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Islam—the Religion of Action

Dr. Muhammad Fazlur Rahman Ansari Al-Qadri (R.A.)

In relation to human exertion and Divine Provision there are two schools of thoughts among Muslims, upholding two different views. One group believes that all depends on human action free from the effect of Divine Agencies, as God does not interfere in human affairs. The other group clings to the very opposite idea and believes that human effort produces no effect at all and everything depends on the interference of Divine Agencies.

Nothing has a greater effect on human destinies than human thought. What an individual is, has a direct relationship with what he thinks. Similarly, what a nation is, has direct connection with the views and ideas prevalent among it. The conditions currently prevailing among us are a direct outcome of these opposite and extremist views, and unfortunately both are unsound. The truth exists somewhere in the middle.

Those who believe in human efforts alone exert themselves well but when they fail in achieving their goals after care and effort they have made, they fall in an unfathomable abyss of despondency. On the other hand, those who believe only in Divine Providence and have no faith in human exertion fail to achieve any goal at all and blame God for all their sufferings and misfortunes.

Let us examine both of these views minutely and carefully and see where lies the error with them.

As for human exertion, and its plausible effect, the Holy Qur'an says:

“And there is not for man except for what he endeavours.” (Al-Quran-53:39)

This verse establishes the necessity of human endeavours, for man shall not reap what he does not sow. Our effort is an obligation which we should fulfill, and if we fall short in the fulfilment of this obligation we

will be held responsible before God, and will at the same time reap the bitter consequences of our inaction.

But our effort alone is not everything, it alone does not produce the desired effect—much depends on Divine Providence to produce the effects we aim at. The farmer tills the land, sows the seed and irrigates the farm, here ends the sphere of his activity: he does not know how the seed develops itself into a plant and how the plant produces the fruit. Even if he knows it, he has no hand in the development of the seed into a plant, bearing fruit. Who does this for him? The Holy Qur'an says:

“A sign for them is the earth that is dead: We do give it life, and produce grain there-from, of which ye eat. And We produce therein orchards with date-palms and vines, and We cause springs to gush forth therein: that they may enjoy the fruits of this (artistry): it was not their hands that made this: will they not then give thanks?: (Al-Quran-36:33-36)

Yes, the fruit we eat is not the production of our labour alone our labour is a mere formality which should be fulfilled in order to invoke the blessings of God. The real producer of the fruit is God or His Providence. Human efforts, however, are not to be disdained—they constitute an obligation; without fulfilling this obligation we can never expect to invoke the Mercy of God and the interference of Divine Agencies.

The same is the case with all human activities. Take for example a simple one i.e. eating. We may buy and prepare the best and the most nourishing food and eat it—that is our part of work—but to get nourishment from it is not within our power and scope. After eating the entire process of digestion and assimilation is handled by the Designer of our nature. If one's physical constitution goes out of order, the richest food will do us

no good, on the contrary it will do us much harm.

Thus, if we should examine all our exertions and endeavours, we will find that our success mostly depends on the cooperation of Divine Agencies. The Holy Qur'an says:

"See ye the seed that ye sow in the ground? Is it ye that cause it to grow, or are We the cause? Were it Our Will, We could crumble it to dry powder and ye would be left in wonderment (saying) "We are indeed left with debts: indeed we are shut out (of the fruit of our labour)". See ye the water which ye drink? Do ye bring it down (in rain) from the cloud or do We? Were it Our Will, We could make it salt (and unpalatable): Then why do ye not give thanks? See ye the fire which ye kindle is it ye who grow the trees which feed the fire, or do we grow it?" (56:64 – 72)

If the ultimate results depend on the will of God and on Divine Agencies, why should man exert himself in action? Why should he not rest and remain idle trusting in Divine Providence? This is the view of yet another group of extremists among Muslims.

This error springs from the study of one particular aspect of Islamic teachings, exclusive of other aspects. Islam is one single inter connected whole and its teachings should be studied as such. Even like a wise parent, Allah does not want His servants to remain idle. It was possible for Him to provide us with all of our necessities in their perfect form, but He created wheat and left for us the labour of grinding and baking it into bread; He created cotton and left for us the labour of spinning, weaving and stitching it into clothes; He made the earth to grow the seed, the cloud to irrigate the land and left for the farmer the labour of sowing, watching and harvesting.

True it is that ultimate results depend, on the Will of God and on His Providence, but man is not to remain idle; he should exert Himself

in the right direction. Though his own exertion will not bear any fruit, it will certainly invoke the Blessings of God and attract His Providence.

Islam is a religion of action and as such it condemns the life of inaction and idleness. The teachings of Islam have been summarized in the chapter of Al-Asr in which the Holy Qur'an says:

"By (the token of) time (through the ages), verily man is in loss except such as have faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth and of patience and constancy." (103:1-3)

It may be seen that according to Holy Qur'an faith alone does not suffice, it should also be associated with righteous deeds—exertion in the right direction—in order to ensure success in this life and also in the life Hereafter.

All healthy lines of action and human exertion are enjoined by Islam, be they in the field of commerce, industry, agriculture, arts and crafts or politics. The unhealthy aspects of these activities have been demarcated to be avoided. Whoever among believers exerts himself in any of these healthy lines of action invokes the blessings of God and attracts His Providence.

"What!" protests one who is ignorant of Islamic teachings. "Is it a virtue to be a merchant, an industrialist or a labourer?"

Yes, it is certainly a virtue from the Islamic point of view, as long as one avoids such practices which have been demarcated by Islam as evil. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

"The truthful and honest merchant shall be (grouped), together with the Prophets, the Testifiers (of the Truth) and the Martyrs." (Tirmizi)

As regards the dignity of labour, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

"No one has ever eaten a better food than

that which he has earned with the labour of his hands: the Prophet of God Hazrat Da'wood (may Allah bless him) used to eat the food he earned through the labour of his own hands". (Bukhari)

Work is not only a necessity; it is an obligation. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has said:

"The quest for lawful earning is an obligation after (other) obligations". (Baihaqui)

This Hadith agrees with the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

"When the prayer is over, set out and seek the Bounty of Allah." (Al-Quran-62:10)

Those who pass their time in idleness and say that they trust in God's Providence are condemned by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) because they are parasites who depend on the Charity of other, whether they beg for it openly or provoke it with their miserable state. He says:

"The upper hand is better than the lower hand." (Bukhari and Muslim)

He has further said:

"Whoever promises me that he will not beg of anyone's charity I shall promise him Jannah." (Abu Dawood)

These Ahadith and of course many more such Ahadith lay stress on human efforts and exertion. Islam does not advocate idleness and inaction, it advocates hard work. The miserable plight of the entire world of Islam is the outcome of our idleness. Progress is not made over night—a nation does not become powerful and prosperous if the individuals cultivate the habit of sitting idle or passing their time in aimless pursuits. Power and prosperity comes to only those who work hard. Whatever you are, to whichever field of activity you may belong, work hard exert yourself to your utmost, then as a true believer trust in Divine Providence, as it has been said: "Work and then trust."

We have lost much time. Those have attained power and prosperity who have been far inferior to us for many centuries in the past. If we are not awake to reality and fail to exert ourselves to the utmost we might be wiped out of existence (may Allah avert the omen of our sins).

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Mai'raj — The Greatest Divine Miracle

N. S. Hayat

The celestial journey of the Prophet (ﷺ) was the most marvellous miracle of Allah through His apostle. There are two words used to describe it in the Holy Qur'an and the Hadis. The one used in the Holy Qur'an is "Asra" (17:1) which means taking or carrying by night. The relevant verse is as under: *"Glorified be He Who carried His servant by night from the inviolable Place of Worship (Ka'aba) to the Far Distant Place of Worship (Jerusalem), the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, that We might show him of our tokens! Lo! He only He, is the Hearer and the Seer."*

The word used in the Hadis by Prophet (ﷺ) himself for Ascension is 'Urija'. He is reported to have said, "Urija bi" that is, "I have been caused to ascend."

The Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) Ascension was something unprecedented. Although Allah showed His Signs to the previous prophets also, yet the miracle performed by Him through the Last Prophet (ﷺ) was something unique. It is said of the Prophet Ibraheem (AS) in the Holy Qur'an that he is made to witness the kingdom of the heavens and the earth:

"Thus did We show Abraham the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth." (6:75)

But what Hazrat Abraham (AS) was made to witness was not in the nature of Ascension.

Similarly, we learn from the Holy Qur'an that Hazrat Musa (AS) had a dialogue with Allah on Mount Sinai and he was granted Ten Commandments. When he expressed his desire to have a glimpse of the Lord, he was told that he was incapable of seeing Him. However, on his insistence, the Divine Light descended on Mount Sinai and Prophet Musa (AS) could not bear the sight of the light and fell faint. This experience of Hazrat Musa (AS) did not constitute what is

meant by the miracle of Ascension.

According to the Old Testament, many other Israeli prophets had been the mediums of similar Divine Miracles, though of lesser degree. But the Ascension of Allah's beloved Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was unique and supreme. He attained to a height which no angel and no son of Adam could reach and witnessed there that which none was capable of.

Was Hazrat Muhammad's (ﷺ) Ascension physical or not? In the verse cited above it is said, "Allah carried His servant (Abd) by night." The word 'Servant' here clearly shows that Muhammad (ﷺ) ascended to the heavens as a human-being. Man is both, a physical and spiritual—being. Had the Ascension been just a vision or a dream, it would not have deserved so much importance as is attached to it. Besides, had it been just a dream, the pagans of Makkah would not have made a fun of it or tried to falsify it. They rather demanded a solid proof of it. What makes the people to interpret it as a dream is the impossibility of its physical nature. But to deny it as a physical reality is tantamount to a denial of Allah's Omnipotence, Who can suspend the operation of the law of causation as and when it suits the divine purpose. The miracle of Ascension was designed to reveal to the Prophet (ﷺ) the secrets of the heavens and the earth as well as to bestow upon him the gift of obligatory prayers, thirteen commandments enshrined in the Sura Bani Israel that enjoin many things of vital importance. They include the need to obey and serve one's parents as well as the golden principle of moderation in life. The commandments embodied in the Surah are as under:

1. Set not up with Allah any other God (O man) lest thou sit down, reproved forsaken.

2. Thy Lord hath decreed, that ye worship none save Him, and (that ye show) kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain to old age with thee, say not "Fie" unto them nor repulse them, but speak unto them a gracious word.
3. And lower unto them the wing of 'submission through mercy, and say: My Lord! Have mercy on them both as they did care for me when I was little.
4. Your Lord is best aware of what is in your minds. If ye are righteous, then lo! He was ever forgiving unto those who turn (unto Him).
5. Give the kinsman his due, and the needy, and the Wayfarer, and squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness.
6. Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils, and the devil was ever ingrate to his Lord.
7. But if thou turn away from them, seeking mercy from the Lord, for which thou hopest, then speak unto them a reasonable word.
8. And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.
9. Lo! thy Lord enlargeth the provision for whom He will, and straiteneth (it for whom He will).
10. Lo! He was ever Knower, Seer of His slaves. Slay not your children, fearing a fall to poverty. We shall provide for them and for you. Lo! the slaying of them is great sin.
11. And come not near unto adultery. Lo! it is an abomination and an evil way.
12. And slay not the life which Allah hath forbidden save with right. Whoso is slain wrongfully, We have given power unto his heir, but let him not commit excess

in slaying. Lo! he will be helped.

13. Come not near the wealth of the orphan save with that which is better till he come to strength; and keep the covenant. Lo! of the covenant it will be asked.
14. Fill the measure when ye measure, and weigh with a right balance, that is meet, and better in the end.
15. (O man), follow not that whereof thou hast no knowledge. Lo! The hearing and the sight and heart — of each of these it will be asked.
16. And walk not in the earth exultant. Lo! thou-canst not rend the earth, nor canst thou stretch to the height of the hills. (17:22-37)

In addition to the above commandments, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) received the last few verses of Surah Al-Baqarah on the occasion of his Ascension. These verses are cited below:

1. Unto Allah (belongeth) whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth; and whether ye make known what is in your minds or hide? it, Allah will bring you to account for it. He will forgive whom He will and He will punish whom He will. Allah is Able to do all things.
2. The Messenger believeth in that which hath been revealed unto him from his Lord and (so do) the believers. Each one believeth in Allah and His angels and His scriptures and His messengers — We make no distinction between any of His messengers — and they say: We hear, and we obey. (Grant us) thy forgiveness, our Lord! Unto thee is the journeying.
3. Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope. for it (is only) that which it hath earned, and against it (only) that which it hath deserved. Our Lord! Condemn us

not if we forget, or miss the mark. Our Lord! Lay not on us such a burden as Thou didst lay on those before us. Our Lord! Impose not on us that which we have not the strength to bear! Pardon us, absolve us and have mercy on us! Thou, our Protector, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk. (2:284-286)

Surah Bani Israel was revealed about a year before the migration of the Prophet (ﷺ) and he was now going to come into contact with the Jews. Hence the children of Israel are addressed in the Sura and are told to accept Muhammed (ﷺ) as their Prophet so that Allah might have mercy upon them:

(O children of Israel!) It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you....

Lo! this Qur'an guideth unto that which is the straightest, and giveth tidings unto the believers who do good works that theirs will be a great reward. (17:8-9)

It is noteworthy that the Prophet (ﷺ) was first taken to Jerusalem on the Night of Mai'raj prior to his ascension to the heavens. This signifies that Muhammed (ﷺ) is the Prophet

of both the East and the West (of the two Qiblas) and that the custodianship of the holy city of Jerusalem passes from the children of Israel to the children of Isma'eel.

According to Traditions, the Prophet (ﷺ) was received by the prophets and angels on arrival at Jerusalem. He then led the congregation of those present at the Distant Mosque. From there he was led by Jibra'el (AS) through the seven choirs of the heavens. When they arrived at the ultimate tree known as Sidrat-ul-Muntaha, Jibra'el (AS) appeared to the Prophet (ﷺ) in his real form and asked him to move on as it was not in the angel's power to go forward. The Prophet (ﷺ) accordingly proceeded all alone and witnessed the Divine Light and had a direct dialogue with Allah.

On his return to Makkah he gave to the Quraish an account of his nocturnal journey. On hearing it, all of them made fun of him. When the news of the Prophet's (ﷺ) Ascension was conveyed to Hazrat Abu Bakr (RDA), he verified it without hesitation and was consequently endowed with the appellation 'Siddiq'.

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Last Days and Death

His last days were days of well-earned rest, repose and respite.

Now Qutub Sahib was in the company of Khawaja Gharib Nawaz at Ajmer. On the 14th of Jumadi-us-Thani in the year 627 A.H., Khawaja Gharib Nawaz finally bade Qutub Sahib farewell. Qutub Sahib has himself described the occasion thus:

When he finished all this teaching, with tears in his eyes he said, 'O Dervesh, I have been brought to this place for this very reason, that this is going to be my last resting place. A few days hence, I will be no more in this world'. Then he asked Hazrat Khawaja Ali of Sanjar to prepare the Khilafat-Deed, and when the Firman was duly prepared, he gave it to me, and made me Khalifa and Sajjada (Spiritual Successor) at Delhi. I bowed low. He asked me to come near him. When I went near him, he put on my head the Dastar (turban) and the cap. He gave me the robe to wear on. And then, he gave me the sacred stick of Hazrat Khawaja Usman. Subsequently, he gave me the Holy Quran, a praying carpet and sandals.

And then he said: "Know thou that this is a trust of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), which has reached the Khawajas of our Line one after the other. I entrust this to thee. It befits thee that thou shouldst keep it with thee as I have kept it with me, so that on the Day of Judgment, I may not feel ashamed before the Khawajas." Afterwards he took my hand in his hand and looking up towards the sky said: "I have entrusted thee to God, and has caused thee to reach the place of Honour and Respect." I then kissed the ground underneath his feet. He prayed and said, "Go wherever you may live, live like a perfect man." I took leave of him and

reached Delhi and settled there.

Furthermore, he writes: "A man came from Ajmer and informed me that twenty days after my departure, His Holiness the Khawaja Sahib breathed his last."

Now, Gharib Nawaz was in his last days. He had become quite old. He had already appointed Khawaja Qutub Sahib as his spiritual successor. He wanted to sleep, sleep now, and sleep forever. On Monday, the 6th of Rajab, 627 A.H. (21st May, 1229 A.D.), Gharib Nawaz, after night prayers, went into his room and closed the door. He did not permit any one to enter in. All night long, the people outside heard a mystic sound, coming from the room occupied by Gharib Nawaz. At the approach of dawn, the sound was not to be heard. When the door remained closed at the time of morning prayers, his devotees thought that there was something unusual. In short, when the door was opened, they found him dead and on his forehead were written the words:

هَذَا حَبِيبُ اللَّهِ مَاتَ فِي حُبِّ اللَّهِ

"He was a beloved of God, and he died in the love of God."

The very night some saints saw in dream the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as saying: Moeen-ud-Din is a friend of God. To-day I have come to welcome him."

Qutub Sahib writes: "The days I came to know of the great event, the very night, I felt a little drowsy, while sitting on my praying carpet. I saw that he (Gharib Nawaz) was standing underneath the Throne of God. I put my head upon his feet, and inquired his condition. He replied: 'God has been merciful enough as to shower His blessings upon me. He has allotted me a place near the angels and thus underneath His Throne. I live here'.

The funeral prayers were led by his eldest son Khawaja Fakhr-ud-Din. He was buried according to the tradition of the prophets, in the same tenement which he had occupied in his life, and in which he had breathed his last. His funeral prayers were largely attended. People belonging to different social grades and of different schools of thought came from all round and participated in the funeral prayers.

His tomb now is visited by myriads of people, coming from every part of the world.

The annual Urs is celebrated with regal splendour every year from the 1st to the 6th of Rajab. On the appearance of the moon of the month of Rajab, great rejoicings are made. Seven guns are fired, declaring that the propitious hour is approaching. On the 6th of Rajab, the Qul Sharif is held when the Urs terminates. But in a way it continues up to the 9th of Rajab when the Dargah Sharif is washed by the devotees. The Urs celebrations are attended by hundreds of thousands of people.

Descendants

He first entered into a marriage contract with Bibi Ummat-Ullah. She was the daughter of the Raja. According to Maulana Shams-ud-Din Tahir, the children born out of this union are Khawaja Fakhr-ud-Din, Khawaja Hisam-ud-Din and Bibi Hafiz Jamal.

Khawaja Fakhr-ud-Din Abdul Khair was born in 591 A.H. He is the eldest son of Gharib Nawaz. He settled in the village known as Mandal, situated at a distance of three miles from Ajmer. He was a Dervesh of the first rank, and attained great spiritual heights. He was well versed in spiritual and temporal knowledge. He breathed his last at the ripe age of seventy on the Fifth of Shaban in the year 661 A.H. He lies buried at Sarwar, a place about thirty-four miles from Ajmer. His Urs ceremony (death anniversary) is held every year from the 3rd to the 6th of Shaban.

Khawaja Hisam-ud-Din Abu Saleh is the second son of Gharib Nawaz. He died at the age of forty.

Al-Fath Al-Rabbani

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Qur'anic Guidance on the Recording of Loans and Debts

Imam Muhammad Al-Asi

O you who are secure in your commitment to Allah! Whenever you transact a debt for a stated term, set it down in writing. And let a scribe write it down equitably between you; and no scribe shall refuse to write as Allah has taught him: thus shall he write. And let him who contracts the debt dictate, and let him be conscious of Allah's power, his Sustainer, and not weaken anything of his undertaking. And if he who contracts the debt is weak of mind or body, or is not able to dictate himself, then let him who watches over his interests dictate equitably. And call upon two of your men to act as witnesses; If two men are not available then [call upon] a man and two women from among such as are acceptable to you as witnesses, so that if one of them should make a mistake, the other could remind her. And the witnesses must not refuse [to give evidence] whenever they are called upon. And be not loath to write every contractual provision, be it small or great, together with the time at which it falls due, this is more equitable in the sight of Allah, more reliable as evidence, and more likely to prevent you from having doubts [later]. If however, [the transaction] concerns ready merchandise which you transfer directly unto one another, you will incur no sin if you do not write it down. And have witnesses whenever you trade with one another, but neither scribe nor witness must suffer harm; for if you do [them harm], behold, it will be sinful conduct on your part. And remain conscious of Allah's power, since it is Allah who teaches you [herewith] — and Allah has full knowledge of everything.

And if you are on a journey and cannot find a scribe, pledges [may be taken] in hand: but if you trust one another, then let him who is trusted fulfil his trust, and let him be

conscious of Allah's power, his Sustainer. And do not conceal what you have witnessed - for, verily he who conceals it is sinful at heart; and Allah has full knowledge of all that you do. (2: 283)

Unto Allah belongs all that is in the heaven and all that is on earth. And whether you bring it into the open what is in your minds or conceal it, Allah will call you to account for it; and then He will forgive whom He wills, and will chastise whom He wills: for Allah has the power to will anything. (Al-Quran 2: 282-284)

These are the concluding ayaat that follow the ayaat detailing for us the values and ideas about Sadaqah and Riba. These ayaat instruct us on issue of debt, business and mortgage (a conditional conveyance of property or assets as a security for the repayment of a loan). Here we are moved by Allah to deal with debt as a friendly, Riba-free loan.

in these ayaat, Allah details the advantages and the human-binding features of monetary generosity (Infaq and Nafaqa), along with reminders of the brutality and callousness of Riba. This is encouragement of Muslims to extend "interest-free" loan (al-qard al-hasana) and to postpone debts when necessary. In these ayaat Allah teaches us how to regulate this commercial behaviour by writing down, by having witnesses, and by mortgaging (pledging someone as security). Understood throughout the course is that money should be invested through commercial and market activities. And if money is loaned to those in need of it, it should be done with a human sense and bond of concern and care so as to express mutual support and cooperation. The three main channels of mutual funds in a

cooperative Islamic Ummah are Infaq, Sadaqa and al-qard al-hasana.

This ayah, which is the longest in the Holy Quran, provides a firm ethical and moral framework for the management of commercial standards and remunerative behaviour, it tells us that commodities may be sold with a commitment to pay off its price later. But measures are taken to secure this process. This ayah also serves to encourage those who do have money to be more forthcoming with those who do not. It is interesting to note that the longest ayah of the Holy Quran addresses financial issues, This should be a clear reply to those who under their religious veneer, prefer to steer clear of money matters and financial discussions, or hold that Islam is a spiritual matter that has little to say about economic and monetary issues. This ayah plunges deep into the world of collateral, restrictive practices, monetarism, letters of credit, promissory notes and economical use of resources. This ayah is a full answer to Muslims who try to present Islam as a religion of strict austerity, poverty and social withdrawal. This ayah along with the ayaat before and after it, are intimately concerned with the organization and regulation of human financial conduct, showing us how economic and fiscal rights are preserved. They coach our commercial instincts and adjust our market mentality. All of this is certainly an indicator that Islam is a Deen concerned with work and labour. By understanding these ayaat we conclude that Allah wants us to earn, and become prosperous; but He wants us to do this through Halal pursuits and lawful methods.

The general atmosphere fostered by these ayaat is one in which moneyed Muslims spend for the sake of public interest, when all means and methods of usury are expunged from society. This makes the Muslim Ummah a people who express their attention to and affection for the poor not only in verbal sermons inside the mosques,

but also in fiscal spending within society. These trade guidelines and business directives can mold a Muslim society to reality that disapproves of opportunism and idle. money-making, and objects strongly to injustice in commercial activities.

True, there are some ayaat in the Holy Quran that criticize materialism and the love of money. But these ayaat have to be read in context. They condemn money-making obsessions when men become so enslaved to the accumulation of wealth that they lose sight of Allah and the Last Day. This type of money-men become unwilling to spend money, he become smallminded and cheap. He is no longer a psychology nurtured by the Quran but a temper marred by the love of worldly, short-term life and the craving for money. One such ayah is:

“Your worldly goods and your children are but a trial and a temptation, whereas with Allah there is a tremendous reward.” (64:15)

“O you who are secure in your commitment to Allah! Whenever you transact a debt for a stated term, set it down in writing.” (2: 282)

Debt is the act of individuals, companies and governments who borrow money. In today's Riba-regulated society usury is invariably payable on this debt. This usury may be at fixed rates, or at floating rates, or at rates linked to a price index. Companies with large debts are 'highly 'geared' or 'highly leveraged', and face financial difficulties if their profit fall or usury rates rise. Many less-developed countries have had difficulty in 'servicing' their debts, and Riba lenders in recent years have had to 'roll over', i.e. extend the duration of loan beyond the period originally agreed, or write off some of the debt. Individuals in debt because of consumer credit, or mortgages on their homes, also face difficulties if usury rates rise, or if their incomes fall because of unemployment.

All this Riba-defined debt is from an Islamic

point of view totally unacceptable. The sweeping principle here by the words of the Creator is that there can be no interest, usury or Riba on borrowed money. The words of the Creator also lay that such transaction must be written down. This is as mandatory as Salah (prayer). Whenever there is a particular time-period agreed for the repayment of the borrowed money, it too must be entered in writing.

“And let a penman write it down equitably between you

This statement teaches us that a third party should be involved in registering the debt, rather than it being left to either of two parties involved. This serves to secure a degree of impartiality. The writer is ordered to record the debt without favoring either party over the other.

This direct command from Allah to those who have the knowledge and skill to record the debt in writing is intended to ensure that it is done in all cases; the ayah goes to instruct the scribe to record the debt without hesitation or reservation:

“And no recorder shall refuse to write as Allah has taught him: thus shall he write.” (2: 282)

Upto this point legal procedure has been established by Allah for men to make a record of any debt-transaction. From here the ayaat explain how this ‘registration of debt should be done:

"And let him who contracts the debt dictate; and let him be conscious of Allah's power, his Sustainer, and he should not devalue anything of his task. And if he who contracts the debt is weak of mind or body, or is not able to dictate himself, then let him who watches over his interests dictate even handedly." (2:282)

We learn from this ayah that the borrower of the recipient of the money (debt) is the one who is charged by Allah to acknowledge to

the scribe affirmation of the debt, its amount, any terms involved, and its duration. By having the receiver of the money (debt) specify the conditions, Allah is precluding a dictatorial scenario that could develop had the lender been placed in that position. Lender may want to increase the debt, or charge the terms in their own favour. In that situation, the needy borrower might feel vulnerable and under pressure to accept unreasonable terms. Moreover, if the borrower is responsible for informing the scribe of the term of the loan, he cannot then later claim not to have been aware of them. Allah tells the borrower not to omit or ignore anything relevant. But if the borrower is feeble-minded in the sense that he is not able to manage his financial and administrative affairs, or if he is infirm (because he is under-age or mentally incompetent), or is incapable of speaking or comprehending basic arithmetic, or if he has some disabling disease, such as Alzheimer's, or is otherwise physically or mentally disqualified, then his guardian should provide the terms and details of the loan, justly and fairly, 'Equitably' in the ayah is justice. Justice is because the guardian may be tempted that, because the burden of debt is not their own, they can be careless or unduly liberal for the borrower or lender. The ayah clearly provides total protection to the rights and position of the borrower, as well as the integrity of the process of recording the terms of the loan.

It is also stated that the loan term (the duration after which loan should be paid-off) should be explicitly specified. It cannot be defined by vague phrases such as “the loan is due when the next snowfall occurs”. This is an indefinite time-period, or a seasonal time-period; the terms of the loan must be specific: the day, the month and the year. Words have to be used that are equally comprehensible to both sides, and all possible ambiguity avoided.

The person who writes and registers the

debt is in a sense to act like a judge. He has to be as unprejudiced as possible. According to the ayah, he can not refuse to record the debt if he is called upon to do so. Should he be paid for this? Some scholars say no, others that it is permissible. As there is no clear bar on it, we can say only that specific conditions and circumstances may determine whether such a person is paid or not.

Then Allah takes us to another aspect of this debt control:

“And call upon two of your men to act as witnesses; if two men are not available then [call upon] a man and two women from among such as are acceptable to you as witnesses, so that if one of them should make a mistake, the other could remind her”. (2: 282)

The clearly established fact here is that a written debt requires two witnesses, who must be acceptable to both parties. This can be interpreted to mean that these witnesses have no criminal record, or a well-known in the community for their good character. It can also mean both parties are satisfied with both witnesses. If there are circumstances that preclude having two male witnesses, Allah has endorsed the use of women as witnesses. Men are particular addressed because when everything is equal in an Islamic society, it is men who are usually involved in these types of affairs. This does not mean that women are excluded; nor does it mean women are unequal. The fact that is often overlooked or misunderstood is that in an equitable Islamic society, women are not supposed to have to work for a living, they are not expected to be the breadwinners for their families.

Then Allah's words guide us through the process of seeing that justice is done:

“And the witnesses must not refuse [to give evidence] whenever they are called upon”. (2: 282)

This is to say that bearing witness to truth is a necessity and a duty. No one can be exempt from it if they are called upon. This should never be considered a voluntary act, as it is a means of establishing justice and equity, nor is this a favour that anyone does to someone else.

Allah now tells us that there is not exemption to recording a debt. Some individuals may make excuses and say that the debt is trivial and it would be a waste of time and effort to go through the formalities of recording it in writing. Others may say that the parties involved are close friends or relatives, or that it would be embarrassing to record a debt when it can be settled by a handshake or a gentlemen's agreement. But Allah says:

“Disdain not to reduce to writing (your contract) for a future period, whether it be small or big: it is juster in the sight of Allah, more suitable as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among.” (2: 282)

The first sentence exposes the psychology that is at work here. Some people think that writing the debt down may be more trouble than the debt itself. But Allah says that writing it down ensures justice and so serves a purpose.

All of these instructions are a guide to our financial and social well-being. This is an expression of Allah's love for us.

Imagine the problems society would have if it agreed to transact debts without putting them in writing; and imagine how cumbersome society would be if we have to record in writing every minor and self-contained transaction! In both instances we realize how practical Allah's Book is. But if a particular commercial transaction requires the involvement of anyone besides buyer and seller. Allah says:

“And have witnesses whenever you trade with one another”. (2: 282)

This may be applied to large commercial deals. Although there may be no debt involved, if we have two people agreeing on a business venture, such as one person paying another a large sum of money for a large amount of land, it is advisable to document the transaction with witnesses.

The Qur'an also lays out the rights of the scribes and witnesses. We are told that if they qualify for these roles, they have no right to exempt themselves from these duties. The following ayah affords them protection and security, so that in doing what they are commanded to do, they do render themselves liable to harm.

“But neither scribe nor witness must suffer harm; for if you do [them harm], behold, it will be sinful conduct on your part. And remain conscious of Allah’s power presence], since it is Allah who teaches you [herewith]— and Allah has full knowledge of everything”. (2: 282)

Those who are doing their duty must not be punished for obeying. Allah and writing or witnessing the debt.

The directive from Allah now turn to less common circumstances. One of these concerns what happens when either or both the lender and the borrower are travelling and are far from home; What if that happens, and they cannot find a scribe to record their dealings? In such a situation, to make things easier, Allah allows a verbal transaction provided there is a mutual assurance of good-will. In this case, the debt is not written down, but a collateral should be provided to the lender:

“And if you are on a journey and cannot find a penman, assurance [may be taken] in hand: but if you trust one another, then let him who is trusted fulfil his trust, and let him be conscious of Allah’s power his Sustainer”. (2: 283)

This is where Taqwa proves its worth. The borrower with Taqwa in his heart, knows that

he is entrusted with a debt. And if the lender is offered collateral, he should also honour the borrower’s confidence in him. Both sides are expected to honour their commitments when Taqwa drives‘ them both.

“And do not conceal what you have witnessed — for, verily he who conceals it is sinful at heart; and Allah has full knowledge of all that you do”. (2: 283)

This is the direct address to the two parties who are witnesses to their own transaction. Allah is telling them that they should not hide any of the details of their transaction; but he who does so is nefarious, ugly, and villainous at heart. (The word Qalb [heart] and its derivatives are mentioned around 69 times in the Holy Qur’an, but almost never as the physical organ in the body. Some of the synonymous or parallel meanings of Qalb are: conscious, human will, emotion, intellect and the spirit. It is at heart that a person is aware of his transaction. It is at heart that a person expresses good will. It is at heart that a person trusts another person; but it is also at the level of that heart that a person may decide to blur and confuse what was agreed at the time of the transaction.

The ayaat of this sequence end by referring to Allah’s ultimate ownership of all possessions. This should have a sobering effect on individuals who get carried away by their wealth and possessions:

“To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth. And whether you disclose what is in your minds or conceal it, Allah will call you to account for it; and then He will forgive whom He wills, and will chastise whom He wills: for Allah has the power to will [and do] anything”. (2: 284)

The entire sequence of these civic rulings and principles are followed by this ayah that speaks directly to the conscience. Man is ultimately reoriented to Allah. Man has to feel and be and act firmly in terms of this reality. (Continued on page #. 21)

Health in Islam

A Holistic Approach

Islam comes from the root word “sa-la-ma”, as do the words Muslim (one who follows the message of Islam) and “salaam” (peace). The root word “Sa - la – ma” denotes peace, security, safety as it does submission and surrender to Almighty God. This security is inherent in the submission to the One God. When a person submits to the will of God, he will experience an innate sense of security and peacefulness. He must also understand that God is the Creator of all that exists or will come to exist, and has power over all things. With this surrender and understanding comes peace – real, easily attainable, and everlasting peace.

From the beginning of time, God has revealed Himself through Prophets and Messengers, who have come with one message. Worship God, without partners, without offspring and without intermediaries. The rules and laws were sometimes different, because they were applicable for the people of a particular time or place, but the creed of each Messenger was the same. Worship Me, and your reward will be contentment in this life and in the hereafter. When Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) came, in the 7th century, BCE, his message was slightly different. He called to the worship of the One God, but his call was for all of humankind. The message was now complete and revealed for all places, and in all times.

Islam was completed for the benefit of all who will exist, until the final Day of Judgment. It is not a religion belonging to the Arabs, although Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, was an Arab, nor is it a religion for the Asian countries or the third world. Muslims exist in all continents and come from all races and ethnicities. There are Muslims in New York, Sydney, Cape Town and Berlin as well as Cairo, Kuala Lumpur

and Dubai. Muslims are as diverse as this magnificent planet. Islam is also not a religion that accepts part time or half-hearted commitment. Islam is a way of life;

Islam is a holistic way of life. When God created the world, He did not abandon it to instability and insecurity, quite the contrary, He sent guidance. He sent a rope, firm and steady, and by holding tightly to this rope an insignificant human being can achieve greatness and eternal peace. A Muslim strives to obey God’s commandments and does so by following God’s guide to life - the Quran, and the authentic teachings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

The Quran is a book of guidance and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) explain and in some cases expand on that guidance. Islam, as a complete way of life, stresses the importance of maintaining good health and offers the ways and the means to cope with ill health. The Quran is a book of wisdom. It is a book full of the wonder and glory of God, and a testament to His mercy and justice.

Through His infinite mercy, God has provided us with a holistic approach to life, one that covers all aspects, spiritual, emotional and physical. When God created humankind, He did so for one purpose – to worship Him.

“And I (God) created not the jinn and humankind, except to worship Me (Alone).”
(Quran 51:56)

The comprehensiveness of Islam allows every aspect of life, from sleeping and washing, to praying and working, to be an act of worship. One who is truly submitted to God is grateful for the countless blessings in his or her life and wants to thank and praise God for His generosity, kindness and mercy. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) explained that we should be thankful to God in every situation, whether we perceive it to be good or bad.

The reality is that God is just, therefore, whatever situation a believer finds himself in, he knows there is goodness and wisdom embedded in it.

“Indeed amazing are the affairs of a believer! They are all for his benefit. If he is granted ease then he is thankful, and this is good for him. And if he is afflicted with a hardship, he perseveres, and this is good for him.” (Muslim)

The life of this world is not stable. Every person goes through stages and phases; happiness is followed by sadness and then relief or joy, ones’ faith is strong and unconquerable, and seemingly, for no reason it plummets, next, by the will of God it slowly rises again. Periods of great fitness and health are followed by injury or, sickness, but with each twinge of pain or suffering a true believer feels some of his sins fall away.

“Whenever a Muslim is afflicted by harm, God will expiate his sins, like leaves drop from a tree.” (Bukhari and Muslim).

Islam teaches us to be concerned, about the whole person. Following the guidance and commandments of God allows us to face illness and injury with patience. Complaining and bemoaning our situation will achieve nothing but more pain and suffering. Our bodies and minds have been given to us as a trust, and we are responsible for them.

Quran Is Healing

Islam takes a holistic approach to health. Just as religious life is inseparable from secular life, physical, emotional and spiritual health cannot be separated; they are three parts that make a completely healthy person. When one part is injured or unhealthy, the other parts suffer. If a person is physically ill or injured it may be difficult to concentrate on anything but the pain. If a person is emotionally unwell, he or she may not be able to take care of him or herself properly or find their minds distracted from

the realities of life.

When speaking to his followers Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) spoke of the strong believer being better than a weak believer, in the eyes of God. [Saheeh Bukhari]. The word strong here can mean strength in faith or in character, but it can equally mean health. Our bodies are a trust from God and we are accountable for how we look after our health. Although physical and emotional health is important, spiritual health needs to be the first priority in our lives. If a person is in spiritual difficulty, then life can begin to unravel and problems may occur in all areas.

Injury and illness can happen for many reasons, however it is important to acknowledge and accept that nothing happens in this world accept with the permission of God.

“And with Him are the keys of the unseen; no one knows them except Him. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it. And no grain is there within the darknesses of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that is [written] in a clear record.” (Quran 6:59)

This world is but a transient place, beautified for us by the things we covet, spouses, children, wealth and luxury. Yet these are just passing pleasures and temporary joys compared to the contentment and extreme beauty that is Paradise. To help us secure a place in Paradise God places trials and obstacles in our way. He tests our patience and gratitude and provides us with ways and means of overcoming the obstacles. God is also merciful and just, so we can be sure that whatever trials we face God designed them to help us secure a place of eternal bliss. Injury and ill health are trials and tests that we must face with patience, forbearance and above all acceptance.

Accepting a trial does not mean that we do nothing, of course we try to overcome it and

learn from it. Accepting means facing the trial patiently armed with the weapons God has provided for us. The greatest of these weapons is the Quran, a book of guidance, filled with mercy and healing. The Quran is not a textbook or book of medicine, but it does contain guidance that promotes good health and healing.

“O mankind! There has come to you a good advice from your Lord (i.e. the Quran), and a healing for that which is in your hearts.” (Quran 10:57)

“And We send down from the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe...” (Quran 17:82)

There is no doubt that the words and verses of Quran contain a healing for humankind's woes and ills. It was narrated in the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, that certain verses and chapters by God's will could bring about healing from disease and distress. Slowly over the years, we have begun to rely more on medicines and physical remedies rather than the spiritual remedies prescribed by Islam. If faith is strong and unwavering, the effect of spiritual remedies may be fast and efficient.

From the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) comes the story of the man whom the Prophet sent on a mission. He camped close by to some people who did not show him any hospitality. When the leader of the nearby camp was bitten by a snake, they went to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)'s companion for help. He recited the opening chapter of the Quran over the afflicted man and he arose *“as if released from a chain”*. [Saheeh Bukhari].

It is important to seek a cure from the Quran, in the manner prescribed by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), but it is equally important to understand that it is permissible and at times obligatory, to seek help from medical practitioners. Our bodies are ours, only in

trust; we are obligated to treat them with respect and to maintain them in the best way. In accordance with the holistic approach Islam takes to health, there is no contradiction in seeking a cure from both medical science and permissible spiritual means.

The Prophet said: *“There is no disease that God Almighty has created, except that He also has created its treatment.”* [Saheeh Bukhari].

He also said: *“There is a remedy for every malady, and when the remedy is applied to the disease it is cured with the permission of Almighty God.”* [Saheeh Bukhari & Muslim]

Quran is a healing for the body and the soul. Whenever life becomes too difficult or we are beset by injury, illness or unhappiness Quran will light our way and lighten our burdens. It is a source of solace and ease. In the world today many people have untold wealth and luxury but little contentment. Those of us in the West have access to doctors and medicine, to traditional healing, medical breakthroughs and alternative cures but many lives are full of emotional pain and listlessness. What is missing is belief, faith in God.

In the past several decades, it has become widely accepted that religious belief and practices have a significant impact on both physical and emotional health. Medical and scientific research has demonstrated that religious commitment aids in the prevention and treatment of emotional disorders, disease and injury and enhances recovery. [Matthews, D. (2000) *Is Religion Good for Your Health* in Stannard, R. (Ed) *God for the 21st Century* Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press]. Belief in and submission to the will of God is the most essential part of good health care. The words and recitation of Quran can cure hearts and minds, as well as overcome illness and injury, however complete trust in God does not negate the healing effects of medical

science provided we use them only in lawful ways. Indeed, God has power over all things, therefore we need to put our trust in Him, develop a lasting relationship with His book of guidance – the Quran, follow the authentic teachings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and seek a cure, wherever it may be.

Diet and Nutrition

Islam is a code of life. Muslims do not practice only during the weekends or festive seasons; rather religion is an ongoing part of daily life. Islam is organized in a spiritual and moral way, taking into account humankind's innate needs and desires. The tenets of Islam are derived from the Quran and the authentic traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), known as the Sunnah, these two sources of revelation are a guide, or a manual for life.

Although, it may, at first, seem like a rather strange analogy; let us compare Islam's life instructions with the manual that comes with a computer. Imagine buying a new laptop without ever having seen any of the technological advances of the last several decades. Would you know where the on/off button was? If you managed to turn the computer on would you know how to look after it, do a system restore, run an anti-virus scan, or generally maintain it? Without a manual, the computer would be not much more than a useless piece of technology.

The computer's designers also designed a manual or guide, knowing that without specific instructions the computer would not be put to the best possible use or do what it was designed to do. Technology usually comes with guarantees and warranties that become useless, unless you follow the manufacturer's instructions. Therefore, because we want to get the best possible use from our expensive technology, we read the manuals and follow the guidelines.

Islam also offers a specific set of instructions that come with a guarantee, a promise of

eternal Paradise. There is no 'use by' date on this guarantee and it allows unlimited extensions. If you make a mistake or 'click' the wrong button the instructions clearly advise you how to make amends and restore normality. God designed and created humankind for the specific purpose of worshipping Him and sent Prophets and Messengers with specific guidance to make our task easy. However, without God's guide to life, humankind can become lost and adrift in a world that does not make a lot of sense or offer any real security and contentment. Lives are lived without purpose or meaning and many people seek out an existence that provides little or no real sense of having a life worth living.

The traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) teach us to cherish good health and realize its true value as one of God's countless bounties.

"And when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you give thanks, I will give you more; but if you are thankless, verily! My punishment is severe.'" (Quran 14:7)

Islam's holistic approach to health includes treating our bodies with respect and nourishing them with, not only faith, but also with lawful, nutritious food. A major part of living life according to the Creator's instructions is implementing a suitable diet. Choosing wholesome food and avoiding the unwholesome is essential to good health.

God says in the Quran, "... Eat of the good things which We have provided for you." (Quran 2:172) "Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth." (Quran 2:168)

The Quran contains many verses of advice about healthy eating that relate to the interconnectedness of physical and spiritual health. Encouragement to eat only good and pure food is often combined with warnings to remember God and avoid Satan. Healthy eating not only satisfies hunger but also has an effect on how well we worship.

“O mankind, eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.” (Quran 2:168)

If one becomes obsessed with food or indulges in too much unwholesome or junk food, he or she may become physically weak or distracted from his primary purpose of serving God. On the other hand, if one concentrated exclusively on spiritual endeavours and neglected their health and nutrition, weakness injury or illness would also result in failure to carry out obligatory worship. The guidance found in the Quran and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) advise humankind to maintain a balance between these two extremes.

A healthy diet is balanced with a mixture of all the foods God has provided for His creation. The variety satisfies all the body's needs for carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins, proteins, fats and amino acids. Numerous verses of Quran mention the foods God has provided for us to nourish and maintain our bodies. It is not an exhaustive list of dietary requirements but rather a general idea of the types of food that maintain a healthy body and prevent illness.

“And the cattle, He created them for you; in them there is warmth (warm clothing), and numerous benefits and of them you eat.” (Quran 16:5)

“It is He who subdued the seas that you eat thereof fresh tender meat.” (Quran 16:14)

“In cattle too you have a worthy lesson. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies, between the undigested food and blood: pure milk, a pleasant beverage for those who drink it.” (Quran 16:66)

“There emerges from their bellies a drink, varying in colours, in which there is healing for people. Indeed in that is a sign for people who give thought.” (Quran 16:69)

“And it is He Who produces gardens trellised

and untrellised, and date palms, and crops of different shape and taste and olives, and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and different (in taste). Eat of their fruit when they ripen...” (Quran 6:141)

“...and from it (the earth) we produced grain for their sustenance.” (Quran 36:33)

God has also provided us with a list of foods that are forbidden and apart from these everything else is considered lawful.

“Forbidden to you (for food) are: dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and the meat of that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for other than God...” (Quran 5:3)

While sweets and junk food are not forbidden, they must be eaten sparingly as part of a balanced diet, designed to maintain optimum health. Many of the most common chronic illnesses today derive from unhealthy eating habits. Coronary heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, obesity and depression have all been linked to inadequate diets. The traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) praise moderation as a way of maintaining good health and the Quran stresses the need to strike a balance between any extremes.

True believers need healthy bodies and minds in order to worship God in the correct way. To maintain a sound mind, a pure heart and a healthy body special attention must be paid to health. The heart and the mind are nourished by remembrance of God, and worship performed in a lawful way, and the body is nourished by partaking of the good and lawful food God has provided. Attention to diet and nutrition is a part of the holistic health system inherent in Islam.

Fitness and Exercise

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, said a strong believer was better than a weak believer. [Saheeh Muslim]. He was talking in terms of faith and character but also indicating that

physical strength i.e. optimum health and fitness were desirable, providing God gave us the ways and means of attaining such strength. Islam's holistic approach to life and thus health offers us the ability to remain strong and healthy. If God decrees that illness or injury are to be part of our lives then Islam provides us with the ways and means of accepting and even being grateful for the tests and trials that envelope us.

This article, the final in a four part series on Islam's holistic approach to health, will examine what Islam, Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and the scholars of Islam have mentioned about fitness and exercise. In a separate series of articles, we will look at how Islam suggests we behave when struck by illness or injury.

Believers in Islam must take care of their spiritual, emotional and physical health. Our bodies, the most complex of machines, are given to us by God as a trust. They should not be abused or neglected but maintained in good order. As previously discussed, diet and nutrition play a big part in maintaining the best possible health, so does a lifestyle incorporating exercise. Islam lays emphasis on a simple diet combined with physical exercise.

Fulfilling the obligations of three of the five pillars of Islam requires that Muslims be of sound health and fitness. The daily performance of five prayers is in itself a form of exercise, its prescribed movements involve all the muscles and joints of the body, and concentration in prayer relieves mental stress. Good health is necessary if one intends to fast the month of Ramadan and the performance of the Hajj (or pilgrimage to Mecca) is an arduous task that requires many days of hard physical effort.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) advised his followers, to work, to be energetic, and to start their day early, all of which are conditions for a healthy body. He said "O God, make the early morning hours blessed

for my nation." [Imam Ahmad]. Obesity or an inadequate diet, laziness and weakness are all afflictions for which we will be called to account. Even though preventing illness or injury is often out of our control, there are many conditions brought on or made worse by our own lack of attention to diet and fitness. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, said, "*Any action without the remembrance of God is either a diversion or heedlessness excepting four acts: Walking from target to target [during archery practice], training a horse, playing with one's family, and learning to swim.*" [At Tabarani].

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his Companions were naturally physically fit. Life was tougher, long distances were covered on foot, men hunted and farmed their food to survive, and there were no useless recreations to produce laziness and waste many hours of otherwise constructive time. The 21st century contains many distractions and forms of entertainment that encourage laziness and induce ill health.

Although advanced technology has many benefits, it is important that time is not wasted in front of the television screen or game console to the detriment of our health. It has been conclusively proven that obesity in children increases the more hours they watch television. Other studies have indicated that this is equally true for adults. Exercise on the other hand has many benefits.

Exercise increases muscle tone, improves flexibility, enhances endurance, strengthens the heart and fights depression. Exercise also helps achieve significant weight loss. Aerobic exercise fights heart disease and high blood pressure, and reduces the risk of diabetes, while weight training increases muscle strength and reduces fat, increases bone density, fights back pain and arthritis, and improves overall mental health.

Respected Islamic scholar Imam Ibnul-

Qayyem stated that movement helped the body get rid of waste food in a very normal way and strengthened the body's immune system. He also stated that each bodily organ has its own sport (or movement) that suited it and that horse riding, archery, wrestling and racing, were sports that benefitted the whole body. [Zad-Al-Ma`aad]

Exercise and fitness play an integral part in the life of a Muslim, however it should not come at the expense of religious obligations, nor should it infringe upon the time spent with family members. In accordance with the holistic approach to life, which is Islam, everything must be done in moderation. There is no allowance for extreme or fanatical behaviour. Letting an exercise regime or a sport take over your life is against the teachings of Islam that call for a middle path and a balanced approach. Exercise and fitness should also not involve unnecessary mixing of the sexes or wearing clothing that exposes the parts of the body that should be kept hidden.

Islam encourages anything that promotes refreshing the mind or revitalizing the body provided it does not lead to or involve sin, cause harm, or hamper or delay religious obligations. The traditions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) undoubtedly encourage involvement in sporting activities as a way to promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage brotherly love and family togetherness.

(Continued from page #. 14)

The laws that men live by do not mean anything if they are not rooted in man's heart. There is a mutually beneficial relationship between the moral conviction that a Muslim gains by conforming to Allah deep down inside his own self and the legal regulations that Muslim adhere to by acceding to Allah's laws. Both of these come from the same source. Allah created the

In a narration recorded by Imam Bukhari (a scholar who compiled Prophetic Traditions), it states that "*The Prophet passed by some people from the tribe of Aslam while they were competing in archery (in the market). He said to them, 'Shoot children of Ishmael (Prophet) your father was a skilled marksman. Shoot and I am with so and so.' One of the two teams therein stopped shooting. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, 'why do not you shoot?' They answered, 'How could we shoot while you are with them (the other team). He then said, 'Shoot and I am with you all.'*" (Bukhari: Kitāb al-Jihād was-Siyar).

In another tradition: "*Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) beloved wife Aisha mentions their love of games and sports. She said, "I raced with the Prophet and I beat him. Later when I had put on some weight, we raced again and he won. Then he said, 'this cancels that (referring to the previous race).'"* (Abu-Dawood, Musnad Ahmed)

A true believer recognizes the wonder of the human body and is grateful to the Creator. This gratitude is shown in the care and attention given to maintaining optimum health. Islam's holistic approach to health covers all aspects of the mind, body and soul. A truly health-conscious person blends diet, nutrition and exercise with the remembrance of God and an intention to fulfill all their religious obligations.

souls and He created human society; only He knows how to have both live in peace and security. Allah cares for us so much that He gave us these precious ayaat to help live a balanced and healthy life. This is something that no other political system, academic philosophy, or man-made ideology can do.

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Role of Ibadah in Developing the Islamic Personality

Prof. Ismail Faruqi

In all the religions of the world, ibadah or worship means a ritual consisting of legomena (i.e., things thought or recited) and dromena (things done or acted) performed by man, more often regularly rather than at random, by which man adores, thanks or petitions God or ultimate reality. According to this definition, ibadah in Islam refers to the "five pillars", viz., al-Shahadah, al-Salat, al-Zakat, al-Siyam and al-Hajj.

There is yet another meaning to ibadah in Islam. This meaning, however, is unique, and it is found only in Islam. Ibadah means any and all actions entered into for the sake of God, and fulfillment of the general imperative of Islam regarding human life on earth. This general imperative flows from the essence of religious experience in Islam. Briefly expressed, this essence is Tawhid the affirmation that "No God is God but Allah" or "لا اله الا الله". In both, its metaphysical sense - which regards Allah ta'ala as the ultimate cause of all events, the ultimate source of all beings, the eternal Creator, and in its axiological sense - which regard Allah ta'ala as the ultimate end of all ends, that which makes all good, the Master and Judge, the affirmation of tawhid implies that God is indeed the determinant of man's whole life. Man and purpose of his existence is to serve God; i.e., to fulfill His will. The divine will, immutable and ubiquitous in space and time, consists of patterns, or sunnah, which are imbedded in the world of nature (which are, hence, always, fulfilled with the necessity of natural laws), and of laws or commandments, awamir or shariah which are revealed for man to fulfill deliberately and in freedom. The human situation is indeed exactly as Allah ta'ala has described

it is His Holy Book "I have not created jinn and mankind but to serve Me".

The content of this service, Islam teaches, is to affirm life, to live it to the full, to procreate, to learn, to grow, to have and to enjoy, as well as to do so in loyalty to God, in justice, in charity, in concern and responsibility, in individual personal life as well as in family and society. That is why the Hadith has told us that "a day of learning is better than the ibadah (in the first sense) of 50 years"; that pursuit of livelihood for oneself and one's family is ibadah, that jihad bilmal (spending of one's substance) and bil Nafs (laying down of one's life) is Ibadah; that every act of self-exertion in the cause of God is Ibadah.

Obviously, in this sense, Ibadah is the very business and substance of life, its sustenance and promotion, as well as the building of society, of social institutions, of culture and civilization. What role does such Ibadah play in the development of the Islamic personality?

This ibadah (in the second, more general sense of fulfilling one's reason for existing) makes of its seeker "a man of Tawhid", a man with a distinct personality. The Tawhidi man is a man possessed, enchanted. Every movement of his wakefulness is filled with the presence of God, the ultimate cause and purpose-. He sees God's work in everything that is or happens around him. In his mind, Subhan Allah, Ma sha'a Allah, Al Hamdu Lillah, La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah, Inna lillahi wa Inna ilalhi raji'un reverberate through his mind constantly. His heart is always moved by the desire for the good," but the good, is itself the desire or command of God. So that in his desiring, emoting and feeling, judging and

expressing Allah again is the only determinant. The difference that this fixation or possession by God makes is that the person affected by it is the person with a cause, a cause greater than himself and all others, greater than his own world and indeed the whole world. This makes him necessarily an idealist in the best sense of the term, a man of gravity, of seriousness, of commitment, a man for whom no act is haphazard and every action and inaction counts.

The Shahadah

The social dimension of the Shahadah is therefore da'wah to self and to others in its highest and most intense meaning.

As a ritual, and hence a ibadah, the shahadah is the solemn affirmation that Allah above is indeed Allah; that worship is due to Him alone; and that Muhammad (ﷺ) is His Prophet and Messenger, sent by Allah Ta'ala to teach the divine message of the Qur'an — whose essence is tawhid. The shahadah is an official confession of the cause of Islam, an expression of the shahid's or confessor's adoption of, or belonging to, that cause. It is a modality of existence raised to the level of consciousness; the moment in which commitments to the cause of Islam has become conscious of itself.

Its role in the development of the human personality lies in moulding the Muslim's personality into constant awareness of his Islamic commitment, the promulgation and proclamation of Islam. The summum bonum (or absolute supreme good) which the Muslim appropriates anew through the shahadah, is wished by the shahadah itself to be known, shared and appropriated by other humans. The social dimension of the shahadah is therefore da'wah to self and to others in its highest and most intense meaning.

The Salat

Salat teaches the Muslim the martial quality of pressing forward toward the front of filling the gap in the forward line.

Besides repeating and reaffirming all the foregoing, the salat, as ibadah in the technical sense which Islam shares with most other religions, is an act of obedience to God." It is the supreme act of worship in Islam. It is incorrectly called "prayer" which is a bad practice, unbecoming of Muslims. Muslims should insist on calling it by its Qur'anic name — al salat. Unlike salat "prayer" is an invocation addressed to God in any form, at any time place or in any position, whose purpose may be adorational, proclamational, thanks giving or petitional, singly or collectively, in any combination of these. Unlike "prayer" salat is an act of worship in a specific form, at specific times, in specific position whose purpose and content can be only that which the Prophet (ﷺ) has assigned to it.

Its role in the development of the Islamic personality distinguishes it further from prayer. Whereas prayer is a purely subjective affair concerned with the worshipper and his relation to God, salat fulfils a number of other functions. The niyyat sets up the framework of consciousness required for communication with the divine. The ablutions cleanse the exposed organs of the body of dirt and refreshes the whole self in consequence. A regular observance of the salat makes one clean and keeps him clean, imposing upon him three to five ablutions everyday of the year and one whole body bath at least once a week. The salat is equally a physical exercise of the body, emerging with it refreshment in one action and position, through five breaks every day. These contribute strongly towards the health as well being of the body.

So much for the physical consequences of salat. Its moral aspects are more complex and richer. First, salat teaches awareness

of the movement of time, and punctuates the day. Since it must be observed at its specific time, it disciplines a man into punctuality and an ordering of his time. It cultivates in the Muslim a feeling of equality with his peers, as it must be performed in straight process in which man stands at par with all his peers. It breeds in him, in addition, a feeling of solidarity and unity, as it demands all Muslims to press together shoulder to shoulder and foot to foot. Salat teaches the Muslim the martial quality of pressing forward toward the front, of filling the gap in the forward line.

Above all, salat imparts self-confidence as it eliminates all middlemen in man's contact with God, frankness and candidness since it presumes man can communicate directly with God, the Omniscient; and responsible, since it reminds man constantly of the reckoning he has to do with God by enacting this accountability every time it is performed.

The Qur'an declared salat capable of prohibiting *الفاحشه و المنكر* (debauchery and evil). For by its direct communion with God, salat teaches both the fear and love of God, endearing His commandments and condemning His prohibitions. It is thus the source of virtue and piety, the preventive shield against corruption. Finally and most importantly, salat's open communication with God uplifts man's morale, deepens universalities, his ethical vocation lures him to the life of piety and virtue.

The Zakat

The zakat is neither charity nor alms. Nor is it the "poor due". These are formless acts of altruism, devoid of specification or modality other than that of being given freely. Unlike them, zakat is a yearly levy at a specific rate of the nisab 2 ½ % of the total wealth appropriated to date, above a certain minimum) for distribution among categories specified in the Qur'an. This is why it should be called by its Qur'anic name

whatever the language of discourse, like shahadah, salat and the whole set of Qur'anic religious vocabulary.

Zakat functions as a "sweetening" a making innocent, legitimate and good for consumption of the wealth earned by any lawful activity or means. It is indeed a sharing of one's wealth with the unfortunates who have no wealth. To man, Allah ta'ala made the whole universe an inheritance to master and to possess, to use and to enjoy. He called the universe His bounty granted to man and He enjoined them to seek and enjoy every material and aesthetic value in it. Sharing it with the destitute, however, Allah ta'ala declared tantamount to the whole of religion, not merely to the observance of the command of zakat. In His wisdom, He instituted the zakat as a means of forcing wealth to circulate, prevent economical sclerosis. And He equated spending of one's substance with spending one's life; both being forms of the supreme sacrifice called jihad.

How does observance of zakat as 'ibadah' affect the development of personality?

First, it is an act of obedience to Allah, requiring man to give up for Allah's sake that which he cherishes and values most, the fruit of his labour. Therefore, it relates man to Allah, his Creator, or Master, and establishes between them a bond of loyalty, of love and esteem.

Zakat makes the observant a "party" to divine providence, a soldier — servant of Allah bearing His brand and raising His banner. Second, zakat establishes a bond of mutual affection and concern, indeed of genuine brotherhood, between man and man. Thus it contributes the cohesive cement out of which society is made, marshalling the economic, cultural, moral and religious factors and combining them together in the service of the ummah (i.e. of societal being). There can be no firmer

foundation for society, for social justice, for social welfare and solidarity. A group of humans sharing together their physical, psychic, linguistic characteristics is a community. One that shares together their history and culture and a will to a common future is a society. But that society which observes the ibadat of Islam is an ummah, a new being, a modality of existence higher than all the rest. The personality which is a full member of the ummah in these senses is an ummatic personality.

SIYAM

That is precisely what self-mastery requires: to deny and to satisfy, to deny again and to satisfy again and so on for every day of Ramadan.

Lest it be misunderstood as an act of self-denial, and act of asceticism and therefore a renunciation of the world and of life, as an act of self-mortification, let us not call siyam by the word fasting. Fasting in the religions which practice it most, viz., Christianity and Theravada Buddhism, rests on a condemnation of this life and this world. In those religions, one fasts because life in the world is fallen, "evil", tanha. Fasting is real renunciation, an existential "NO!" addressed to life and the process of space and time. For, it is assumed they are a change-for-the-worse which had occurred to the absolute, to the ideal.

Siyam, per contra, is none of that. This life and this world are God's creation, is therefore good. He established them as man's destiny enjoined upon him to seek and promote them. His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) defined the good, the noble, the felicitous man as one whose career adds a real plus to the total value of the universe who leaves the world a better place than that which he was born. But Siyam is definitely an abstinence from food, drink and sex. What then is its meaning?

Besides constituting another act of

obedience to Allah ta'ala, hence realizing all the values appertaining to obedience to and a communion with the divine. (already mentioned), siyam is an exercise in self-mastery. The instincts for food and sex are the basic ingredients of which life is made. They are the strongest and ultimate urges man possesses. For their sake as ultimate goals, normal human life and energy are spent. Siyam addresses them. It does not deny them continuously, perpetually, but during Ramadan, one-twelfth of the year, and does so only between dawn to sunset. That is precisely what self-mastery requires: to deny and to satisfy, to deny again and to satisfy again, and so on for every day of Ramadan. Had denial been the consequence of condemnation, it would have been commanded for continuous, observance as in Christianity and Buddhism, not for continual observance during one month only. That is why the Muslim rejoices and celebrates every sunset in Ramadan. For the sunset signifies his victory over himself during the day! This is why Ramadan is the happiest month of the year.

Siyam is furthermore an act of "retreat" and self-stock-taking; an occasion for *hisab* with oneself as to one's whence and whither; a remembrance of and commiseration with the poor, and hungry, the destitute and deprived. It is the prime occasion for every noble act of sadaqah or charity, of altruistic concern which is the opposite of egotism, and ultimately for all ummatic values. Its effect upon the development of the human personality is capital and decisive. First, it disciplines man and enables him to master the strongest urges raging within him. It trains him to subdue them to the nobler ends of the ethics of religion. It orientates him — in his physical and psychic being toward the ummah, and thus makes him an effective executor and actualizer of the divine cause in history.

Indeed, it prepares him par excellence to enter the arena of history, and there to fulfill

the pattern of God. The true observer of Siyam is a person ready to be the subject of history, not its object.

THE HAJJ

The Hajj is not a memorial pilgrimage to a place declared holy by its association with a divine act, a Prophet, a saintly person or simply an historical event of great significance. Its purpose is not merely to remember. Hence, it should not be called "pilgrimage". Rather, it must be known by its Qur'anic name alone, al-Hajj. Certainly, it is an act by an individual worshipper; but it is not an individual act, affecting its subject-doer alone or primarily alone, on the religious level. Moreover, it may not be entered into in private, at random or at any time the subject chooses. It is a collective, rather ummatic, act which must be done at its proper time, and must include a specific set of acts of devotion in a specific sequence. There is no Hajj without the Ummah's participation. Indeed, there is no Islam when there is only one Muslim at rest as it were with space and time.

Al-Hajj is making-present-again, a re-enactment, a living or going-through once more of the experience of Ibrahim (عليه السلام) and of the Hijrah from Makkah of Sayyidina Muhammad (ﷺ) and of his triumphant re-entry eight years later. It is at once the re-destruction of the idols of the Ka'bah, the re-establishment of Islam as Al-Din, or religion, or the primordial religion the ultimate norm of man's relation with Allah ta'ala the Absolute as its motto indicates (Labbayka Allahumma Labbayka) al-Hajj is the affirmative response of man to His Creator's call, a re-dedication and re-consecration of one's life to the divine cause. It is a reenactment on the deepest personal level, of the sunnah of Ibrahim (عليه السلام) being called upon to give up his sole son Ismail; of the sunnah of Muhammad (ﷺ) when oppression forced him to abandon the city of Ibrahim (عليه السلام) and seek refuge in Yathrib

as well as a base for launching the world movement of Islam, and of the Path of Makkah and its reconsecration as Bayt, city, and Ummah fused together to represent and effectuate the cause of God in history. To undertake the Hajj is really to be and feel oneself the companionship of Ibrahim, Ismail and Muhammad (ﷺ) as they lived out their ministry and mission; indeed to re-live their experience.

On the collective level, the Ummah level, al-Hajj is the coming together of all parties, all races, and peoples, all nations and states, all schools and classes, all groups of all colours – to the God of all parties. All subdue and suppress their differences in order to affirm their unity and communion. As bearers of the banner of Allah in space and time, they assemble in order to redefine and reconfirm their mission as callers to God as actualizers of His patterns in Space-time. Al-Hajj is, equally, occasion for the ummah as a whole to take and give account of itself before Allah ta'ala; for its leaders, its teachers, thinkers and guardians to render account of themselves and their roles. It is the occasion for the Ummah as a whole to rededicate itself to Islam as the cause of Allah in history, to proclaim and to call the nations of the world to join ranks with them as would-be transformers of space-time, the would-be fulfillers of the divine will in the world. It is, in short, for the universalism of Islam to reaffirm itself, to proclaim its plans for history, and to launch the actualization of those plans.

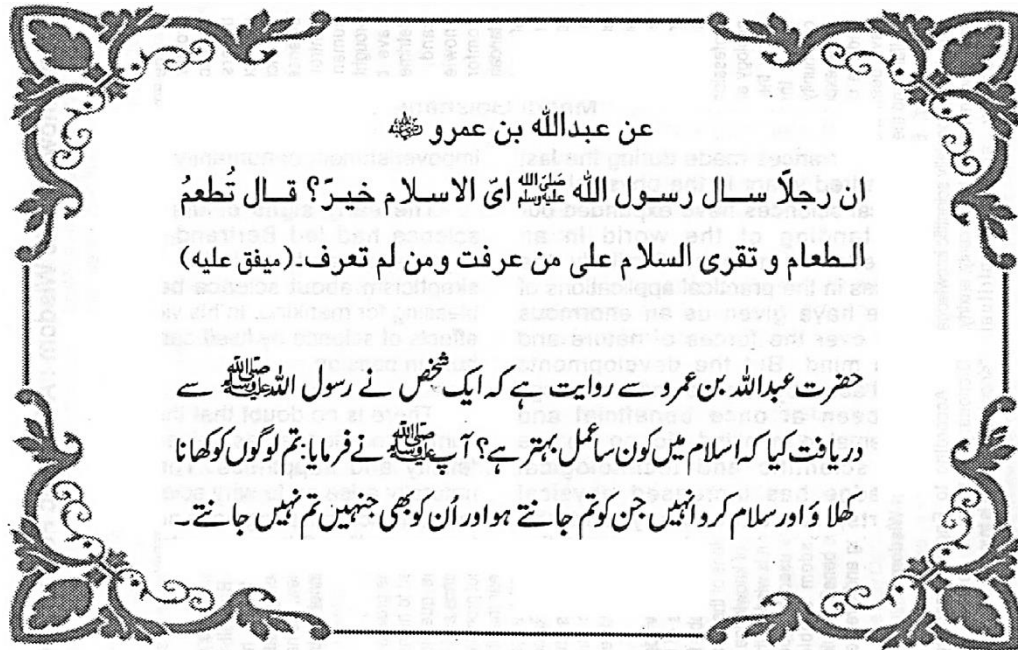
As such, al-Hajj is a unique religious, political, cultural and human event. It is spectacular, indeed the greatest of spectacles ever put by man. No religion and no civilization ever witnessed or sustained similar event, now in its 1438th annual year.

The effect of al-Hajj, on the participant is always radical. It shatters his personality by convincing him of its futility or vanity; and it reconstructs that personality and orients it

towards Allah and His cause. It destroys every vestige of individualism, egotism, every trace of subjectivism and isolationism, every tendency to particularize and nationalism and finally, every touch of inferiority-complex and or superiority-complex. It restores and instills in the participant's mental health, emotional equilibrium, concern for humans across every boundary of race or colour, of culture, language, of social classification. It makes or reinforces his consciousness of himself as an ummatic being endowed with a universal mission. With all this, al-Hajj lifts the participant above the flow of space and time, and confirms him as the guide and leader of that flow.

No system of ibadah in any religion has ever come anywhere close to the ibadah of Islam. None has succeeded as did the ibadah of Islam. None has fitted the purposes of its religion and ideology as did the Ibadah of Islam. That is why no system has ever lasted as long, and none has been as universally and consistently and indentially observed as the ibadah of Islam. Why? Because it is from Allah ta'ala, the Perfect, whose every work is perfect.

This magnificent system of ibadah is yours; yours to have free, to possess and appropriate and teach to your sons and daughters, to your neighbours and strangers, to the whole of humankind. Why? Because it is from God, the system which truly and certainly leads to Him, the Supreme God. Having given it to you as an act of mercy, a rahmatull lil'alamin, having made creation — the whole of — sub-servant to you; wisdom and sagacity, having raised you above the angels whom He commanded to prostrate themselves before you; and having made you His Khula Fa' on earth, His vicegerents; and having invited you to act as to be the vortices, or real aqtab, around which the world and history may or should be made what is left for you to do but to acquiesce and to say with me: I believe in Allah, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Prophets, in the Day of Judgement, in Power of doing all actions (whether good or bad) proceeds from Allah (but that I am responsible for my own actions) and the Day of Resurrection; and I say : [لا اله الا الله محمد] La ilaha Il-lal-lah Muhammad-ur-Rasul-ullah (ﷺ).



یہ نظم حمدیہ شاعری کا خوبصورت نمونہ ہے جس میں تخلیق الہی، بندگی اور ندامت کے جذبات عمدہ انداز سے بیان ہوئے ہیں۔ زبان رواں ہے، اس کا عنوان 'صبغة اللہ۔ رنگ تیری تصویر کا' قرآن کریم کی آیت "صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً" (البقرة: 138) سے ماخوذ ہے۔ [مدیر]

صبغة اللہ - رنگ تیری تصویر کا

سید محمد فاروق نسیم

حد تصور سے آگے ہے تصور تری تصویر کا
 ارض و سماں اک نکتہ ہے تیری رنگینے تحریر کا
 رُحمن بھی تو رحیم بھی تو نوڑ علیٰ کا نور بھی
 ذکر ہے یا رب حمد تری تخلیق کے ڈوبے خمیر کا
 سود و زیاں کی لذتوں میں الجھی ہوئی ہے زندگی
 میرے ہی نفس نے کر دیا یوں سودا مرے ضمیر کا
 عبادت تری میں جب کروں کُل مصائب سے بری رہوں
 تو ڈاٹرے اس سجدے نے ہر حلقہ مری زنجیر کا
 گرفتہ دل ہوں میں جن کا مری لاج وہاں پہ رکھ لینا
 شفاعت ان کی مل جائے بن کے تحفہ مری تقدیر کا
 نسیم جان یہ سر اپنا تا عمر رواں تم خم رکھنا
 ندامت میں ہی قرار ہے اس فانی خاکی شریر کا

جمہور علماء کا اتفاق ہے کہ یہ جمع حقیقی نہیں بلکہ صوری تھی، تاکہ امت پر تنگی نہ رہے۔

نیز جمع بین الصلاتین (دو نمازوں کو ایک وقت میں ادا کرنے) سے متعلق جو احادیث منقول ہیں، وہ خبر واحد کے درجے کی ہیں، یعنی چند راویوں کے ذریعے منقول روایات ہیں، متواتر نہیں۔ جبکہ قرآن مجید میں نمازوں کے اوقات صریح اور قطعی طور پر بیان کیے گئے ہیں، مثلاً:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا (النساء):

(103)

پیشک نماز مسلمانوں پر مقررہ وقت میں فرض ہے۔

اصولی قاعدہ یہ ہے کہ خبر واحد قرآن قطعی کے حکم میں تبدیلی نہیں کر سکتی، اس لیے وہ احادیث جو بظاہر جمع بین الصلاتین (بلا عذر) پر دلالت کرتی ہیں، ان کا مطلب جمع صوری ہے، یعنی نبی کریم ﷺ نے دونوں نمازیں اپنے اپنے وقت میں پڑھی تھیں مگر بظاہر ساتھ معلوم ہوئیں۔ اس لیے ایسی روایات کو قرآن کے ظاہری حکم کے تابع سمجھا جائے گا، نہ کہ اس کے نسخ یا معارض کے طور پر۔ یوں قرآن مجید کے حکم اور احادیث میں کوئی تضاد باقی نہیں رہتا۔ لہذا فقہ حنفی اور جمہور علماء کے نزدیک ہر نماز اپنے وقت پر فرض ہے، اور بغیر شرعی عذر دو نمازوں کو ایک ساتھ پڑھنا جائز نہیں۔

فقہ حنفی کا موقف

امام اعظم ابو حنیفہ رحمہ اللہ کے نزدیک: جمع حقیقی صرف دو مواقع پر جائز ہے:

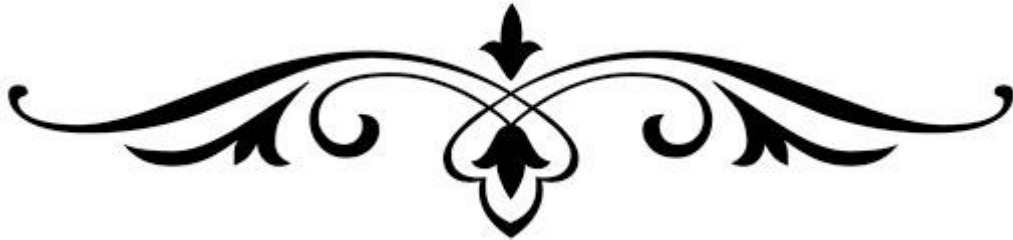
1. عرفات میں: ظہر و عصر کا جمع
2. مزدلفہ میں: مغرب و عشاء کا جمع
- ان کے علاوہ تمام مقامات پر جمع حقیقی جائز نہیں؛ البتہ جمع صوری ممکن ہے۔

حکمت نبوی ﷺ

نبی کریم ﷺ نے کبھی کبھار جمع صوری اس لیے اختیار فرمائی کہ:

1. امت پر سختی نہ ہو۔
2. نماز کے اوقات میں وسعت کا پہلو واضح ہو۔
3. امت کو یہ تعلیم دی جائے کہ اگر کسی کو عذر لاحق ہو تو وقت کے آخری یا ابتدائی حصے میں سہولت سے نماز ادا کی جاسکتی ہے۔

عبادات میں نبی کریم ﷺ نے نہ شدت اختیار فرمائی نہ تساہل، بلکہ اعتدال و توازن کا کامل نمونہ پیش فرمایا۔ نماز کے اوقات کی پابندی بندگی کی علامت اور شریعت کی روح ہے۔ اکابر امت کا اجماع و تعامل اسی پر رہا کہ: ہر نماز اپنے وقت پر ادا کی جائے، یہی سنت محمدی ﷺ اور فقہ حنفی کا مزاج ہے۔



ہو جائے تو عصر کی نماز ادا کی جائے۔ اسی طرح مغرب اور عشاء میں بھی کیا جائے۔ اس صورت میں ظہر اپنی مقررہ وقت میں اور عصر اپنے وقت میں پڑھی جائے گی، لیکن بظاہر ایسا محسوس ہو گا کہ دونوں نمازیں ایک ساتھ پڑھی گئیں۔ نبی کریم ﷺ نے جب دو نمازوں کو اس طرح جمع فرمایا تو راویوں نے تعبیر کے طور پر کہا کہ آپ ﷺ نے دو نمازوں کو جمع فرمایا، حالانکہ حقیقت میں ایسا نہ تھا، جیسا کہ تفصیلی روایات سے اس کی وضاحت ہوتی ہے۔

چنانچہ عبد اللہ ابن عمر رضی اللہ عنہ فرماتے ہیں: زَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِذَا أَغْلَهُ السَّنِيرُ فِي السَّفَرِ يُؤَخَّرُ صَلَاةَ الْمَغْرِبِ حَتَّى يَجْمَعَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ (صحیح مسلم، باب جواز الجمع بین الصلاتین فی السفر: 704)

میں نے رسول اللہ ﷺ کو دیکھا کہ جب آپ کو سفر پر جانے میں عجلت ہوتی تو مغرب کی نماز کو مؤخر کرتے یہاں تک کہ مغرب اور عشاء کو جمع فرماتے۔

حضرت انس رضی اللہ عنہ فرماتے ہیں: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِذَا اَزْتَحَلَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْزِيلَ الشَّمْسِ أَخَّرَ الظُّهْرَ إِلَى وَقْتِ الْعَصْرِ ثُمَّ نَزَلَ فَجَمَعَ (صحیح مسلم، باب جواز الجمع بین الصلاتین فی السفر، 705)

رسول اللہ ﷺ جب سورج کے زائل ہونے سے قبل سفر فرماتے تو ظہر کو مؤخر فرماتے عصر تک، پھر (سواری سے) اترتے، اور دونوں نمازوں کو جمع فرماتے۔

ان روایات سے پتا چلتا ہے کہ آپ کا دو نمازوں کو جمع فرمانا صورتاً تھا

حقیقتاً نہیں، اس لیے اس کو جمع صوری پر محمول کیا جائے گا؛ تاکہ قرآن اور حدیث پر مکمل طور پر عمل ہو، اور ان میں باہم تضاد اور ٹکراؤ نہ ہو۔

جمع حقیقی و صوری کی وضاحت
جمع حقیقی کا مطلب ہے کہ:

جمع حقیقی سے مراد یہ ہے کہ دو نمازیں ایک ہی وقت میں ادا کی جائیں، یعنی پہلی نماز کو اس کے وقت کے بعد یا دوسری نماز کو اس کے وقت سے پہلے پڑھا جائے۔ جیسے ظہر کے وقت میں عصر یا عشاء کے وقت میں مغرب پڑھنا۔

جمع صوری کا مطلب ہے کہ:

• ظہر کو اس کے بالکل آخری وقت میں ادا کیا جائے؛ اور فوراً بعد عصر اپنے ابتدائی وقت میں پڑھی جائے؛ یوں بظاہر دونوں اکٹھی معلوم ہوں گی، مگر حقیقت میں ہر ایک اپنی جگہ وقت کے اندر ادا ہوگی۔

• مغرب کو اس کے آخر وقت میں اور عشاء کو فوراً بعد اپنے وقت میں ادا کیا جائے تو یہ بھی جمع صوری کہلاتی ہے۔

امام طحاوی رحمہ اللہ فرماتے ہیں:

یہ جمع دراصل جمع صوری تھی، نبی ﷺ نے دونوں نمازیں اپنے اپنے وقت میں ادا کیں، مگر بظاہر ساتھ ساتھ معلوم ہوئیں۔

امام نووی رحمہ اللہ (شرح مسلم) میں فرماتے ہیں:

عنہم چاروں خلفاء کا طریقہ یہی تھا کہ ہر نماز اپنے مقررہ وقت میں ادا فرماتے۔ حضرت عمر رضی اللہ عنہ نے اپنے گورنروں کو باقاعدہ حکم فرمایا:

يَنْهَاهُمْ أَنْ يَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الصَّلَاتَيْنِ وَيُخْبِرُهُمْ أَنَّ الْجَمْعَ بَيْنَ الصَّلَاتَيْنِ فِي وَفْتٍ وَاحِدٍ كَبِيرَةٌ مِنَ الْكَبَائِرِ - (موطأ محمد، باب الجمع بين الصلاتين في السفر: 205)

انہیں (گورنروں کو) حکم دیا کہ لوگوں کو جمع بین الصلاتین سے روکیں، اور انہیں بتادیں کہ ایک ہی وقت میں دو نمازوں کو جمع کرنا کبیرہ گناہ ہے۔

بغیر عذر کے جمع بین الصلاتین: کبیرہ گناہ

حضرت ابن عباس رضی اللہ عنہ سے روایت ہے:

مَنْ جَمَعَ بَيْنَ الصَّلَاتَيْنِ مِنْ غَيْرِ عَذْرِ فَقَدْ أَتَى بَابًا مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْكَبَائِرِ - (سنن الترمذی: 188)

جس نے بغیر عذر کے دو نمازوں کو جمع کیا، وہ کبیرہ گناہوں کے دروازوں میں سے ایک دروازے میں داخل ہو گیا۔

یہ روایت اس حقیقت کو واضح کرتی ہے کہ جمع بین الصلاتین بلا عذر، شریعت میں ناجائز اور گناہ کبیرہ ہے۔

حدیث حضرت عبداللہ بن عباسؓ (جمع بغیر عذر کے)

صَلَّى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ الظُّهْرَ وَالْعَصْرَ جَمِيعًا، وَالْمَغْرِبَ وَالْعِشَاءَ جَمِيعًا، فِي غَيْرِ خَوْفٍ وَلَا سَفَرٍ (صحيح مسلم، كتاب صلاة المسافرين، حديث: 705)

رسول اللہ ﷺ نے ظہر و عصر، اور مغرب و عشاء کی نمازیں ایک ساتھ پڑھیں، اس حالت میں کہ نہ کوئی خوف تھا، نہ بارش، نہ سفر۔

حضرت ابن عباسؓ سے پوچھا گیا کہ آپ ﷺ نے ایسا کیوں کیا؟ انہوں نے فرمایا:

أَرَادَ أَنْ لَا يُخْرِجَ أُمَّتَهُ.

آپ ﷺ نے ایسا اس لیے کیا کہ امت پر تنگی نہ ہو۔

عذر کی وضاحت: خوف یا جنگ (خوف شدید یا قتال)

اگر جنگ یا دشمن کے حملے کا خوف ہو تو نمازوں کو جمع کرنے کی اجازت ہے۔

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرَجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا (البقرة: 239)

اگر تمہیں خوف ہو تو کھڑے کھڑے یا سواری پر ہی نماز پڑھ لو۔

نبی ﷺ نے غزوہ تبوک میں ظہر و عصر اور مغرب و عشاء کو جمع

کیا۔ (صحیح مسلم، حدیث: 706)

ایسی صورت میں جمع حقیقی جائز ہے، کیونکہ نماز کی حفاظت اور دشمن سے بچاؤ ایک شرعی عذر ہے۔

بظاہر اشکال

یہ روایت بظاہر یہ ظاہر کرتی ہے کہ نبی کریم ﷺ نے بلا عذر دو

نمازوں کو جمع کیا، جس سے بعض لوگوں نے یہ سمجھا کہ جمع بین

الصلاتین (دو نمازیں ایک وقت میں پڑھنا) عام حالات میں بھی جائز

ہے۔ اسی طرح سفر کے موقع پر دو نمازوں کو جمع کرنے کی اجازت، تو

واضح رہے کہ یہاں جمع کرنے سے صورتاً جمع کرنا مراد ہے، حقیقتاً

نہیں۔ اس کی وضاحت یہ ہے کہ ظہر کی نماز اتنی دیر سے پڑھی جائے

کہ اس کا وقت ختم ہونے کے قریب ہو، جیسے ہی ظہر کی نماز سے

فراغت ہو، تھوڑا سا وقفہ کیا جائے، پھر جب عصر کا وقت شروع

جمع بین الصلاتین کا شرعی حکم

محمد سرفراز صابری (پہلے جامعہ العلییہ اسلامیہ)

میں نے نبی کریم ﷺ کو کبھی نماز وقت سے باہر ادا کرتے نہیں دیکھا، سوائے دو نمازوں کے: مغرب و عشاء کو مزدلفہ میں جمع فرمایا، اور فجر کی نماز کو اس کے ابتدائی وقت میں ادا فرمایا۔

امام نووی رحمہ اللہ اس حدیث کی تشریح میں فرماتے ہیں: فجر کی نماز وقت سے پہلے ادا کرنے کا مطلب یہ نہیں کہ طلوع فجر سے پہلے پڑھی گئی، بلکہ مراد یہ ہے کہ فجر کے بالکل ابتدائی وقت میں ادا فرمائی، کیوں کہ طلوع فجر سے پہلے نماز پڑھنا اجماع امت سے ناجائز ہے۔ (شرح صحیح مسلم)

جمع بین الصلاتین کے مواقع

نبی کریم ﷺ سے دو مواقع پر جمع بین الصلاتین (دو نمازوں کو ایک ساتھ پڑھنا) بطور حقیقت ثابت ہے:

1. یوم عرفہ (حج کے دن): ظہر و عصر کی نمازیں ایک ساتھ میدان عرفات میں ادا فرمائیں۔

2. مزدلفہ: مغرب و عشاء کی نمازیں ایک ساتھ ادا فرمائیں۔

ان دو مواقع کے علاوہ کسی حالت میں نبی کریم ﷺ اور خلفائے راشدین رضی اللہ عنہم سے نمازوں کو وقت سے پہلے یا بعد میں جمع کرنا ثابت نہیں ہے۔

خلفائے راشدین کا تعامل

حضرت ابو بکر، حضرت عمر، حضرت عثمان اور حضرت علی رضی اللہ

نماز اسلام کا ستون اور بندگی کا مظہر اعلیٰ ہے۔ قرآن مجید نے اس کے اوقات نہایت وضاحت سے بیان فرمائے ہیں، اور رسول اکرم ﷺ نے ان اوقات کی عملی تعیین فرما کر امت کے لیے ایک دائمی اسوہ قائم فرمایا۔ چنانچہ شریعت مطہرہ میں نمازوں کے اوقات مقرر ہیں، نہ ان میں تقدیم (پہلے پڑھنا) کی گنجائش ہے، نہ تاخیر (بعد میں پڑھنا) کی، سوائے ان مواقع کے جن کی خاص اجازت نصوص صریحہ سے ثابت ہے۔

اللہ تعالیٰ کا ارشاد ہے:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا (النساء: 103)

بیشک نماز مسلمانوں پر مقررہ وقت میں فرض ہے۔

اس آیت کریمہ سے صراحت کے ساتھ معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ نمازوں کا وقت متعین اور مقرر ہے، اور ان کی ادائیگی انہی حدود کے اندر ہونی چاہیے۔

احادیث نبویہ کی روشنی میں

حضرت عبداللہ بن مسعود رضی اللہ عنہ فرماتے ہیں:

مَا رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَلَّى صَلَاةً بغير مِيقَاتِهَا إِلَّا صَلَاتَيْنِ جَمَعَ بَيْنَ الْمَغْرِبِ وَالْعِشَاءِ وَصَلَّى الْفَجْرَ قَبْلَ مِيقَاتِهَا. (صحیح البخاری، باب من یصلی الفجر یجمع: 1682)