

*“Say, Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and
my living and my dying are for Allah,
Lord of the worlds”*



Chief Justice Faces Backlash As Demands For His Axing Grows

South Africa's Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng has come under intense fire for publically expressing his love for Israel.

His pro-Israeli comments on an online platform hosted by the Jerusalem Post have come under severe attack from numerous human rights organizations, legal minds as well as the governing party, the African National Congress.

One of his former colleagues who is professor of law at Howard Law School, Ziyad Motala, described Mogoeng's comments as mind numbing, misinformed, repugnant and disgraceful.

"It is astonishing that you absolve Israel from any and all blame with respect to protecting and fortifying apartheid. And you give Israel a pass based on an odious reading of scripture. For the record, Israel is deeply culpable in the support and fortifying of the apartheid state and the brutalization of the Black majority."

Not only was it foolish and naive for him to ignore legal obligations upon him as the chief custodian of the country's constitution, he ought to have been aware of the presence of overwhelming solidarity for Palestinian human rights in South Africa.

The question thus arises whether he misread the mood in South Africa or whether he believed that citing biblical references to justify his pro-Israeli stance, would endear him to the country's majority Christian population?

An additional question is whether the setting of the Jerusalem Post webinar and the participation of South Africa's Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, whose allegiance to Israel is well known, made it improbable for the Chief Justice to offend his Israeli hosts despite the legal constraints of his high office?

The answers to these questions as well as additional concerns can only be provided by the Chief Justice.

What is clear is that within hours of his video clip going viral, a backlash emerged, including an editorial in the Daily Maverick penned by a prominent Christian leader.

Rev Moss Ntsha, General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance of South Africa and involved in church-based initiatives for social justice called out Mogoeng's theological support for Israel as misleading and insisted that it would be remiss for the Christian community to leave his remarks uncorrected. The most scathing observation made by Rev Ntsha is what many Palestinian solidarity activists suspect: "...the Chief Justice has fallen into the trap laid by Zionists for millions of unsuspecting Christian fundamentalists".

The trap is an often misquoted statement in the Bible which the Chief Justice quoted with relish in declaring his love for Israel: "those who bless Israel will be blessed and those who curse Israel will be cursed".

Whatever his dogmatic religious explanation may be, the position outlined by a legal grouping of democratic lawyers known as NADEL, leaves him very little room to squeeze out of.

Unsurprisingly they view his comments as repugnant to the values and precepts of Constitutional democracy, international law and basic human rights.

In a hard-hitting statement they remind him that judges have to have regard for the foundational constitutional principle that South Africa is a secular state with a strong commitment to human rights and international law.

And contrary to his patronizing religious attachment to Israel, NADEL reminds him that Israel was declared an apartheid state on the basis of international law, found guilty of war crimes, crimes against humanity, torture and various other gross human rights violations.

"Notwithstanding, the atrocities against Palestinians continue unabatedly despite condemnation by the international community."

At the time when the anti-apartheid movement was mobilizing the world to isolate South Africa, NADEL reminds him that Israel joined forces with apartheid South Africa to evade sanctions and divestment by the international community.

And they correctly say that religious interpretation of scriptures which is based on the beliefs of one religion was jettisoned in 1994 when our constitutional democracy was birthed.

"The Chief Justice's interpretation of the scripture that the Israel referred to in the Bible is the same (apartheid) Israel, is misguided and incorrect. This interpretation stems from the austere Calvinist doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church that provided religious justification for apartheid South Africa, and bears a strong resemblance to the racist Zionist belief that God ordained Israel ('a land without a people') for the Jews ('a people people without a land')."

A further damning observation made by them is that it offends the ethos of the judiciary and constitutional democracy for the Chief Justice, or any judge for that matter, to publicly criticize his government's foreign policy on Israel and then to take sides with such foreign government, which has a record of brutality, occupation and oppression.

In reference to the ahistorical narrative conveyed by the Chief Justice about Israel's 'clean hands' when compared with the struggle in South Africa, NADEL claims is devoid of moral and legal principle, and ignores our history of land dispossession, oppression and exploitation under colonialism and apartheid.

"Apartheid Israel is doing to the Palestinians what apartheid South Africa did to black people, when it annexed the land, confined black people to the bantustans and oppressed and exploited black people."

The demand for the Chief Justice to withdraw his inflammatory, offensive and divisive statements have grown louder by the day.

Will he do so and restore the dignity of the Office of Chief Justice or will he remain wedded to his contentious views which are inconsistent with SA foreign policy, human rights and international law?

If he sticks to the latter, calls for his sacking will in all likelihood gain momentum.

If indeed Israel's lobby in South Africa of which Rabbi Goldstein is part of, had any illusion that to cage the Chief Justice in a pre-planned online Webinar uttering unconditional support for Israel without any regard to the fact that Palestinian necks are pinned to the ground by Netanyahu's murderous troops, they foolishly miscalculated.

The outcry is evident that South Africa has not wilted in its stand for the human rights and dignity of Palestinians - Muslim and Christian - against the racist apartheid settler colonial Israel.

Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng's statements are inconsistent with the ethos and Office of the Chief Justice and the oath of allegiance to the constitution that he swore to uphold.

Iqbal Jassat -Media Review Network



PLAGUED by PLAGUES

BY FAIZEL KHAMKER

The old saying that it never rains but it pours would find an ample home in this era in respect to plagues. The Covid 19 pandemic which has created panic globally within all sectors of society and exposed the shortcomings of many leaders in all fields of endeavour and has seen a reaction unlike any other in recent years remains the focal point where energy is being exerted.

Tedros Adhom the general secretary of the WHO had clearly labelled the corona virus as "public enemy number 1" and has chastised those countries that he has effectively labelled as reckless for ignoring the "seriousness" of the virus. This has allowed other plagues and potential plagues to slip through the cracks and scant reference is made in the main stream media. Besides the connotation to disease it also refers to that which causes worry, pain or difficulty. The corona plague fits all of these descriptions.

In parts of Africa and in India the plague of the locust has also surfaced. No direct link exists between the two, other than the hardships which follow. Large areas of agriculture has been affected and in turn this has threatened food security at a time when the masses are already reeling from the economic effects of the drastic measures taken to combat the covid 19 pandemic. This will lead to shortages in the food supply chain which will in turn cause financial panic amongst the farmers.

At the same time the price of basic commodities will shoot up making the vulnerable having to face more difficulties. All of this would add to the poverty levels and increase the level of malnutrition of many. With the focus on covid 19 resources to counter the effects of this calamity will be limited and the damage to humanity cannot be counted.

Reports have emerged from China that the emergence of a new plague is threatening. The new virus is similar to the H1N1 virus in respect to its source; however the greater details are shrouded in mystery. Critical information such as its effects on humankind, its fatality rate its infection rate and a number of other technical details are being investigated.

We are aware that the reaction by China specifically with its reporting duties has been openly questioned and some countries have accused China in failing in its duty in this respect. It is hoped that the above is not true, despite knowing that to defend that

position would be tantamount to putting ones head on a block. On the other hand if it is true than the masses of this planet will be put to immeasurable suffering.

This bubonic plaque has already infected certain farm workers; however the quantum is guess work at the moment.

We have learnt from the media, albeit in a muted way of a number of other causes of worry, pain and torment. A number of countries have been struck with certain natural disasters such as flooding and fire. The relegating these events and elevating the corona virus leads to inappropriate responses which in turn lead to other forms of misery or even death.

The victims suffering the most are once more the most vulnerable of society. These sufferings are made more unbearable because all attention is placed on a war which created embarrassment to the leaders in the scientific and political field who combined have not come to a point where a solution can be touted as likely but are placing their hope on a mysterious vaccine which would like magic make this coronas virus disappear.

However all of the above can aptly be described as layers of the real pandemic to which scant regard is made and for which no vaccine can be developed. Scientist are unable to find a solution whilst politicians are in reality the primary cause of this pandemic which is daily taking lives on a massive scale but no tally is kept as is in the case of corona virus. This pandemic which is pervasive and found in all four corners of the world is the poverty pandemic.

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Tasawwuf

By: Moulana Mahomed Aslam Suliman

Part Two

Alhumdullillah, we would like to elaborate on the above series. There are four important letters in the Arabic word Tasawwuf (Ta / Swad / Waw and Fa).

According to many Shuyook of the various spiritual Tariqas, it is summarized and agreed by most of them that the letter Ta in Tasawwuf stands for TAWBA (Repentance). The letter Swad stands for SAAFIY (Cleanliness of the heart from anger, jealousy and Greed). The letter Waw stands for WILAYAT (Sainthood). The letter Fa stands for FANA (Annihilation).

We can therefore conclude from the above that when a Seeker (ie Taalib) on the path adheres to the laws of Quran and Sunnah thereafter fully engages himself with Tawba and purifies his heart from the vices of anger, jealousy and greed will become a Beloved of Allah ie a WALLI and if he continues to do so, he will with Allah's Grace and Mercy reach the station of becoming annihilated in the ocean of the Love of Allah.

Why is there a need to adopt Tasawwuf or Islamic Mysticism

This question is been asked by many. Be it old or young, man or woman and even the corrupted people in our society are looking for answers.

As we are currently experiencing the effects and challenges of the pandemic COVID-19, a virus affecting the human species is not something new. Many viruses have come and disappeared with time. Some are still existing. Great scientists and doctors are working around the clock to alleviate the effects and sufferings of those infected by the virus by seeking a vaccine. The proper vaccine prescribed by a medical expert will help ease and overcome the suffering of humanity with Allah's mercy. The result is the restoring of human life.

In the same way, we are all carrying different spiritual viruses with us within our souls and hearts. The viruses of pride, arrogance, ego's, greed etc are affecting and challenging us all. The expert doctors in the field of Tasawwuf are the Awliya Ikraam. They are there to guide us and help with the proper vaccine of spirituality thereby alleviating the spread of evil infections and with Allah's help bring about an inward purification state. This will be the success of everyone who has adopted Islamic Mysticism.

A very great Sufi Saint named Shaikh Muhammad Zaki Ebrahim has outlined beautifully the true essence of Tasawwuf and Sufism by the following words. Readers are requested to study each line and ponder over it as it is a reality in this day and age.

Dear beloved son, I utter the truth, fully convinced
 And there is no recourse outside of the truth
 The claimant is excused on account of what he's seen
 So do not be angered, for what he's seen is sullen
 Sufism is not in the "dance of the dancers"
 Nor the drums or flutes, shouts and screams
 It is not remembrance uttered with corrupt expressions
 Nor is it fainting or convulsing
 Nor it is found in the processions of colored flags
 Or falsities passed off, that anger the King
 Nor is it found in the large turban or the rosary
 Hung round the necks, nor in the assemblies of babbling
 tongues
 It is not found in laziness or claims to sainthood
 Or contriving breaks with natural phenomena, or fake
 Nor is it in the sash or the cane, or one's counterfeit lineage
 To the Prophet, falsely claimed
 It is not in the licenses bought by mere dirhams
 Or occupations earned through forgery
 It is not found in displays of grief and birthdays
 Or amassing men, the best of whom are crippled
 It is not contained in foolish philosophies
 Quoted ignorantly like parrots
 Sufism, then, is but understanding in the religion
 And understanding the religion solidifies and makes men
 Sufism is the Book and what the Prophet brought
 All else is but false
 Sufism is the secret of Allah that He bestows
 Upon those He loves, and Allah's love is a crowning
 And love is but through character and gnosis
 Remembrance, contemplation, repose, and quietude
 Sufism is actualizing one's position
 In God's earth; otherwise it is naught but false claims

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Hajj without a Visa!

Since Hajj is among the most virtuous deeds in Islam, and not everyone can afford it (especially on a continuous basis) Allah Ta'ala has attached the reward of optional Hajj to certain other deeds for the benefit of all.

Since this year there wont be any Hajjis leaving, we can take consolation from the following narrations which promise of various other deeds yielding Hajj rewards:

1. Wudu at home before proceeding for Salah with Jamat.

Sayyiduna Abu Umaamah (radiyallahu'anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "One who purifies himself (i.e. makes wudu) and leaves his home to attend the fard salah in congregation receives the reward of a Haji in the state of Ihram,

And if he leaves for the Salatu-Dhuha (Chaast) he gets the reward of 'Umrah... (Sunan Abi Dawud, Hadith: 559)

2. Salatul Ishraq.

Sayyiduna Anas Ibn Maalik (radiyallahu 'anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Whoever offers his Fajr salah in congregation, and then remains seated making the dhikr (remembrance) of Allah until (approximately 15 mins after) sunrise after which he offers two rak'aats of salaah (Ishraq), will receive the reward of one complete Hajj and one complete 'Umrah"

(Sunan Tirmidhi, Hadith: 586 with a sound chain)

N.B. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) repeated the words: "complete" thrice.

3. Going to the Masjid to acquire or impart Knowledge.

Sayyiduna Abu Umaamah (radiyallahu'anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Whoever goes to the Masjid for the purpose of learning or teaching Knowledge, receives the reward of a Haji whose Hajj was perfect.

(Tabarani, Hadith: 7473 with a sound chain. See Targheeb vol.1 pg.104 & Takhreejul Ihyaa, Hadith: 4253)

4. To recite "Subhanallah" 100 times in the morning and evening.

Sayyiduna 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr (radiyallahu 'anhuma) reported That Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam) said: "He who recites Subhanallah 100 times in the morning and another 100 times in the

evening is like one who performed Hajj 100 times!" (Sunan Tirmidhi, Hadith: 3471 with a sound chain)

5. Serving one's Parents:

Sayyiduna Anas (radiyallahu'anhu) reports that a man came to Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and said: "I wish to participate in Jihad, but I cannot afford it" Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) enquired if any of his parents were alive, to which he said: "Yes! My mother is alive" Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Show Allah how you serve her. If you do so (duly) you will be like a: Haji, a Mu'tamir (one doing 'Umrah) and a Mujaahid (One striving in Allah's way)." (Abu Ya'la, Hadith: 2760, and Tabarani with good chains.-Targheeb, vol.3, pg. 315 & Mukhtasar Ithaaf, Hadith: 5721)

6. Glancing at ones Parents with love.

Ibn Abbas (radi Allahu anhu) narrated that the Prophet (sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "The pious offspring who casts a single look of affection at his parents receives a reward from Allah equal to the reward of an accepted Hajj." The people enquired: "O Prophet of Allah (sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam), if someone casts a hundred such glances of love and affection at his parents, what then?" The Prophet (sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "Yes, indeed, even if one does so a hundred times a day, he will get a hundred fold reward. Allah is far greater than you imagine and is completely free from petty narrow mindedness." (Sahih Muslim)

N.B. The promises of "gaining the same reward as Hajj" that are mentioned above, are restricted to the reward only. It does not mean that one upon whom Hajj is obligatory can merely suffice on these deeds. (Sharh-Nawawi 'ala Muslim, Hadith: 1256 & Fathul Mulhim, vol.6, pg.123)

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In a small desert town hemmed by a narrow valley, there lived a young man. He is said to have been short with a medium but tough build, and a heavy mop of hair. People would often compare him to a young lion, what with his mane and strength. He came from a rich and noble family. He was very attached to his parents and particularly devoted to his mother.

He spent much of his time making and repairing bows and arrows, and honing his skills in archery - as if he expected suddenly to find himself on the brink of a great adventure. Folks saw him as a serious and intelligent young man. However, as is the way of youth, he found dissatisfaction with his people and their lifestyle. But more than that, he would be upset about their corrupt beliefs and disagreeable practices. For this town was Mecca and the young man was Saad bin Abi Waqqas.

Saad was a cousin of Aminah bint Wahb, and thus a maternal uncle of our Prophet (ﷺ). Saad belonged to Bani Zuhrah, and for this reason, he is sometimes referred to as Saad of Zuhrali, to distinguish him from several others whose first name was Saad. The Prophet is said to have been pleased with this family relationship to Saad. Once as he (ﷺ) was sitting with his Companions, he saw Saad approaching him and said, "This is my maternal uncle. Let a man see his maternal uncle!" (Make way for my uncle.)

Saad distinguished himself in many encounters that took place during the life of the Prophet (ﷺ) and after. Saad is known as the first Companion to have shot an arrow in the defense of Islam. During the Battle of Badr, Saad fought alongside his brother Umayr. Umayr was a mere lad in his early teens, and had begged to be allowed to accompany the Muslim army. Saad returned alone to Medina, for Umayr was one among the fourteen Muslim martyrs who fell that day.

At the Battle of Uhud, Saad was especially chosen as one of the best archers along with Zaid and Saib. In that landmark battle, when the Muslim archers kept in reserve and abandoned their positions in the eagerness for booty, Saad remained steadfast, and fought vigorously in defense of the Prophet (ﷺ). To urge him during these perilous moments, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Shoot, Saad... May my father and mother be ransomed for you!"

On this occasion, Ali bin Abi Talib (رضي الله عنه) said that he had not heard the Prophet (ﷺ) promising such a great ransom to anyone except Saad. The Prophet (ﷺ) is also known to have prayed for Saad, "O Lord, direct his aim and respond to his prayer."

Saad was one of the Companions of the Prophet who was blessed

with great wealth, and he was as known for his generosity as much as his courage. During the farewell pilgrimage with the Prophet (ﷺ), Saad fell ill. The Prophet (ﷺ) came to visit him and Saad inquired: "O Messenger of Allah, I have wealth and only one daughter to inherit from this. Shall I give two thirds away as charity?"

"No," said the Prophet (ﷺ).

"How about half?" asked Saad, and the Prophet still replied "No."

"Then shall I give one third?"

"Yes," replied the Prophet. "The third is enough. Indeed, to leave your heirs provided for is better than leaving them dependent and begging from others. If you spend anything seeking to gain the pleasure of Allah, you will be rewarded for it even if it is a morsel which you place in your wife's mouth." [Bukhari]

Saad did not remain the father of one daughter, but Allah blessed him with many more children.

This is the tale of Saad and his mother to whom he was very attached. Saad was still a youth when he accepted Islam. In fact he was one amongst the early few to accept Islam, and this pleased him greatly. While the Prophet (ﷺ) was delighted with Saad's acceptance of Islam, others, particularly his mother, were not.

When Saad's mother heard the news of Saad's acceptance of Islam, she flew into a rage. She came up to him and said: "O Saad! What religion have you embraced that has drawn you away from the religion of your father and mother? Either you forsake your new religion or I swear that I will neither eat nor drink until I die. Your heart will be broken with grief for me and remorse would consume you on account of your deed and people would condemn you forever."

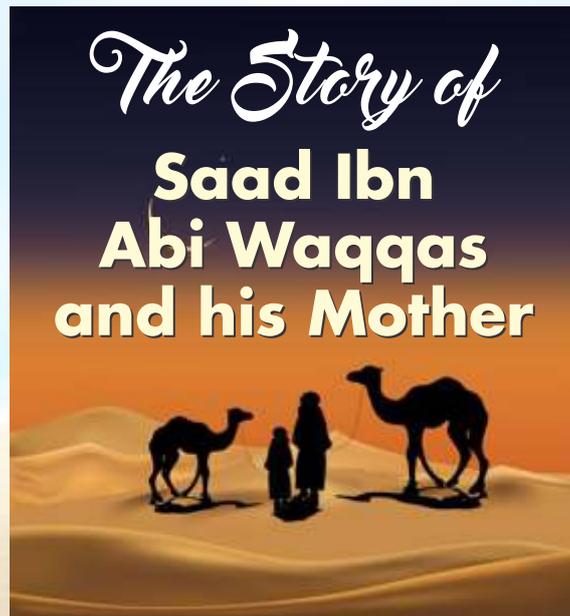
"Don't do such a thing, my mother," said Saad, "for I will not give up Islam for anything!"

But she went ahead with her threat. For days and days, she would not eat or drink, and became emaciated and weak. Hour after hour, Saad would go to her and ask if he could bring her some food or something to drink. But she persistently refused, insisting that she would not stop until she died or until Saad abandoned his religion.

After many days of pleading and entreating to her, Saad finally said, "O my mother! In spite of the love I bear for you, my love for Allah and His Messenger are indeed stronger. By Allah, if you had a thousand souls and one soul after another would depart, I would still not abandon this religion for anything."

When his mother saw Saad's determination, she unwillingly relented and ate and drank.

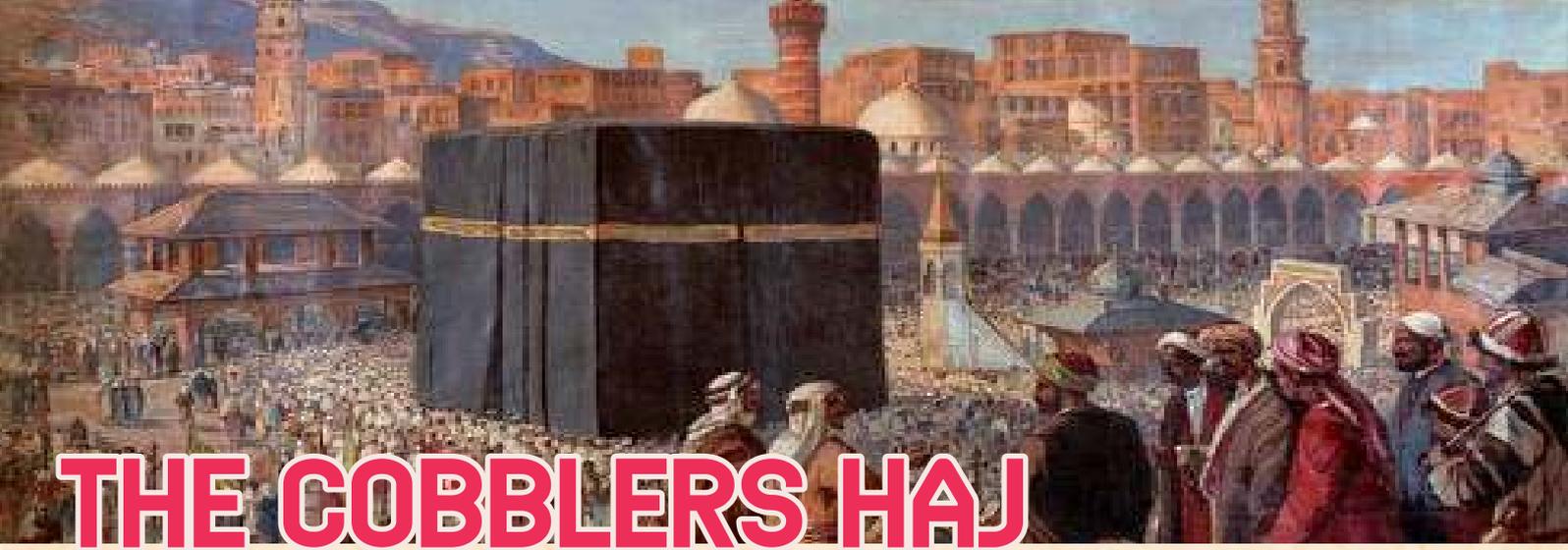
It was concerning Saad's relationship with his mother and her attempts to force him to recant his faith that the following verses of the Holy Qur'an were revealed: "And we enjoined on man to be good to his parents. In pain upon pain did his mother bear him and his weaning took two years. So show gratitude to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final destiny. But if they strive to make you join in worship with Me things of which you have no knowledge, obey them not. Yet bear them company in this life with justice and consideration and follow the way of those who turn to Me. In the end, the return of all is to Me, and I shall tell you the truth and meaning of all that you used to do." [Luqman; 31: 14- 15]



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THE COBBLERS HAJJ

It is related that a noted Muslim scholar Abdullah bin Mubarak, had a dream while he was sleeping near the Kaaba.

Abdullah bin Mubarak saw two angels' descend from the sky, and start talking to each other.

One of the angels asked the other: "Do you know how many people have come for Hajj this year?"

The other angel replied: "Six hundred thousand have come for Hajj."

Abdullah bin Mubarak had also gone for Hajj that year.

The first angel asked: "How many people's Hajj has been accepted?"

The second replied: "I wonder if anyone's Hajj has been accepted at all."

Abdullah bin Mubarak was grieved to hear that. He thought, "So many people have come from all over the world, crossing so many obstacles like rivers, jungles, mountains, suffered so many hardships, and meeting so many expenses. Would their effort be wasted? Allah does not let anyone's effort go to waste".

He had thought only so far when he heard the other angel speak: "There is a cobbler in Damascus. His name is Ali bin al-Mufiq. He could not come for Hajj, but Allah has accepted his intention of Hajj. Not only will he get the reward for Hajj, but because of him, all the Hajjis will be rewarded.

When Abdullah bin Mubarak woke up, he decided he would go to Damascus and meet that cobbler whose Hajj intentions carried such a lot of weight.

On reaching Damascus, Abdullah bin Mubarak inquired if anyone knew a cobbler named Ali bin al-Mufiq. The town people directed him to a house. When a man appeared from the house Abdullah bin Mubarak greeted him and asked his name. The man replied "Ali bin al-Mufiq".

Abdullah bin Mubarak asked: "What do you do for a living?"

Ali replied: "I am a cobbler". Then Ali asked the stranger's name that had come looking for him.

Abdullah bin Mubarak was a very well-known scholar of Islam when Abdullah bin Mubarak introduced himself, the cobbler was anxious to find out why such a well-known scholar was seeking him out.

When Abdullah bin Mubarak asked Ali to tell him if he had made any

plans to go for Hajj. Ali replied "For thirty years I have lived in the hope of performing the Hajj. This year I had saved enough to go for Hajj, but Allah did not will it, so I couldn't make my intention translate into action.

Abdullah bin Mubarak was eager to find out how could this man's Hajj be accepted and blessed for all the people who went for Hajj that year when he didn't go for Hajj in the first place. While talking to the cobbler he could feel a certain purity in his heart. Islam regards greatness not in wealth or in power, but in civility, in good manners and the goodness of heart.

Abdullah bin Mubarak further asked: "why could you not go on Hajj?" In order not to disclose the reason, Ali again replied: "it was Allah's will".

When Abdullah bin Mubarak persisted, Ali revealed: "Once I went to see my neighbour's house. His family was just sitting down for dinner. Although I was not hungry I thought my neighbour would invite me to sit down for dinner out of courtesy but I could see that my neighbour was grieved about something and wanted to avoid inviting me for dinner.

After some hesitation, the neighbour told me: "I am sorry I cannot invite you for food. We were without food for three days and I could not bear to see the pain of hunger of my children. I went out looking for food today and found a dead donkey. In my desperation, I cut out some meat from the dead animal and brought it home so that my wife could cook this meat. It is halal (lawful or permitted) for us because of our extreme condition of hunger, but I cannot offer it to you."

Ali continued: "On hearing this, my heart bled with tears. I got up and went home, collected the three thousand dinars I had saved for Hajj, and gave my neighbour the money. I too had to go hungry but that was to save money for Hajj, but I thought helping my neighbour during his difficult times was more important. Although I still desire to go for Hajj if Allah wills."

Abdullah bin Mubarak was greatly inspired by the cobbler's story and told the cobbler of his dream.

God is merciful and shows mercy to those who do likewise to his creatures. This act of compassion on the part of the cobbler was so pleasing to God that it not only earned him the reward of Hajj but was extended to all the people who came for Hajj.

Hajj is a journey that can ignite the soul to be reminded of the time it was created and takes it beyond the dimensions of this life to the time it will meet the creator.

The sincere performance of Hajj can transcend a person's day to day life into a spiritual awakening of the highest magnitude. A successful Hajj experience connects us to our creator and the greater compassion of humanity.

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Fault-Finding

A Poisonous Emotion

BY MOULANA NASIK AHMED BROOD

Islam places great emphasis on each individual taking account of one's actions. As Muslims we have the duty of commanding good and forbidding evil. We thus engage ourselves, as social beings, in improving ourselves and working towards being instruments in improving the world we live in.

We need to set aside some time during the end of the day to evaluate ourselves and work on our weaknesses. This is one of the best methods towards improving oneself. However, there are people who take it upon themselves to evaluate the faults in others instead of themselves. Looking at the fault of others instead of oneself is highly frowned upon in Islam. Occupying oneself with finding fault in others can lead to many evils.

Allah Almighty has mentioned in the Holy Quran: "And do not find faults in one another" (S49: V 11) This brings to light one of the other reasons why finding fault in others is a terrible act as it can lead to animosity and humiliation for people in the community. It has been said that 'One who contemplates his own flaws is too busy to consider other people's faults, and the one who is satisfied with whatever sustenance Allah Almighty has provided him does not grieve over that which he has lost. The one who observes the shortcomings of others, disapproves of them, and then adopts them for himself is truly a fool'.

Fault-finding is the habit of the miserable. It is said that the great person calls to attention the good points in others while the miserable person calls to attention the defects in others. That is perhaps why losers can easily say, "Something is wrong" and winners usually say, "How can I correct it".

Losers say, "Why don't you do this?" and winners usually say, "Here is something I can do." Fault-finders normally tell others about someone's faults and rarely have the guts to face people; fitting the description of Dhul-Wajhayn (two-faced). Fault-finders also tend to be miserable themselves, lacking self-esteem; and since they focus so much on blaming others, they become resentful; and rather than cherish people, tend to develop a desire to undermine and discredit people. The negative feelings that a fault-finder harbours regarding others eventually consumes the person and this negativity eventually becomes part of the fault-finder's character.

If we look at it realistically we can see that fault-finders are those that insult the honour of others. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam) has said: "The believer does not insult the honour of others, nor curse, nor obscene, nor is he foul." (Tirmidhi - 1977) It has been said: 'Why do you look at the little speck in your brother's eye and forget the

plank in your own eye'. Hazrat Ali (Radiyahallahu Anhu) said: "The worst of people is the person who searches for faults in others while being blind to his own faults". Speech is projection of thoughts and emotions; the content of speech reflects the culture of the heart, so consider carefully how you feel about others, why you feel the way you feel and what you say about people.

Since virtually all fault-finding is conveyed verbally, we must be careful of the power of the tongue since wise people caution the fact that affliction caused by the tongue is more severe than the harm caused by the sword.

In relation to people who always look at the weaknesses and faults of other people, Imam Muhammad ibn Ali al-Baqir has said: "Sufficient is a person's own defect (in himself) that he tries to pick and look for faults in other people when he himself has those same faults in himself (and does not recognize them)!" If those who pick faults of others would spend the same energy that they use in looking at the bad in others and through which they reproach other people, on correcting themselves and looking at their own defects and trying to recognize their own souls, imagine what level of happiness they would be able to reach to!

Finally, a big reason for not prying into others faults is that it takes away from one's own self-improvement. Those insincere people who find fault with others without looking at their own are truly a poisonous element in society. We should of course make sure that we do not have such a shortcoming in us, but we should also try to stay away and not give credence to these types of people in our communities.

May Allah Almighty, through the Wasilah of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam), save us from having such a poisonous emotion. Aameen!



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ETIQUETTES OF Qurbani



ON WHOM IS QURBANI WAAJIB

The sacrificing of animals has been made waajib and incumbent on the entire ummah. Rasulallah ﷺ Himself and all the Sahabah ؓ, Tabi'een, and the whole Ummah from every country and place have continuously fulfilled and up kept this waajib.

Qurbani is waajib on every muslim who is mature, sane, muqim (i.e. Not a traveller) and possesses the amount of fifty two and a half tolas of silver (equivalent to 612,36 grams) or wealth equivalent to that value in excess of one's basic (asli) needs.

In the case of Qurbani it is not necessary that this amount be in one's possession for a complete lunar year, like in zakaat.

THE DAYS OF QURBANI

The act of Qurbani is prescribed for three special days - the tenth, eleventh and twelfth of Zil Haj. Qurbani may be performed on any of these days, but the first day is better.

SADAQAH OR CHARITY INSTEAD OF QURBANI

There is no Ibadah more lovable in the eyes of Allah Ta'aala during the days of Qurbani than Qurbani itself. By giving the equivalent amount of Sadaqah or Charity during the days of Qurbani will not compensate nor fulfill the Wujoob. One will always remain sinful because of leaving the Waajib (Qurbani is a unique Ibaadah). In the manner that salaah cannot compensate for Saum, or Saum cannot compensate for Salaah, similarly Sadaqah or Charity cannot compensate for Qurbani. The practices of Rasulallah ﷺ and the Sahabah ؓ are a testimony to this.

WARNING FOR THOSE WHO IGNORE QURBANI

It is reported by Hazrat Abu Hurairah ؓ that Rasulallah ﷺ said, "that the person who has the means of performing Qurbani but does not do so should not even come near our Eid Gah (where Eid Salaah takes place).

THE TIME FOR QURBANI

In towns where Jumua Salaah and the Eidayn are performed, qurbani is performed after the Eid Salaah and not before. In villages

where Jumua Salaah and the Eidayn's are not performed, Qurbani may be performed after Subha Saadiq (true dawn) on the tenth day of Zil Haj till the 12th of Zil Haj until sunset. It is makrooh to perform Qurbani at night.

AGE OF THE QURBANI ANIMAL

A camel 5 years old.

A cow, ox and buffalo must be 2 years old.

A goat or sheep must be at least at least 1 year old.

A sheep that has reached the age where it is thought to be 1 year old could be used for Qurbani.

Animals that are younger in age are not suitable for Qurbani. If an animal seller says that an animal has reached the required age, and outwardly there is no sign to disprove it, then it is permissible to rely on such a statement.

DEFORMITY IN A QURBANI ANIMAL

There are two kinds of deformity in a Qurbani animal, some deformity in an animal prohibit Qurbani while other faults does not affect the Qurbani at all.

UYOOB- E- MUKHALLA

Deformity which prohibit Qurbani

- * Horns which are broken off from the root.
- * Weakness which does not permit the animal to walk to the place of slaughtering
- * Animals which are blind, squint eyes or limping.
- * If more than a third of the ear or tail of the animal is cut off.
- * An animal that was born without ears.
- * An animal without teeth.
- * An animal that has three or less legs.

UYOOB-E-GHAIR MUKHALLA

Deformity which does not affect Qurbani

- * Horns which are broken above the roots.
- * An animal born without horns.
- * Less than a third weakness visible.
- * Limps but is able to walk on its own.
- * If less than a third of the ear or tail is cut off.
- * While slaughtering the animal jumps and thereafter becomes injured or deformed.

MISCELLANEOUS MASAA'IL

- * If an animal that has been selected for Qurbani gives birth before it's slaughter, or while slaughtering a live lamb or calf is born, then the newly born animal should also be slaughtered.
- * A person may eat the meat of every Qurbani slaughtered, be it a Waajib, Nafil or Nazr (mannat) Qurbani.
- * Seven people are allowed to the part in the sharing of a cow for Qurbani, providing each shareholder contributes 1/7 towards purchasing the cow. If any of the shareholders share is less than a 1/7 then no - one's Qurbani will be correct, (even those who have given a full share.)
- * If seven people have a share in a cow or bull, then the meat should be weighed and divided equally.
- * It is better to slaughter your own Qurbani yourself. If for some reason or the other one is unable to slaughter, then it is permissible to let someone else slaughter it.
- * It is preferable to be present when the animal is being slaughtered.

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Some Rules of SLAUGHTERING

1. Ensure that the knife is sharp.
2. Let the animal lay on its left side, allowing its face to be towards the Qiblah.
3. It is Sunnah to recite the following Dua:

إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ط إِنَّ الصَّلَوَاتِ
وَأُسْكِي وَمَخَيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ط
اللَّهُمَّ مِنْكَ وَلَكَ ط

“Inni Wajjahtu Wajhiya Lillazi Fataras Samaawaati Wal Arda
Hanifaw Wa Maa Ana Minal Mushrikeen.
Innas Salaati Wanusuki Wamah Yaaya Wa Mamaati Lillahi
Rabbil Aalimeen.
Allahumma Minka Walak.”

For me I have set my face firmly and truly towards Him who
created the Heavens and the earth and I am His alone (hanif)
and never shall I ascribe partners to Allah.
Oh Allah this sacrifice is from You and for You.

4. Then say: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ط
“Bismillahi Allahu Akbar”

And slaughter

5. After slaughtering read this Dua:

اللَّهُمَّ تَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي كَمَا تَقَبَّلْتَ مِنْ خَلِيلِكَ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَحَبِيبِكَ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

“Allahumma Taqabbal Minni Kama Taqabbalta Min Khaleelika
Ebrahim Alayhis Salaam wa Habeebika Muhammadin Sallallahu
Alayhi Wasallam”

Oh Allah! Accept from me (this sacrifice) like you have accepted
from Your friend Ebrahim (Alayhis Salaam) and Your Beloved
Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)

6. If slaughtering on behalf of someone else, then read:

اللَّهُمَّ تَقَبَّلْ مِنْ كَمَا تَقَبَّلْتَ
مِنْ خَلِيلِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
وَ حَبِيبِكَ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

“Allahumma Taqabbal min (mention the person's name) Kamaa
Taqabbalta Min Khaleelika Ebrahim Alayhis Salaam wa
Habeebika Muhammadin Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam”
Oh Allah! Accept from (mention the person's name) this
sacrifice like you have accepted from Your friend Ebrahim
(Alayhis Salaam) and Your Beloved Muhammad (Sallallahu
Alayhi Wasallam)

7. Do not skin the animal until it has cooled.
8. Do not slaughter an animal in front of other animals.
9. Four veins should be clearly cut. The throat, the windpipe
and two jugular veins. Even if three are cut, the meat would still
be considered Halaal.

MEAT OF THE QURBANI ANIMAL

It is preferable to divide the Qurbani meat into three portions.

1. A portion for one's own use.
 2. A portion for one's relatives and friends.
 3. A portion for the poor and needy.
- * However, it is permissible to keep all the meat or give all the
meat away.
* The Qurbani meat of shareholders should be distributed by
weight and not estimation.
* It is Haraam to sell the Qurbani meat.

SKIN OF THE QURBANI ANIMAL

* The skin of the Qurbani animal may be kept for one's personal
use, such as tanning the skin and using it as a Musallah or
water bag etc.

- * If the skin is sold, the money cannot be used for one's self. It
is Waajib to give it away as Sadaqah.
* A needy Muslim engaged in religious activities (organisations)
may be given the skin as Sadaqah. It is preferable to do this.
* It is incorrect to give the labourers (who skin the animal) the
skin, fat or unusable flesh as payment for their labour. They
must be paid for their labour in terms of cash.

TAKBEERAAT-E-TASHREEQ

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ط
اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ ط

Beginning from the fajr of 9th Zil Haj upto the Asr
of 13th, it is Waajib on every Muslim to recite the
Takbeer-e-Tashreeq after every Fard Salaah

N.B. Whether one is performing with Jamaat or on one's
own, it makes no difference. One must recite the Takbeers.
Males should recite it in a loud voice, females in a low voice.

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INSPIRATIONS

from the Life of

Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA)

Part 3 ...continuation

BY SHIREEN ISMAIL

The Noble Quran Kareem in Surah Ale-Imran informs the reader of the miraculous even

t that occurs in the youthful years of Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA).

"And remember when the angels said: 'O Maryam, Allah gives you glad-tidings of a word from Him whose name will be Isa, son of Maryam, who will be the most distinguished in this world and the Hereafter and shall be of those brought near to Him' (S3 V45); "And He shall speak to the people in the cradle and in maturity and will be of the righteous" (S3 V46); "She said: 'O my Lord, how shall I have a son when no man has touched me? He (the angel) said: Such is the way of Allah; He creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: 'Be and it is'" (S3 V47).

Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA)'s Miraculous Conception

Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) in her youthful years reaches maturity and would stay with Nabi Zakariya's (عليه السلام) wife during these cycles. When Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) returned to her sanctuary (mihrab) she would increase her worship of Allah Almighty, and the service at Al-Aqsa Mosque resumes. On one occasion whilst at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) withdraws from the mosque to an eastern location as the Noble Quran Kareem indicates, "And remember, Maryam in the book; when she went apart from her family towards a place in the east." (S19 V16).

Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) is now perhaps thirteen or twenty years of age. The tafsir in Kanzullmaan mentions that the purpose of Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA)'s relocation to the eastern retreat was either to bathe or to engage in worship. According to scholars at this point, Allah Almighty sends the Angel Jibra'eel (عليه السلام) to Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA), "Then she put a screen away from them, then We sent our spiritual towards her, and he appeared before her in the shape of a healthy man" (S19 V17).

Angel Jibra'eel (عليه السلام) appeared in front of Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) in the human form instead of an angelic form. Nevertheless, Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) the Pure, was frightened and turned to Allah Almighty for protection. She said, "I beg refuge of the most Affectionate from you if you are afraid of Allah". Angel Jibra'eel (عليه السلام) then explained who he was and the nature of his mission from Allah by saying, "I am only a messenger of your Lord, that I may give you a pure son" (S19 V19).

Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) then spoke the following words, "from where shall I have a son, no man has touched me, nor I am an unchaste?". Angel Jibra'eel (عليه السلام) replied, "so it is, your Lord has said, this is to me, and that We make it a sign for the people and a mercy

from Us, and this matter is already decreed.

"Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) was to bear a son miraculously so that the power of Allah Almighty is revealed and manifested. Upon hearing this news from Angel Jibra'eel (عليه السلام), Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) immediately surrendered to the will of the Allah SWT. The Angel Jibra'eel (عليه السلام) then breathed 'of the Spirit of Allah' into the pit (of the sleeve) of Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA)'s garment and at Allah SWT's command: "kun fa yakun" (Be! And it is).

Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) conceived with 'Kun' that which was neither from the sperm of a father nor of a mother. Says Allah Almighty: "The likeness of Hazrat Isa (عليه السلام) with Allah, is like Nabi Adam (عليه السلام), Allah created him out of dust, then said, "Be and he was at once" (S3 V59). "Now Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) conceived, then she went away with him to a far-off place" (S19 V22).

Hazrat Bibi Maryam (RA) covered by the darkness of the night went to the jungles of Baitul Lahm (Bethlehem), because the signs of labour pains would become visible and the divulgence and birthing of this secret came with many painful ramifications. On the night of Meraaj, accompanied by Angel Jibra'eel (عليه السلام), our Nabi offered prayers at this place signifying the birthplace of Nabi Isa (عليه السلام). Hazrat Ali bin Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) in Jami' at-Tirmidhi narrates that the Messenger of Allah said: "The best of women are Khadijah bint Khuwaylid and Maryam bint Imran."

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOCUS

BY FAKIR HASSEN

Riyadh, SAUDI ARABIA – This year's Hajj will be like no other before it after the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah indicated that health standards are the primary selection criteria for Hajj 2020 pilgrims. The one decision that is likely to disappoint all those pilgrims who are allowed to perform Hajj is that touching or kissing the Ka'abah or the Black Stone is prohibited to ensure the social distancing required. Authorities said that the pilgrim quota will comprise 30% Saudi citizens, and Hajj workers, and 70% will be a limited number of nationals of various countries from across the globe who are already in the country because they are working there. All workers and pilgrims are required to wear face masks at all times, and to properly remove and discard them. Saudi pilgrims will be strictly chosen from among Saudi healthcare workers and security personnel who had fully recovered from COVID-19.

Geneva, SWITZERLAND – The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesu, has welcomed the decision by Saudi Arabia to organize the annual Hajj pilgrimage this year with a very limited number of pilgrims of different nationalities who live within the Kingdom. "WHO supports this decision. We understand that it was not an easy decision to make, and we also understand it is a major disappointment for many Muslims who were looking forward to making their pilgrimage this year," he said, adding that "this is another example of the hard choices that all countries must make to put health first."

Srebrenica, BOSNIA - Commemorations were held at a special cemetery where the remains of those killed and thrown into mass graves were reburied to mark the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre. During the Bosnian War, Srebrenica was supposed to be a UN safe haven, but over 8,000 Muslim men and boys were killed by Bosnian Serb forces in just a week in July 1995. The Bosnian Serbs' military and political chiefs, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, were later sentenced to life imprisonment by a world tribunal over their roles in the massacre, which was dubbed the only genocide ever in Europe after the Second World War .

Ramallah, PALESTINE - British Prime Minister Boris Johnson reiterated in a telephone call with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas his government's opposition to Israeli annexation of occupied Palestinian territory and his support for international law. President Abbas said he briefed the British premier on the latest political developments, particularly the Israeli annexation plans, which are rejected by the Palestinians, the Arab governments and the international community.

Abu Dhabi, UAE - The United Arab Emirates has sent a second aid plane carrying eight metric tons of medical supplies to Kazakhstan, to assist the approximately 8 000 medical professionals who are working around the clock to contain the coronavirus in the country. Kazakhstan was one of the first countries to receive medical assistance from the UAE during the current pandemic.

London, UK - Thousands of Britons took part in virtual mosque tours across the United Kingdom as part of the Muslim Council of Britain's annual 'Visit My Mosque Day', which took place digitally this year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Usually UK mosques welcome personal visits from people of faiths on this day to promote religious harmony and a better understanding of Muslim culture. The tours, hosted over Zoom, Facebook Live, and YouTube, were viewed by thousands of people, many saying it was the first time many had ever seen the inside of a mosque. Participants also expressed gratitude for the live explanations and videos which allowed them to see Islam differently from the way it is featured in other media.

Lahore, PAKISTAN - The Halaal Research Council, in association with Al Huda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics, is organising a Halaal industry webinar series until the end of July. These webinars will contribute to enhance the knowledge of the participants and provide the opportunity to learn about the latest trends and opportunities in the Halaal industry from experts around the world. The series will also discuss the current COVID-19 situation effects on the Halaal industry, said Chief Executive Officer of the Halal Research Council Muhammad Zubair Mughal.



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