word has been uttered. Reports, however, differ as to what this 'al-'Ism al-A'zam' is -- Translator). The word 'Allah' الله refers to the Essence, and hence this name cannot be given to anyone except Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). That is why this word has neither a plural nor a dual, for Allah is One and has no associate. In short, Allah is the name of that Ultimate Reality which comprehends in Itself all the attributes of perfection, which is the creator and sustainer,

unique and peerless. Thus, the phrase بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ (Bismillaah) has these three respective significations according to the three connotations of the preposition بَاء 'Baa':

- With the name of Allah
- With the help of the name of Allah
- With the Barakah or benediction of the name of Allah.

But, in all the three forms, the phrase obviously remains incomplete unless one mentions the work which one intends to begin with the name of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) or with its help or benediction. So, according to the rules of grammar, some verb is taken to be understood here which should be suitable for the occasion -- e.g., 'I begin or recite with the name of Allah.' Propriety demands that even this verb should be understood to occur after the phrase, so that one does actually begin with the name of Allah and the verb does not precede His name. The preposition بَاء 'Baa' has, however, to be placed before the name of Allah, for it is an exigency of the Arabic language. But even in this respect the 'Uthmaani manuscript of the Holy Quraan prepared by the third Caliph 'Uthmaan has made the necessary modification

in accordance with the consensus of the Sahaabah of the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam). The regular Arabic script requires the letter بَاء 'Baa' here to be joined with the letter الف 'Alif', producing this shape بِاسْمِ اللّٰهِ. But the 'Uthmaani manuscript has dropped the الف 'Alif', and joined the letter بَاء 'Baa' with the letter س 'Seen', making the بَاء 'Baa' look like a part of the word اسم 'Ism', so that the beginning is made, in effect, with the name of Allah. That is why the letter الف 'Alif' is not dropped in other combinations between the preposition بَاء 'Baa' and the noun اسم 'Ism' -- for example, in the Aayah اقراء باسم ربك (Iqra Bismi Rabbik), the الف 'Alif' is written along with the بَاء 'Baa'. It is the peculiarity of (بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ) Bismillaah (alone that the letter بَاء 'Baa' has been joined with the letter س 'Seen'.

The all-Merciful, the very-Merciful الرحمن الرحيم

These two are the attributes of Allah Almighty. الرحمن (al-Rahmaan) (one whose mercy is common to all, and extends to the whole universe, to everything that will be created in the future. On the other hand, الرحيم (al-Raheem) signifies one whose mercy is perfect in all possible ways. That is why Rahmaan is the exclusive attribute of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) and the word is employed only when one is referring to Him. It is not permissible to qualify any created being as Rahmaan,

for there cannot possibly be anyone else, beside Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa), whose mercy should be all-embracing and all-inclusive. Just like the word 'Allah', there is no dual or plural for the word Raheem too, because these words are in their signification exclusive to the One and Absolute Being which does not permit the existence of a second or a third (Tafseer al-Qurtubi) The signification of the word Raheem, on the contrary, does not contain anything which it should be impossible to find in a created being, for a man may be perfectly merciful in his dealings with another man. So, the word Raheem may justifiably be employed in the case of a human being -- as the Quraan itself has used the word in speaking of the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) which is:

بالمومنين روف رحيم

(He is gentle and very merciful towards the Muslims)

Ruling

This would easily show that those who shorten the names such as 'Abd al-Rahmaan or Fadhl al-Rahmaan into 'Rahmaan' are doing what is not permissible and are thus committing a sin. Out of the al-Asmaa al-Husnaa, (Beautiful Names) of Allah Almighty and His attributes of perfection,

only two have been mentioned in this Aayah -- namely, 'al-Rahmaan' and 'al-Raheem', and both have been derived from the root رحم 'Rahmah' (Mercy), indicating the all-pervasiveness and perfection of Divine mercy. It points to the fact that the creation of the heavens and the earth and the sustenance of the whole universe has no other motivation than making manifest Allah's quality of mercy. He Himself had no need of these things, nor could anyone compel Him to create them. It is His own mercy which has required the creation and sustenance of the whole universal order. How aptly this was put in Persian by poet Roomi

ما نبوديم و تقاضا ما نبود
لطف تو ناگفته مای شنود

There was nothing -- neither our being nor our claim to be; It was Thy mercy that heard our unsaid.

Injunctions and related considerations

The Holy Quraan says:

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ

When you recite the Quraan, seek the protection of Allah against Shaitaan (Satan), the rejected one.

(An-Nahl 16:98)

According to the consensus of Muslim Ummah

(Nation), it is a Sunnah to say **اعوذ بالله (Ta'awwuz)** before the recitation of the Holy Quraan whether in Salaah or out of Salaah (Sharah al-Munyah). Saying **اعوذ بالله Ta'awwuz** is peculiar to the recitation of the Holy Quraan. Therefore, with the exception of **تلاوه** Tilaawah, all other chores should be taken up by first saying **بسم الله (Bismillaah)** only. Saying **اعوذ بالله Ta'awwuz** is not a Sunnah there. (Aalamgiri, Chapter 4, Al-Karahiyah)

One should begin the recitation of the Quraan by reciting both **اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم** (I seek refuge with Allah from Satan -- the accursed) and **بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم** (I begin with the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful).

During the recitation, one should repeat **بسم الله (Bismillaah)**, but not **اعوذ بالله 'A'oozubillaah'**, when one comes to the end of a Soorah (or Chapter) and begins the next Soorah -- with the sole exception of the Soorah **المقره** (al-Barah). If one comes upon this particular Soorah in the course of the recitation, one should not say **بسم الله (Bismillaah)** before reading it. But if one happens to begin the recitation of the Holy Quraan with this Soorah, one should recite **اعوذ بالله 'A'oozubillaah'** and **بسم الله (Bismillaah)** both (Aalamgiri from Muheet).

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (I begin with the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful) is an Aayah of the Holy Quraan and a part of the Aayah in Soorah **المل** al-Naml; it is also a regular Aayah when it occurs between two Soorahs. It must, therefore, be treated with as much respect as the Holy Quraan itself, and it is not permissible to touch it without having performed Wudhoo

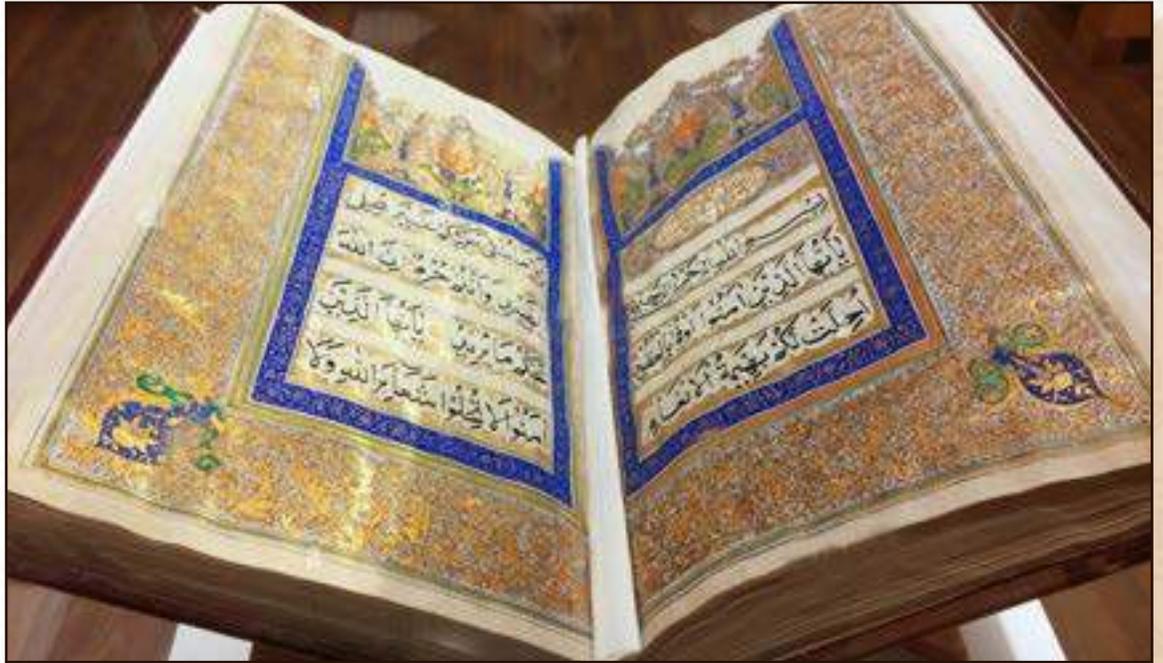
(Ablution). In the state of major ritual impurity (e.g., after the emission of semen, or during menstruation, or after child-birth), it is not allowed to even read this Aayah as recitation of the Holy Quraan before having taken a ritual bath. One may, however, recite it as a form of prayer before beginning a work; like taking one's meals or drinking water under all conditions.

Rulings

(1) It is a Sunnah to recite **بسم الله Bismillaah**

after **اعوذ بالله 'A'oozubillaah** at the very beginning of the first Raka'ah (Unit) in the Salaah. But views differ as to whether it should be recited in a loud or a low voice. Imam Abu Hanifah and certain other Imams prefer it to be done in a low voice. There is a consensus on the point that **بسم الله Bismillaah** should be recited at the beginning of all the succeeding Raka'at (Units) too. This is unanimously considered to be a Sunnah; however, in some narrations, the reciting of **بسم الله Bismillaah** (at the beginning of every Raka'ah has been identified as **واجب** Waajib or necessary.

(2) In the course of Salaah, whether one is reciting the Holy Quraan loudly or silently, one should not recite **بسم الله Bismillaah** (before beginning a Soorah just after the Soorah **الفاتحه** al-Faatihah. Such a practice has not been reported either from the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) or from any of the first four Khulafaa (Caliphs). According to Sharah al-Munyah, this is the view of Imam Abu Hanifah and of Imam Abu Yusuf; and Sharah al-Munyah, al-Durr al-Mukhtaar, al-Burhaan, etc., prefer it to other views. But Imam Muhammad considers it to be preferable that one should recite **بسم الله Bismillaah** (if one is reciting the



Holy Quraan in a Salaah offered silently. Certain reports attribute this view even to Imam Abu Hanifah, and al-Shaami has quoted some Muslim jurists in support of this view, which has been adopted even in 'Bahishti Zewar' of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi. Anyhow, there is a complete agreement among the Ulamaa that it is not Makrooh (Reprehensible) for someone to recite **بسم الله Bismillaah** in this situation

(Ma'aarif ul Quraan: Grand Mufti of Pakistan Mufti Muhammad Shafi'R.A.)



ALLAH

(Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)

ACCEPTS DEEDS

THAT ARE ONLY FOR HIM

عن عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه، قال: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - يَقُولُ: «إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى؛ فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَهَجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا فَهَجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ». (بخاری و مسلم)

(1/1) It is related by Umar Ibn al-Khattab that he heard the Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s Messenger (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam):

“The actions are but judged according to intentions; and to every man is due what he intended. Thus, whosoever migrates for the sake of Allah and His Messenger [and there is no other motive of his migration except compliance with the commands of Allah and the Prophet and the winning of their good pleasure], his migration is accounted for the sake of Allah and His Messenger [and, doubtlessly, he is a true Muhaajir – Emigrant -- and shall receive the recompense prescribed for Hijrah – Migration -- towards Allah and His Messenger]; and whosoever migrates for the sake of this world or to wed a woman [his migration will not be

for Allah and the Prophet], and it will be accounted only for the purpose for which it is intended.”

(Bukhari and Muslim)

Commentary: The translation of the Tradition given above is self-explanatory and there is no need for a further elucidation of the subject-idea of this saying of the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam). But its special significance demands that a little more light be shed on its meaning.

The main purpose of the above Hadith is to show that the goodness or badness and acceptability or otherwise of all human actions is dependent on intention. Or, in other words, only such a deed will be deemed good and carry merit in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) which is done with a good and virtuous intention and a 'good' deed that is done with an evil or impure intention will not be judged as noble and meritorious; on the contrary, it will be held to be wicked and detestable according to the intention



which motivated it though, apparently, it may be good and praiseworthy.

In sum, Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) sees intention along with action and the hidden along with the manifest. He judges the worth and value of a deed by the motive with which it is performed.

A Misunderstanding

It should, however, not be imagined that when it is the motive that decides, even the evil deeds that are done with a good intention become virtuous and deserving of Divine reward, as for instance, if a person commits theft with the intention that he will give away to the poor and the needy, the goods he will thus acquire, it will entitle him to recompense from Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa).

The deeds that are wicked in themselves and have been condemned as such by Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) and His Messenger (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) will remain abominable and worthy of Divine chastisement in any case. Their evilness cannot be taken away by the purity of the motive. What is more, to perform them with a noble intention and be hopeful of Divine reward because of it may well be the cause of additional misfortune and enhancement of punishment as it will amount to playing with the religion of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa).

Rather this saying emphasizes that the good deeds too will cease to be commendable if one performs them with an evil intention and will lead to a bitter end owing to the uncleanness of the motive. For example, a person offers Salaah (Prayer) with great humbleness which, by itself is a virtuous act of the highest order but if his humility is prompted by the desire to impress others so that they may think much of his devoutness and hold him in high esteem then, according to the above Hadeeth, it will gain him nothing in the judgement of the Lord. Similarly, if a person migrates from the land of apostasy to the land of Faith and endures all the hardship that goes with it but his migration is not for seeking the countenance of the Lord and there is some worldly motive behind it, like marrying a woman who lives in the country, his migration will not be an Islamic Hijrah nor will it entitle him to Divine recompense. On the contrary, it will be considered sinful.

Even a Great Deed that is not for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) and lacks sincerity

It is related in a Hadeeth that, first of all, three persons shall be condemned to Jahannum (Hell) by Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) on the Day of Qiyaamah (Resurrection). The first to be called to account will be a person who had been martyred in Jihaad. When he will be produced, Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will remind him of His blessings, which he will recall with full recognition. Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will, then say to him:

“Tell Me, how did you give the rights of these blessings?”

He will reply:

“I waged Jihaad in Your way and even laid down my life in seeking Your good pleasure.”

Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will remark:

“You are a liar. You participated in Jihaad simply because you wanted people to say such a one was a valiant man, and it has been said already.”

He will, thereupon, be thrown headlong into the Fire of Jahannum at the command of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa).

In the same way, a theologian will be brought before Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) who had got the whole of the Quraan by heart. Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will ask him:

“What did you do?”

He will submit:

"I learnt Your Book and studied Your Faith myself and taught them to others also, and I did it all for Your sake alone."

Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will say:

"You are a liar. You did desire only that men should say that such a one was a great scholar and a reciter of the Quraan, and that has been said already."

He will, thereupon, be cast into Jahannum at the command of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa).

After him, one who had an abundance of wealth, will be produced before Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) who will say:

"Did I not give you plenty of wealth and what did you do with it?"

He will reply:

"My Lord! I left no branch of goodness in which I did not spend for Your sake."

Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will remark:

"You are a liar. You desired that men should say that such a one was a generous man; and that has been said already."

He, also, will be thrown into fire of Jahannum, head foremost, at the command of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). (Muslim)

In brief, only such an act will be of help and advantage to us with Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) which is performed with a pure intention i.e., solely for His propitiation. In the special terminology of Islam it is called Ikhaals (Sincerity) or single-minded devotion.

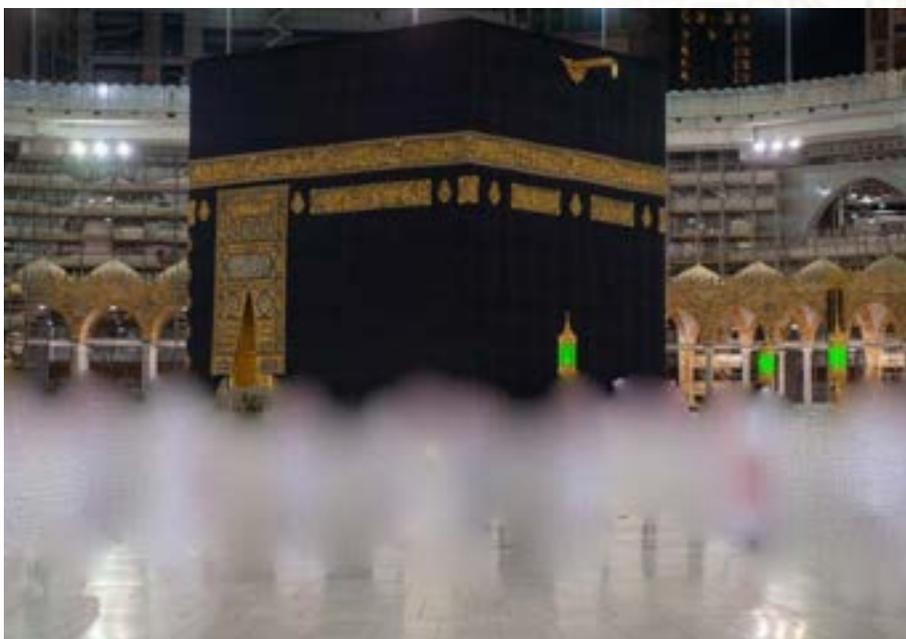
A Quraanic Similitude of the Sincere and the Insincere

In the Quraanic Aayaat (Verses) we are now going to produce two categories of men who practice charity are spoken of, those who spend their wealth on the weak and the indigent with the object of impressing others and winning their admiration and the other who do so wholly for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). Outwardly, the conduct of both of them is similar and the eye cannot distinguish between their acts of benevolence but the Quraan insists that since their intentions are different, the results will also not be

the same. The action of one of them is altogether fruitful and propitious while that of the other wholly wasteful and unrewarding.

يَتَّيِبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِثَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

"O you who believe! Do not nullify your acts of charity by boasting about (doing people a) favor and by causing (them) hurt, like the one who spends his wealth to show off before people and does not believe in Allah and in the Last Day. So, his example is like a rock on which there is dust, then a heavy rain came over it and left it barren. They have no ability to gain anything out of



what they have done, and Allah does not give guidance to the people who disbelieve."

(Al-Baqarah 2:264)

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيتًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَتَأَنَّتْ أَكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِيبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلَّ وَاللَّهُ يَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٦٧﴾

"The example of those who spend their wealth to seek the pleasure of Allah and to make firm (their faith) from (the depths of) their souls is like a garden on a foothill on which came a heavy rain, and it yielded its produce twofold. Even if a heavy rain does not come to it, a light drizzle is enough, and Allah is watchful of what you do."

(Al-Baqarah 2:265)

Thus, although, apparently, the two groups of men gave away of their wealth to the needy in an

identical manner, the motive of the former being that of ostentatious exhibition, they got nothing from it except ephemeral praise and laudation, while the later had aspired only for the good graces of the Lord and so they were recompensed by Him in keeping with their intention. This, in sum, is the Divine Law and Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s confirmed practice to which the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) has drawn attention in the Hadeeth under discussion.

In this world judgement is based upon the apparent, while in the Aakhirah (Hereafter), intention is the main criteria

The world in which we live and carry out our duties is a 'visible' one and the scope of our awareness and perception, here, too, is limited to the 'apparent'. In this world, we can form a good or bad opinion about anyone only on the basis of his conduct that can be seen and easily understood and we deal with him accordingly. We are incapable of knowing the real intentions, the hidden secrets of the heart that lie at the back of the visible deeds. Hence, Sayyidina 'Umar has said:

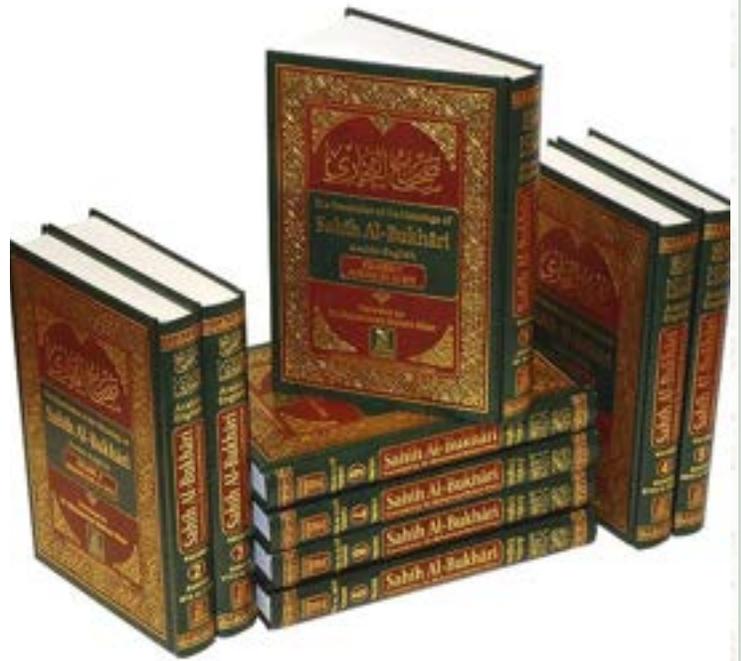
نَحْنُ نَحْكُمُ بِالظَّاهِرِ، وَاللَّهُ يَتَوَلَّى السَّرَائِرَ

"Our function is to decide according to what is apparent and the hidden secrets entrusted to Allah."

But, in the Aakhirah, judgement will rest with the Lord, Who is the Knower of the Invisible, and He will decide according to intentions. Thus, while, here in this world, the visible deeds are the main thing and no decision can be given on the basis of intentions, in the Future Existence it will be the other way round and the Divine Judgement will be based upon intentions, and apparent actions will be subordinated to them.

Significance

The above Tradition is included among what are known as جوامع الكلم Jawaam-ul-Kalim (i.e., all-embracing speech). It is one of the wide-ranging sayings of the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) which, in spite of their brevity, are comprehensive of a large and most important segment of Faith. According to leading theologians, one-third of Islam is covered by it, which is not an over-statement by any means because, basically, Islam is divided into three parts, Imaan (Articles of Faith), A'maal (Deeds) and Ikhlās (Sincerity in Action), and this Tradition takes into account the whole branch of Ikhlās. Hence, the claim that one-third of Islam is contained in it. Moreover, earnestness is needed at each step, whatever the endeavor, and when a person embarks on a noble undertaking, whether intellectual or practical, he should, particularly, keep in mind the, admonition



of the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam). It has, as such, been the practice of well-known Muslim religious scholars to begin their theological works with the above Tradition. Imam Bukhari, and, Imam Baghawi have, for instance, placed this Tradition at the head of their compilations, respectively, Jamay' Saheeh and Masaabeeh, in recognition of the fact that this saying of the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) expresses one of the fundamental ethical principles of Islam. They have made it, so to speak, the exordium of their collections. Ibn Mehdi, has remarked:

"If anyone writes a book on a theological subject, he will be well advised to begin it with this Tradition If I write a book, I would begin each chapter of it with this saying." (Fath ul Baari)

For that reason, the present writer, too, has preferred to commence his compilation with the above Tradition. May the Almighty bless him and the readers with single-heartedness and purity of intention!

(We will, now take up, under a special arrangement, the Traditions in which the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) has explained Imaan and Islam, and their fundamental doctrines and subdivisions, pre-requisites and stipulations, virtues and benefits, as well as things that are inimical to them. We are going to start with Hadeeth Jibreel which is known as the 'Mother of Sunnah' on account of being doctrinally comprehensive of all the branches of Faith.)

(Ma'aarif ul Hadeeth: Maulana Muhammad Manzoor Nomani, R.A.)

IN ALLAH WE TRUST

Sent by: Brother Ameer Khanzada

التوكل على الله (At-Tawakkal 'ala Allah) is the Islamic concept of complete reliance on Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) or "trusting in Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s plan." The root word in Arabic is وَكَّلَ (wakala) which means to entrust, charge or authorize. Allah is الوكيل al-Wakeel, the Disposer of Affairs, the One entrusted, relied upon, depended upon and sufficient to take care of all matters.

Difference between Tawakkul and Tawaakul

Tawakkul means putting trust in Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) while also implementing the means that have been permitted. Ulamaa (Scholars) have made an important distinction between Tawakkul (توكل) and Tawaakul (تواكل). Tawakkul is a Muslim's trust and acceptance of the Divine will, which no one knows, understands or controls except Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa).

The meaning of Tawaakul, on the other hand, comprises elements of laziness, inability, a resigned, careless attitude. It indicates refusal to strive in accordance with the laws and ways which Allah (Subhaanahu Wa

Ta'aalaa) has laid down for humankind. Those who misunderstand it, wait for a miracle to 'drop from the sky' without striving towards it in any way. Such people expect Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) to send down their provisions, feed them and take care of their affairs and concerns while they do nothing.

The negative attitude of Tawaakul contradicts every aspect of the life of the Prophet (SallAllahu 'Alaihe WaSallam) and his Sahaabah (Companions) – their Jihaad, the efforts they expended in accordance with natural laws, their planning and their way of thinking. For example, when migrating to Madinah al Munawwarah, Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s Messenger (SallAllahu 'Alaihe Wasallam) took all the precautions that were humanly possible. He planned the journey secretly, leaving when least expected, telling Hadhrat 'Ali to sleep in his bed, selecting a hiding place, arranging for provisions, arranging for a faithful guide, etc. However, once he had done whatever was humanly possible, he had such trust in Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) that he was never worried about the consequences.

It was reported through Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik that when a Bedouin who had confused Tawakkul for Tawaakul came to the Prophet (SallAllaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) and asked about the matter, he explained that it was to take the appropriate action and then trust in Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). The Bedouin asked:

يا رسول الله، أعقدها وأتوكل أو أطلقها وأتوكل

“Should I tie my camel and rely upon Allah, or should I leave her untied and rely upon Allah?”

The Messenger (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) replied:

أعقلها وتوكل

“Tie her and then rely upon Allah.”

(At-Tirmizi)

The following Hadeeth is significant, and is most quoted to explain the concept of Tawakkul:

Hadhrat 'Umar bin al-Khattaab heard Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s Messenger (SallAllaho 'Alaihe Wasallam) saying:

لو أنكم كنتم تؤكّلون على الله حق تؤكّلون له ليرزقكم كما يرزق الطير، تَعْدُوْا خِطَافًا، وَتَرْوِحُ بِطَانَا

“If you trusted Allah with due Tawakkul, He would provide you sustenance as He provides for the birds; they go out in the morning with empty stomachs and come back in the evening with full stomachs.”

(At-Tirmizi and Ibne Maajah)

A bird sitting in its nest and praising Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will not have its stomach filled.

It has to go out and work hard to find food from morning to evening. One who goes out and expends effort while knowing that Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) provides will obtain what he desires.

Obedience is the key to Tawakkul. The praiseworthy are those who have actualized Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s words:

“It is You (alone) we worship, and You (alone) we ask for help”

(Al-Faatihah:4)

And also:

فَاعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ ۗ

“So, worship Him and have trust in Him.”



(Hood 11:123)

They sought assistance from Him by obeying Him, confirming that He is their Lord and that He must be worshipped alone through obedience to Him and to His Messenger (SallAllaho 'Alaihe WaSallam).

Tawakkul explained in the Quraan and Sunnah.

There are numerous Aayaat in the Quraan which command and explain Tawakkul:

1. We are told to rely on Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) in all our affairs.

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْوَحْيِ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ

٥٨

“And place your trust in the Ever-Living who cannot die”

(Al-Furqaan 25:58)

2. When we rely on Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa), He suffices.

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ

٢

حَسْبُهُ ۗ

“And whoever places his trust in Allah, He is sufficient for him.”

(At-Talaaq 65:3)

3. Before declaring this, Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) also promises that if his rulings are obeyed, (in cases of divorce and that is when one is likely to fall into error and behave in an improper manner), He will fulfill needs:

وَيَرْزُقُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۗ

“and (Allah) provides him (with what he needs) from where he does not even imagine.”

(At-Talaaq 65:3)

Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will provide from where one never imagined or anticipated.

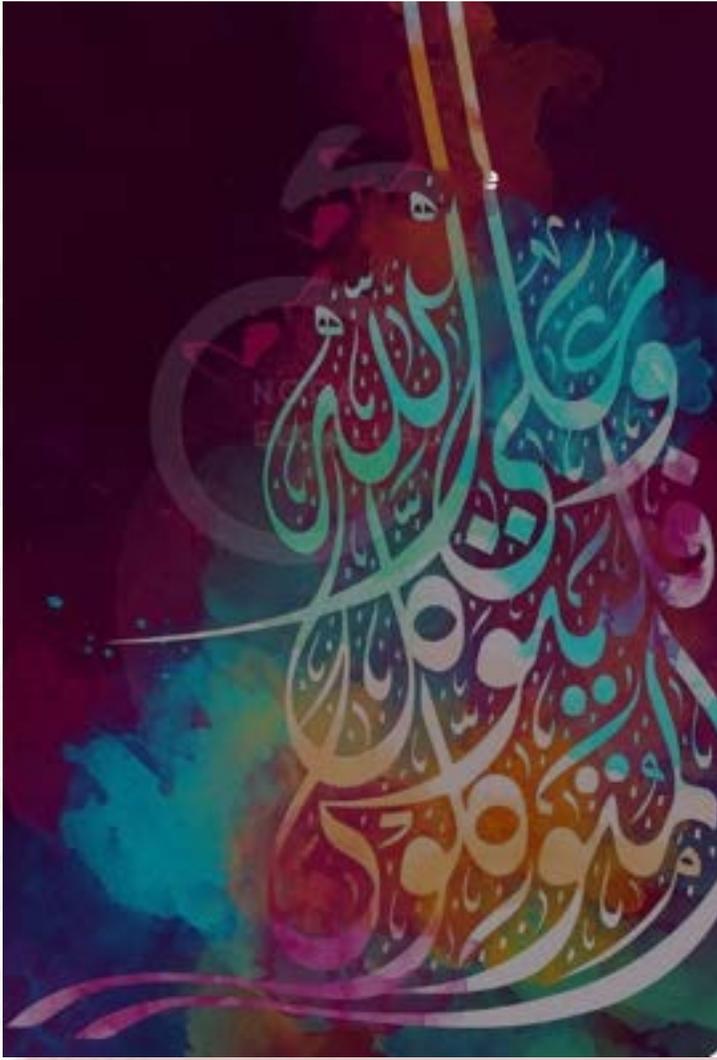
4. We are told to consult and then take a decision.

فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۗ

“.....once you have taken a decision, place your trust in Allah.”

(Aale 'Imraan 3:159)

You should then trust in Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) regarding your decision.



5. We are told to recognize that none should be worshipped but Him and then rely on Him.

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ﴿١﴾

“He is the Lord of the East and the West; there is no god but He; so take Him for (your) Guardian.”

(Al-Muzzammil 73:9)

Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) Alone is the owner and controller of all affairs everywhere. So just as you single Him out for worship, you should also single Him out for reliance and take Him as your guardian and trustee.

6. Believers obey Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) and then trust in Him as the best manager of their affairs.

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾

“Allah is fully sufficient for us, and the best One in whom to trust.”

(Aale ‘Imraan 3:173)

Hadhrat Ibne `Abbas said about حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ (Allah is fully sufficient for us, and the best One in whom to trust):

“Prophet Ibrahim said it when he was thrown

into the fire. Prophet Muhammad (SallAllaaho Alaihe WaSallam) said it on the day of Uhud:

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدَّ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاتَّخَذْتَهُمْ فِرَادَهُمْ إِيْمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾

“(that is) those to whom people said: ‘The people have gathered against you; so, fear them.’ It increased them in Faith and they said: ‘Allah is fully sufficient for us, and the best One in whom to trust’.” (Aale ‘Imraan 3:173) Thereafter, the above Aayah was revealed.

(Bukhari)

As believers we need to know what our Lord wants from us and then do what is right in obedience to Him. Then we should put our trust in Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa), not merely saying that He is the best disposer of our affairs but believing it from the depths of our hearts. It is then that our reliance on Him will have meaning and take effect.

7. Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa)’s Messenger (SallAllaaho Alaihe WaSallam) was ordered to tell the believers that no calamity or difficulty will befall them unless Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) wills it. Hence, they should rely on Him.

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

“Say: ‘Nothing can ever reach us except what Allah has destined for us. He is our Master. And in Allah alone the believers must place their trust.’”

(At-Taubah 9:51)

Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) directed His Messenger (ﷺ) to reply to the hypocrites and tell them that nothing will ever happen except what Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) has decreed, for we are under His control and command and He is our Master and Protector; therefore, the true believers support the cause of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) and then put their trust in Him.

8. Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) is sufficient to protect and manage the affairs of His servants.

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٨﴾

“.....and put your trust in Allah; and Allah suffices as an Ever-Trusted Trustee.”

(Al-Ahzaab 33:48)

9. True believers have faith and then rely on Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa).

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

“Certainly, the believers are those whose hearts are filled with awe when (the name of) Allah is mentioned; and when His verses are recited to them, it



makes them more developed in faith; and in their Lord they place their trust.” (Al-Anfaal 8:2)

Hadhrat Ibne ‘Abbas said about this Aayah:

“The quality of a true believer is that when Allah is mentioned, he feels a fear in his heart and therefore obeys His orders and prohibitions; then he relies upon Allah.”

Tawakkul is the key to faith

After understanding the meaning of “at-Tawakkal ‘ala Allah”, we can discern that it is an important branch of faith and a form of ‘Ibaadah (Worship). Practicing it produces strength, patience, forbearance, determination, contentment, happiness and an acceptance of His will and decree. It keeps worry, distress, disappointment and depression at a minimum. And it gives the believer renewed energy to take account of himself and lead a life of obedience, to exert effort, to repent from sins and to contemplate the power and majesty of the Lord he worships, depends upon and trusts.

This concept, when not understood properly can either lead to laziness in the form of Tawaakul, or trap one in a delusion of self-sufficiency, leading him to the erroneous conclusion that whatever he achieves is by his own effort or merit. Thus, a kind of arrogance and pride takes root in the heart. It should be remembered that one can be tried not only with hardships, but also by being given extensive wealth and resources. A valuable instruction is given in Soorah Al-Kahf, which is that when everyone is pleased with an accomplishment or material possession, he should say:

مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

“What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah.” (Al-Kahf 18:39)

Each one of us is totally dependent upon Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) at every moment, and no

one can achieve anything by his own efforts and abilities unless He wills it.

The delusion of self-sufficiency needs to be uprooted from our minds and hearts. It is that false sense of self-worth, constantly evaluated by worldly standards, and craving for approval which weakens the heart’s striving to connect with Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa), cling to Him, beseech Him and implore Him to enrich us from Himself with a richness that no one can steal or harm through envy, the richness of a clear perception and understanding that everything belongs to Him, to be given at will to whomever He wills and to be taken at will.

So, we must trust and rely on Him. But this requires that we free our minds to do Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa)’s will, to obey Him and to make our choices in all of life’s decisions within the framework of Islam, by means of Du’aa, Istikhaarah i.e., the Sunnah way of requesting from Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa) the best out of a situation, and the Mashwarah i.e., counsel of sincere believing friends. Along with the permissible physical means, these are the spiritual means available to us to accomplish what is required. Success in this world means to survive, manage and live within the limits set by Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta’aalaa). But true success is in obtaining His approval, and that will be fully manifested in the next life.

It is said that the more a servant’s expectations are set on the favor and mercy of his Lord as the means to fulfill his needs and repel his misfortunes, the stronger his servitude to his Lord becomes. And in this is freedom from everything other than Him. And since it is the case that the more a person’s hopes are fixed on created beings, the more he is compelled to serve them, it follows that not having hope in them provides independence from them.

It is also said that the fruit of Tawakkul is contentment with Allah’s decree. Whoever leaves his affairs to Allah and then is accepting of what he is given has truly relied on Allah.

حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

“Enough for me is Allah. There is no god but He. In Him I have placed my trust, and He is the Lord of the Great Throne.” (At-Taubah 9:129) ❀❀





BLESSINGS OF SUNNAH

Sent by: Sister Shela Abdul Shakoor

The Prophet of Islam, Hadhrat Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) has been an example to people in every respect. Like other people, he became ill, wounded in the war, worked for his sustenance, engaged in trade, got married, had children and even had to manage administrative affairs of the community in Madinah al Munawwarah. He has experienced many situations that ordinary as well as the people with higher status and responsibility, can encounter. In all these situations, he has shown the attitudes and behaviors that Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) is pleased with. All of these attitudes and behaviors are called Sunnah.

In fact, Hadhrat Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) is a unique gift of incalculable blessings from Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) for the humanity. One can possess this gift and experience the blessings only by following his Sunnah, his way of life. Only through the Sunnah can one reap the full harvest of Islam. The Muslim is at his best when he lives by the Sunnah of the

Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam). This is exactly what is meant when Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) says in the Quraan:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ
وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿١١﴾

“There is indeed a good model for you in the Messenger of Allah -- for the one who has hope in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah profusely.”

(Al-AhzAab 33:21)

It is observed that the Muttaqeen (Pious Practicing Muslims) experience the Sunnah in every aspect of their daily life. But without doubt, it is also in the control and power of every one of us to at least intend to live all of them and to practice Sunnah as much as we can.

The Sunnah to be followed, of course, includes the principles of behavior, too, such as talking, eating, drinking and sleeping. It is like talking to the addressee by turning our faces with our whole body, eating and drinking with the right hand, and going to bed with Wudhoo (Ablution), etc. It is not difficult for anyone to

carry out these actions that take place in daily life and that many of us have already been doing, by modelling Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s Messenger (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam).

Hadhrat Anas has reported that three people came to the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam)'s wives and asked how the Prophet conducted his worship. When they were told about it they seemed to consider it little and said:

وَأَيُّنَ نَحْنُ مِنَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَدْ غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ

“What a difference there is between us and the Prophet whose former and latter sins have been forgiven him by Allah!”

One of them said:

أما أنا فإني أصلي الليل أبدا

“As for me, I will always offer Salaah (Pray) during the night.”

Another said:

أنا أصوم الدهر ولا أفطر

“I will observe Sawm (Fast) during the daytime and not break my fast.”

The other said:

أنا أغتزل النساء فلا أتزوج أبدا

“I will have nothing to do with women and will never marry.”

Then the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) came to them and said:

أَنْتُمْ الَّذِينَ قُلْتُمْ كَذَا وَكَذَا أَمَا وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأَخْشَاكُمْ لِلَّهِ وَأَتَقَاكُمْ لَهُ لِكَيْتِي أَصُومُ وَأَفْطِرُ وَأَصَلِّي وَأَرْقُدُ وَأَتَزَوَّجُ النِّسَاءَ فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَنِّي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي

“Are you the people who said such and such? By Allah! I am the one of you who fears and reverences Allah most, yet I keep Sawm and I break my fast; I offer Salaah and I sleep; and I marry women. He who is displeased with my Sunnah has nothing to do with me.”

(Bukhari and Muslim.)

To understand well for the purpose to follow, the Sunnah of Hadhrat Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) may be seen through two dimensions, internal and external. The internal sphere comprises his relationship with Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa), his view of life and its purpose and ultimate end, the aspirations of his soul, his heart's desires, his thoughts and feelings. The external sphere includes his words and deeds and daily habits. Together they form an integrated pattern of matchless beauty and harmony.

Hadhrat Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam)'s outer life was firmly rooted in his inner life. For example, the way he sat expressed his awareness of his smallness before his Lord and his humility, while the way he ate expressed his consciousness of the greatness of his Lord, of his thankfulness for Allah (Subhaanahu

Wa Ta'aalaa)'s bounty and mercy. That there is a vital connection between the spirit and external appearance can best be seen in the movements of the Salaah and the rituals of the Hajj (Pilgrimage). The minutest details of the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam)'s external life were a projection of his inner life which was ever wakeful to the eternal presence of Allah (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) and completely saturated with His power and glory. The external depended on and was determined by the internal.

Thus, it is imperative for us to remember this relationship between the internal and the external in the Sunnah. We can derive the full benefit of observing the Sunnah only when we remember this inseparable connection.

To follow the Sunnah of Hadhrat Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam), we have to follow both the inner and outer aspects of his life. We have to shape ourselves both inwardly and outwardly following his model. We have to put Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) in the center of our heart just as he did. We have to view life the way he viewed it, think the way he thought, desire what he desired and shun what he shunned, feel the way he felt and judge every experience of life as he judged his experiences. With the mind and heart shaped in this fashion we have to try our best to make our outward life resemble his.

Actually, apart from the miracles of our Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) and his particular states, he remained human in his actions, states and attitudes, submitted to the law of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s customary practice and His Divine supreme law of creation, and became obedient. He also suffered from cold, pain and more. A marvelous situation has not been given to him in every circumstance and environment so that he becomes a role model for his Ummah (Nation) with his actions, be a guide with his attitudes, and teaches with his all actions. If he had been excellent in all his actions, he himself would not have been an imam, a guide, and a mercy to the worlds with all his virtues in every aspect.

Following the Sunnah alone can provide us the assurance of being on the Siraat al Mustaqeem (Straight Path) -- in the course that is most pleasing to Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). This sets the heart at ease and offers us the courage and endurance needed to get through life's varied trials. It saves us from the many confusions, distractions and dissipation of life which waste our spirit, time, energy and resources. It saves us from all kinds of frustration and regrets. It gives our life a clear sense of direction and discipline as nothing else can. To live by the Sunnah is to heed Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s call to 'grasp the firm handhold that



never breaks' that gives us an unshakable inner peace and a profound sense of safety, security and hope, as indicated in Quraan:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٦﴾

"The correct way has become distinct from the erroneous. Now, whoever rejects the Taaghoot (the Rebel, the Satan) and believes in Allah has a firm grasp on the strongest ring that never breaks. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

(Al-Baqarah 2:256)

When one follows the Sunnah one in fact partakes in the life of his beloved Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam), partakes in the Barakah that Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) received from Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). What better thing can a Muslim expect to receive in life? The observance of the Sunnah at once eliminates the distance of time and place between us and the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam). We are at once placed beside his noble presence in his blessed company. He becomes a living reality in our lives and a source immeasurable joy and solace. Our hearts are sobered, softened and soothed.

The Sunnah of the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) is the very lifestyle that Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) approves of – which is declared in the Quraan. We already live this worldly life in a way. Why shouldn't we live it in the circle of Sunnah according to the principles of the Sunnah? Isn't the fact that Muslims have lived Sunnah for one thousand and four hundred years an indication that we can live Sunnah easily, too? These lofty and elevated truths, which will turn our Aakhirah (Hereafter) into Jannah (Paradise) along with

the life of this world, have no weight that cannot be overcome.

The Sunnah also unites the Muslim Ummah. It can cut across all barriers of power, wealth, language, geography and history. Living by it, Muslims can have a universally shared mode of thinking, perception, responses to situations, goals and pattern of living. The bond that belief in Tawheed creates among Muslims all over the world can be visibly materialized only through the observance of Sunnah. Nothing can then stand in its way.

Islam places great value on Muslim unity, brotherhood and fellowship in this world, and we also talk of them. But in reality,

we lost them centuries ago. We present a pitiable group of people, chaotic and hopelessly quarreling among ourselves. All over the world, Muslims have set up many organizations and mechanisms of various sorts, hoping to bring back those lost but desired virtues among the Muslims, but with little success. It is time we asked why. Oftentimes with every good intention we gather with much publicity and fanfare only to dispute among ourselves and fall farther apart. Hardly any of these gatherings ever take the trouble to recall this instruction of our beloved Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam):

تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمَا بِهِمَا كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةَ نَبِيِّهِ

"I have left you with two matters which will never lead you astray, as long as you hold to them: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of his Prophet."

(Maalik and Haakim)

What can be sadder than this? How long will we continue to overlook and ignore the message of the Noble Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam), and still foolishly hope to reap the benefits of Islam?

It is impossible to count the blessings of the Sunnah in our lives. They can only be experienced as one lives by them. Islam is like a mine of endless and priceless treasures, but the mine can be dug and the treasures can be possessed only through loving adherence to the Sunnah of the beloved Messenger (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). To savor the real taste of Islam and experience its full blessings in this and the next life one has to come to the Sunnah of Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam). May Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) grant us the wisdom and Taufeeq to do so. Aameen!

DON'T BE APOLOGETIC

Sent by: Brother Abul Khair, Dhaka, Bangladesh

In face of the continuous and frantic attacks on Islam by the disbelievers, some Muslims turn to the defensive with an inner feeling of defeat as they try to show that the Islamic values are no different from the Western ones.

If they are told that the Islamic political system is not compatible with Western-style democracy, they respond by trying to show that it is exactly a replica of Western democratic norms. If they are told that Islam spread with Jihad (that comprises of Da'wah – no-war pact on the basis of Jizya (Tax for public security) to be paid by the non-believers – and, if not agreed to initial two conditions then lastly, the sword clears the obstacle i.e., the rulers, to show true Islamic life general public),

they respond that Muslims fought only to defend themselves when attacked. If they are told that there is a problem with the status of women in Islam, they try to prove that Islam allows polygamy only under strict conditions which most men do not fulfill and hence they conclude it is virtually not allowed!

Such apologetic attitudes should be put behind. Islam is a way of life given to us by Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). It cannot be put as "equivalent" on the same level as other man-made ideologies or corrupted revelations. Muslims should have firm Iman (Belief) to display enough confidence in the Sunnah lifestyle to go on the offensive rather than stay on the defensive like accused persons. When Quraish accused the Muslims



PROTECTION FROM EVIL EYE

Sent by: Brother Abdullah Shaikh

It is an important aspect of Islam that practicing it in daily life does not bring any unnecessary hardship. Rather one of the most significant aims of Shari'ah is to relieve people of hardship.

Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) says:

مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ
 "Allah does not want to place you in difficulty"
 (Al-Maaidah 5:6)

It is not permissible for a Muslim to listen to Shaitaan (Satan) and let him fill his life with doubts, "Waswaas" (Whispers) and paranoia, for if he does that he will lose out in this world and will not gain anything in the Aakhirah (Hereafter). Such Whispers (Waswaas) are merely tricks of the accursed Shaitaan who wants to cause grief for those who believe. And Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) is the best of protectors and the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

What one must do is put a stop to all these

whispers, and not pay any attention to bad thoughts. It is sufficient as a defense to do the Zikr i.e. Remembrance of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) that is prescribed in Shari'ah when one see something good, and Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will protect it against the evil eye and Hasad (Destructive Envy). Remembrance of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) and the evil eye or envy cannot coexist.

It was narrated from Hadhrat Abu Umaamah ibn Sahl ibn Haneef that the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) said:

أَلَا بَرَكْتُ إِنَّ الْعَيْنَ حَقٌّ
 "Why did you not say: 'May Allah bless you?' (ta baraka-llah)"
 (Muwattaa Imam Maalik)

Al-Zarqaani said:

"..why don't you say: بارك الله فيك (Baarak Allahu feek) 'May Allah bless you', and that would cancel out what is feared of the evil eye and take away its effects."

(Sharh al-Muwattaa)

It was narrated that Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) said:

إِذَا رَأَى أَحَدَكُمْ مِنْ أَخِيهِ، أَوْ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، أَوْ مِنْ مَالِهِ مَا يُعْجِبُهُ [فَلْيَدْعُ لَهُ بِالْبَرَكَاتِ] فَإِنَّ الْعَيْنَ حَقٌّ

"If you see something from your brother, yourself or wealth which you find impressing, then invoke blessings for it, for the evil eye is indeed true."

(Ahmad, Ibne Maajah, Maalik)

This indicates that the evil eye cannot cause any harm if the one who may harm with the evil eye invokes blessings. What is prescribed for everyone who admires something is to invoke blessings, for if he prays for blessings, the harm must inevitably be diverted. Invoking blessings means to say:

تبارك الله احسن الخالقين - اللهم بارك فيه

(Tabaarak Allah ahsan al-khaaliqeen, Allahumma baarik fihi)

"Blessed be Allah the best of creators, O Allah bless it."

Al-Nawawi said:

"It is Mustahabb for the one who may harm with the evil eye to pray the blessing for the one who may be harmed and say:

اللهم بارك ولا تضره

(Allahumma baarik wa laa tadurrahu)

"O Allah! Bless and do not harm him."

And also:

ماشاء الله لا قوة الا بالله

(Maa shaa Allah laa quwwata illa Billaah)

"As Allah wills, there is no power except with Allah."

Al-Haafiz Ibne Hajar said:

"The one who admires something should hasten to pray that the thing he admires be blessed, and that will be a Ruqyah on his part."

(Fath al-Baari)

It is said that the remedy for the one who may cause harm with the evil eye when he sees something he admires is to remember Allah and invoke blessing.

It is also said that if the one who may cause harm with the evil eye fears that he may harm the thing he is looking at, then he should say:

اللهم بارك عليه

(Allahumma baarik 'alayhi)

"O Allah! Bless it."

Similarly, it is Mustahabb for him to say:

ماشاء الله لا قوة الا بالله

(Maa shaa Allah. Laa quwwata illa Billaah"

"As Allah Wills, there is no power except with Allah."

Because it was narrated from Hishaam ibn 'Urwah from his father that when he saw a thing that

he liked or he entered one of his gardens, he would say:

ماشاء الله لا قوة الا بالله

(Maa shaa Allah. Laa quwwata illa Billaah)

"As Allah Wills, there is no power except with Allah."

If the one who may cause harm with the evil eye always says this Zikr, then he will ward off its harm, In Shaa Allah.

A Muslim should not let doubts, illusions, suspicion and excessive fear of the evil eye overwhelm him so much that he becomes afflicted with psychological illness and the like. He should think positively of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa), and understand that whatever befalls him only happens by the Will of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). So let him turn to Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa), because He alone is able to ward off harm and relieve distress.

If one sees something that he likes, then pray to Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) for blessing, and do not pay attention to anything else. Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) will protect it because of his Du'aa', and will ward off all harm from it.

Do not let yourself keep on fearing it, for Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) does not want that for His slaves. Also keep striving to make yourself see the Will of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) in all things, for He has great wisdom in what He gives and withholds, lowers and raises, and there is none to put back His Judgement. The Quraan says:

وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقَّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ ۗ

"Allah judges; there is none to repel His judgement."

(Ar-Ra'd 13:41)

And also, none can change His Words. Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) says:

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا ۗ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝١١٥

"The Word of your Lord is perfect in truth and justice. None is there to change His words, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing." (Al-An'aam 6:115)

Always remember! This world and everything in it, is too insignificant for people to envy one another and transgress against one another for its sake, as al-Mutanabbi said:

What hearts desire is too insignificant for people to transgress against one another or destroy one another in pursuit of it.

This is also indicated in the words of the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam):

عَلَامٌ يَقْتُلُ أَحَدَكُمْ أَخَاهُ

"Why would one of you kill his brother?"

(Maalik, Ahmad and others)

حضرت ابو ذر غفاري رضي الله عنه

HADHRAT ABU ZARR

Sister Fatima Binte Ammar Khalid

Nakhlah Islamic School

Hadhrat Abu Zarr Al Ghifaari belonged to the tribe of Ghifaar which lived in the valley of Waddan and was located in the outskirts of Makkah al Mukarramah.

Ghifaar was an extremely poor tribe and lived of the meagre provisions which were given to them by the trading caravans of Quraish. If they felt they had not been given enough they had no reluctance in robbing these caravans.

The real name of Hadhrat Abu Zarr was Jundub bin Junaadah but he was known as Abu Zarr. He was one of the young men of the tribe but surpassed them by far in keenness of intellect, courage and farsightedness.

The idolatry of people annoyed him and he always disapproved the ill-practices rampant in Arabia.

When the news of the Holy Prophet, Hadhrat Muhammad (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) reached Hadhrat Abu Zharr, he requested his brother Anees to go to Makkah al Mukarramah and investigate the truth about this man who claims to receive Divine Revelation. He asked him to listen to the words of the person claiming to be the Prophet and convey them to him.

Anees reached Makkah al Mukarramah and after meeting the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) he returned to the village where Hadhrat Abu Zarr had impatiently been waiting.

As soon as the brothers met, Hadhrat Abu Zarr asked Anees about the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam). The reports Anees had brought, didn't satisfy Hadhrat Abu Zarr he told Anees:

"By Allah! You have neither satisfied my thirst nor fulfilled my need. Will you take care of my family until my return so I may form an opinion about him?"

Anees replied:

"Certainly, but be careful of the Makkans."

Hadhrat Abu Zarr left for Makkah al Mukarramah and with the precautions in mind. When he arrived there, he did not ask anyone directly of the whereabouts of the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) because he was not aware if he was asking a friend or a foe.

As night fell he lied down in the Masjid al Haraam to fall asleep that is when Hadhrat Ali bin Abi Taalib saw him and requested to be his guest. This was

their practice to host the travelers during their stay at Makkah al Mukarramah. Hadhrat. Hadhrat Abu Zarr went with him and slept the night at Hadhrat Ali bin Abi Talib's house.

The next morning, he arose and without telling Hadhrat Ali he head out towards the Masjid and on the second day also he could not find any information about the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam).

At night, Hadhrat Ali once again requested Hadhrat Abu Zarr to come and sleep at his home and Hadhrat Abu Zarr spent the night at Hazrat Ali's house.

Till then, Hadhrat Ali had asked no question but on the third night Hadhrat Ali asked:

"Why don't you tell me what brings you to here, at Makkah al Mukarramah?"

Hadhrat Abu Zarr cautiously replied:

"I shall only tell you if you guide me to that which I seek."

When Hadhrat Ali gave him a solemn oath, Hadhrat Abu Zarr told him:

"I have come to Makkah al Mukarramah from afar, seeking to meet this new claimant of Prophethood and hear his words."

Hadhrat Ali's face lit up and he proclaimed:

"By Allah! He is truly the messenger of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). In the morning, follow me wherever I take you. If I sense any danger, I shall pause as though I have spilled water. However, if I keep going, follow me and enter where I stop."

All night long Hadhrat Abu Zarr could barely contain his excitement at the thought of meeting the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) and hearing the words of divine revelation personally. After dawn, Hadhrat Ali set out to meet the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) and Hadhrat Abu Zarr obediently followed behind. When they reached Hadhrat Abu Zarr said:

"As Salaam o 'Alaikum. (Peace be upon you), O messenger of Allah!"

Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) replied:

"Wa 'Alaikum as Salaam" (And upon you be Allah's peace). Therefore, Hadhrat Abu Zarr was the first person to greet the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) by the greeting of Islam.

The Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) invited Hadhrat Abu Zarr to accept Islam and immediately Hadhrat Abu Zarr accepted Islam and



pronounced the "Declaration of Faith" and accepted Islam. Thus, he became the fourth or fifth Muslim.

Hadhrat Abu Zarr stayed with the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) in Makkah al Mukarramah and he taught him the Holy Quraan.

The Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) cautioned him:

"Do not inform anyone of your Islam in Makkah al Mukarramah for I fear they might kill you."

Hadhrat Abu Zarr answered:

"By Him in whose hands is my soul! I shall announce my Islam loudly in the middle of people Quraish tribe."

The Blessed Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam) kept silent.

Hadhrat Abu Zarr, then, went to the Masjid al Haraam and found some Quraish people sitting there and chatting. He went up to them and said:

"O people of Quraish! I bear witness that 'There is no god other than Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah'."

The Quraish were awestruck and stared at Hadhrat Abu Zarr in fury and rage:

"Away with this apostate!"

They attacked him and tried to kill him. Seeing the incident, the paternal uncle of the Blessed Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam), Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib shielded Hadhrat Abu Zarr. He warned:

"Woe betide you! Shall you kill a man from Ghifaar where your trading caravans pass by them regularly?"

On realizing this fact, they left him alone. When Hadhrat Abu Dharr recovered consciousness, he went to the Prophet (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam). Observing the terrible condition of Hadhrat Abu Dharr, he said:

"Did I not forbid you from revealing your Islam?"

Hadhrat Abu Zarr replied:

"O Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s Messenger (SallAllaaho 'Alaihe WaSallam)! it was a need of mine

that I had to fulfill."

The Prophet said:

"Go back to your people and inform them of what you have seen and heard, and invite them to Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s Deen (Religion). Perhaps Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) may benefit them through you and reward you through them. Once news reaches you that Islam has prevailed, then come to me."

And so Hadhrat Abu Zarr returned to his people in tribe of Ghifaar. His brother Anees met him and asked him:

“What have you achieved?”

Hadhrat Abu Zarr replied:

“I have accepted Islam and I have affirmed (the Truth).”

Anees replied:

“I have nothing against your religion and I also accept your religion and I also affirm.”

After this meeting, both the brothers went and met their mother and invited her towards the fold of Islam. She said:

“I have no objection to your religion.”

She also accepted Islam. After that day the family of believers started inviting other members of the tribe towards Islam.

A great number of them accepted Islam whilst a group said: “We shall adhere to our religion until the blessed Prophet (SallAllaaho ‘Alaihe WaSallam) goes to Yathrib (as Hadhrat Abu Zarr heard possibility of his migration there directly from the him). Then we shall accept Islam.”

Hadhrat Abu Zarr stayed in his village until after the battle of Badr, Uhud and Khandaq. Then he came to Madinah al Munawwarah and devoted himself to the service of the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho ‘Alaihe WaSallam). He humbly desired to keep the company of the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho ‘Alaihe WaSallam) and was allowed to do so. Thus he gained the joy of serving the Holy Prophet (SallAllaaho ‘Alaihe WaSallam). The Blessed Prophet (SallAllaaho ‘Alaihe WaSallam) always accorded him with great honor and gave him special importance. After the Blessed Prophet (SallAllaaho ‘Alaihe WaSallam) left the mortal world, Hadhrat Abu Zarr could no longer live in Madina al Munawwarah and moved to Syria and stayed there during the caliphates of Hadhrat Abu Bakr and Hadhrat ‘Umar.

During the caliphate of Hadhrat ‘Uthmaan he moved to Damascus. However, when he saw the Muslims eagerly pursuing worldly pleasure, he was deeply upset by the behavior. Hadhrat ‘Uthmaan bin Affaan told him to move to Makkah al Mukarramah. He moved to Madinah al Munawwarah but even in Madinah al Munawwarah, he was disturbed by the worldliness

of the people. Whereas people found his harsh criticism very offensive. Finally, Hadhrat ‘Uthmaan asked him to move to Rabazah (a small town in the suburb of Madinah al Munawwarah). He spent his remaining last years in this town.

One day a man came to Hadhrat Abu Zarr’s home and was surprised to see almost nothing inside. The man asked:

“Where is your possessions?”

Hadhrat Abu Zarr replied:

“We have a house over there (in the Akhirah i.e., Hereafter), where we send our best possessions.”

The man understood what Hadhrat Abu Zarr was saying and said:

“Surely you need some of the things as long as you live in this house (this world).”

Hadhrat Abu Zarr responded:

The (real) owner of this house (Ord Almighty) will not leave us here.”

Once the ruler of Syria gave him three hundred dinars to fulfill his needs and said:

“Use this to fulfill your needs.”

Hadhrat Abu Zarr promptly returned the money saying:

“Could the ruler of Syria find no slave of Allah more deserving than me?”

The Blessed Prophet (SallAllaaho ‘Alaihe WaSallam) had prophesied about Hadhrat Abu Zarr:

“He will live alone and die alone and will be raised up alone.”

In the thirteenth year of Hijrah, death finally acclaimed the soul of a worshipper about whom the Blessed Prophet (SallAllaaho ‘Alaihe WaSallam) had said:

“Never has the earth borne nor has the sky shaded a man more truthful than Abu Zarr.”





ALLAH'S PLAN PREVAILS

Sister Shariffa Carlo had joined a US group with a sinister motive to prepare youth for sending them among Muslims to weaken their faith and spur a women's rights movement in the Middle East. But her life began to change when

The story of how I reverted to Islam is a story of a series of my plans.

I made plans, the group I was with made plans, but Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) made His own plans. And Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) is the best of Planners.

When I was a teenager, I came in touch with a group of people who harbored a very sinister agenda. They were, and probably still are, a loose association of individuals who would work in government positions, but have a special agenda to malign Islam and harm the Muslim community. It is not a governmental group that I am aware of, they simply use their positions in the US government to advance their cause.

One member of this group approached me because he saw that I was articulate, motivated and very much an advocate of the women's rights. He told me that if I studied international relations with an emphasis on the Middle East, he would guarantee me a job at the American Embassy in Egypt.

He wanted me to eventually go there to use my position in the country to talk to Muslim women and encourage the fledgling women's rights movement. In

the beginning I thought this to be a great idea. I had seen Muslim women on TV programs and I thought they



were a poor oppressed group. I wanted to lead them to the light of 20th century freedom.

With this intention, I went to college and began



personal effort to educate me about Islam. May Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) increase his "Ajar" (Reward)! He would give me Da'wah (Invitation towards Islam) at every opportunity which presented itself.

One day, this man contacted me, and he told me about a group of Muslims who were visiting in the town. He wanted me to meet them. I agreed and went to meet with them after 'Ishaa Salaah (Night prayer). I was led to a room with at least 20 men inside. They all made space for me to sit, and I was placed face to face with an elderly Pakistani gentleman.

my education. I studied Quraan i.e. Muslim's Holy Scripture, Hadeeth i.e. the Tradition (Sayings and Practices) of Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (SallAllaahu 'Alaihe WaSallam) and Islamic history i.e. history of Muslim across the globe over centuries. I also studied the way I could use (or manipulate) this information (against Islam and Muslims). I learned how to twist the words to say what I wanted them to say. It was a valuable tool. Once I started learning, however, I began to be intrigued by this Message (embedded in Quraan and Hadeeth). It made sense. That was very scary. Therefore, in order to counteract this effect (of challenging my the then Beliefs), I began to take classes in Christianity.

I chose to take classes with a professor on campus because he had a good reputation and had a Ph.D. in Theology from Harvard University.

I felt I was in good hands. I was, but not for the reasons I thought. It turns out that this professor was a Unitarian Christian. He did not believe in the trinity or the divinity of Jesus. In actuality, he believed that Jesus was a Prophet.

He proceeded to prove this by taking the Bible from its sources in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic and showed how and where the changes had been made. He showed historical events, which shaped and followed these changes. By the time I finished this class, my Deen (Religion i.e. firm belief in Christianity) had been destroyed, but I was still not ready to accept Islam.

As time went on, I continued to study, for myself and for my future career. This took about three years. In this time, I would question Muslims about their beliefs.

One of the individuals I questioned was a Muslim brother with the MSA. Alhamdulillah! He saw my interest in the Deen (Religion), and made it a

Maa Shaa Allah! This brother was a very knowledgeable man in matters of Christianity. He and I discussed and argued the varying parts of the Bible and the Quraan until the Fajr Salaah (Dawn prayer). At this point, after having listened to this wise man telling me what I already knew, based on the classes I had taken in Christianity, he did what no other individual had ever done.

He invited me to become a Muslim. In those three years, I had been searching and researching, no one had ever invited me. I had been taught, argued with and even insulted, but never invited. May Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) guide us all!

So when he invited me, it clicked. I realized this was the time. I knew it was the truth, and I had to make a decision. Alhamdulillah! Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) opened my heart, and I said:

"Yes. I want to be a Muslim."

With that, the man led me to Shahaadah, in English and in Arabic:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

"I testify that there is no God but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

I swear by Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)! When I took the Shahaadah, I felt the strangest sensation. I felt as if a huge, physical weight had just been lifted off my chest; I gasped for breath as if I were breathing for the first time in my life.

Alhamdulillah! Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa) had given me a new life, a clean slate, a chance for Jannah (Paradise), and I pray that I live the rest of my days and die as a Muslim. Aameen!

UNVEILING THE DIVINE PROCESSES

Brother Zaid Mu'aaz Khalid
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In this article, we will explore the scientific miracles of the Quraan, the Holy Book of Islam. As Muslims, we firmly believe that the Quraan is not only a means of guidance but also a treasure trove of scientific wonders that testify to its Divine origin.



Let's delve into some of the incredible scientific miracles found within the Quraan.

1. Embryonic Development

The Quraan accurately describes the stages of embryonic development centuries before modern science discovered it. For instance, the Quraan mentions that the sperm-drop is placed in resting place (womb), and in later stages, bones and flesh develop around it.

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النَّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا
الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْلًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْلَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ
خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

"Then We made him a sperm-drop in a firm resting place. Then We turned the sperm-drop into a clot, then We turned the clot into a fetus-lump, then We turned the fetus-lump into bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh; thereafter We developed it into another creature."

(Al-Muminoon 23:13,14)



The Quraan's accurate depiction of early human development serves as a testimony to the divine authorship of the Quraan.

2. Creation of the Universe

The Quraan explains the creation of the universe through a series of stages that has been offered the Big Bang Theory of modern science though Quraan declares it under Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa)'s command and not without Divine intervention. The Quraan describes how the heavens and the earth were joined together and then separated, and how the universe is constantly expanding.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتْ رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا ۗ

"Do the disbelievers not realize that the heavens and earth were "once" one mass then We split them apart?"

(Al-Anbiyaa 21:30)

The Quraan further describes at another place:

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ

"And it is We who have built the universe with [Our creative] power; and, verily, it is We who are steadily expanding it."

About fifteen centuries later, in 1929, by using the

largest telescope of the time Edwin Hubble discovered that the more distant a galaxy is from us, the faster it appears to be receding into space. This means that the universe is expanding uniformly in all directions.

These descriptions in the Quraan open up human eyes about the facts the scientific understanding of how the universe came into being.

3. The Rain Process

The Quraan accurately describes the rain process, centuries before modern science discovered it. The Quraan states that clouds are formed, driven and then falls back to the earth.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُرْسِجُ سَحَابًا ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ رُكَامًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَيَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُ عَنِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ يَكَادُ سَنَا بَرْقِهِ يَذْهَبُ بِالْأَبْصَارِ ۗ

"Do you not realize that Allah drives the clouds, then joins them together, then turns them into a heap? Then you see the rain coming out from their midst. And He sends down from the heaven mountains wherein is hail, then afflicts therewith whomsoever He will, and averts it from whomsoever He will. The flash of its lightening takes away the sights."

These descriptions in the Quraan demonstrate the Divine knowledge and wisdom of Allah (Subhaanahu



Wa Ta'aalaa).

4. Mountains as Stabilizers

The Quraan describes mountains as stabilizers of the earth's crust, ensuring the stability of the land.

﴿٣﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِهِمْ

“And We have placed mountains in the earth so that positions thereon do not move.”

(Al-Anbyaa 21:31)

The verse states that mountains perform the function of preventing shocks in the Earth. This fact was not known by anyone at the time the Quraan was revealed. It was, in fact, brought to light only recently, as a result of the findings of modern geological research.

Also the Quraan states:

﴿٦﴾ وَالْجِبَالِ أَوْتَادًا ﴿٧﴾

“Did We not make the earth a floor. And the mountains as pegs.”

(An-Nabaa 78:6,7)

The researchers, centuries later found:

Mountains have roots deep under the surface of the ground. (Press and Siever, Earth, 413.)

Schematic section. Mountains, like pegs, have deep roots embedded in the ground. (Andre Cailleux and J. Moody Stuart, Anatomy of the Earth (McGraw-Hill Companies: 1968), 220.)

Another illustration shows how mountains are peg-like in shape, due to their deep roots. (Edward J. Tarbuck and Frederick K. Lutgens, Earth Science (USA: Macmillan USA: 1993), 158.)

Modern geology has confirmed that mountains

play a crucial role in maintaining the stability of the earth's surface, corroborating with the Quraan's scientific accuracy.

5. Creation in Pairs

The Quraan describes the creation of all living beings in pairs, male and female.

﴿٤٩﴾ وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

“And of every thing We have created pairs, that haply you may ponder.”

(Az-Zaariyaat 51:49)

Modern science confirms that existence of male and female organisms in nature. This is, of course, necessary for reproduction and survival. The fact underscores the Quraan's accuracy in describing the natural world.

6. Preservation of the Environment

The Quraan admonishes humans to preserve the environment and avoid actions that harm it. The Quraan mentions that the forest and the trees are essential for the well-being of all living beings.

﴿١١﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُخْرَجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مَاتِرًا كَثِيرًا وَمِمَّنْ أَلْتَحِلُّ مِنْ طَلْعِهَا قِنَوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ وَجَنَّاتٍ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَبِهٍ انظُرُوا إِلَى ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

“And He is the One who sent down water from the sky, and We brought out with it plants of every kind. We brought out from it the green, from which We bring out multiple seeds; and what is from the palm trees, from its sheaths hanging low and near; and gardens of grapes and olives and pomegranates, similar and not similar. Look at its fruit when it blossoms and its ripeness. In this are signs for a people that believe.”

Ignoring and destroying these signs of the Lord Almighty, modern science warns that deforestation causes widespread damage to the environment set by the Creator. This highlights the Quraan's scientific emphasis on preserving the natural world.

Conclusion

The facts discovered or realized by the modern researchers today confirm the Quraan as a testament to the Divine knowledge and wisdom of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa). The Quraan's accuracy, revealed centuries before modern science, underscores its authenticity and Divine origin. As believers, we are encouraged to reflect upon these scientific miracles and apply their teachings to our everyday lives. By doing so, we can appreciate the limitless power and wisdom of Allah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aalaa), the Creator of the universe.

