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APARTHEID ON ITS WAY BACK

How's this! What if somebody told you its time to bring back apartheid?

Hey, what's that? Are you serious? Surely you don't mean it!

Actually I mean it. I'm not joking. Can't you see just how bad its getting!

Yes but its not got bad because apartheid is gone. In fact it could have been worse had it still been around. Whites-only mentality. White leader, white government, white country! Land, wealth, services, opportunity, all for the whites! And we, the darkies, must be their slaves, and live just for a loaf of bread!

Cool it mate! You're right, I'm not serious. I'm not talking about the apartheid you are thinking of!

Okay let's hear! Tell me what you're talking about, and it better be good!

Good? Yes its about good. My apartheid system says, keep Bad away from Good!

Good people should stay away from bad people. Even the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) warned his people about choosing company, because a person is inclined to following the religion, or way of life, of his friend

"No Arab is superior over a non-Arab, and no white is superior over black nor a black over a white and superiority is by righteousness and God-fearing alone," he also said.

The society of the Prophet (ﷺ) was closely-knit, charitable and benevolent, who lived together, prayed together, fought the common enemies together, and grew in might and success, for it.

They dug out evil, and fiercely confronted corruption, apostasy, hypocrisy, and lawlessness.

We need to assess our personal state of affairs right now. Our families. Most seriously our children. Let's not go into denial, that comatose state that helps when you can't face Reality. Do the right thing! Truth over Falsehood.

"Not equal are the residents of the Fire and the residents of the Garden. The residents of the Garden, only they are the successful." (Q)

Read the message. The months of Reform are here. Let's get active. Change towards Good. And good will follow! Choose your friends. Keep away from the kuffaar, and those who are muslim by name only, who flaunt their sins and promote disrespect towards Islam. Separate yourselves from such people

May Allah keep us upon the path whereupon are those whom He favours!

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HAZRAT BAYAZID BUSTAMI ﷺ

Perhaps not many know that the concept of Ma'rifah (Recognition of ALLAH) was often taught by Hadrat Dhun Nun al-Misri (Alaihir Rahmah), but it was Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (Alaihir Rahmah) who explained and taught the concept with further perfection and completeness. He helped his successors and eager followers of Sufism to understand the concepts of Fana and Baqa. Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (Alaihir Rahmah) openly spoke about wajd.

These concepts became the core teachings of Sufism. Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (Alaihir Rahmah) always instructed his students to perform five main acts. Practice the obedience of Qur'an and Sunnah. Clean the hearts from hatred and lies. Do not eat illegal materials and avoid wrongful innovations in religion. This is clear evidence that Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (Alaihir Rahmah) considered Shari'ah as the initial step towards finding the love of ALLAH Ta'ala. His quotes and words are so extraordinarily wise and deep that describing each quotation with great details would take years for its full completion. It is reported that once a man asked him about a deed which could take him towards ALLAH Ta'ala. He mentioned that love the Saints of ALLAH, so that they love you in return. He further mentioned that ALLAH Ta'ala looks into the hearts of His Saints and if He witnessed your name, then He will forgive all your sins. This inspirational saying is guidance for a devotee or disciple for unconditionally loving and admiring their righteous and humble master or Sheikh. It also indicates towards the Qur'anic concept of following the paths of those whom ALLAH Ta'ala have blessed. "Guide us on the right path. Path of those you have favoured." [1:5-6]. And ALLAH has favoured "those whom ALLAH has blessed are the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous..." [4:69] His humility and humbleness increased to an extraordinary level that not a single element of arrogance was left in him. His wise and inspirational sayings were great tools in the realisation of the purpose of one's creation.

It is said that when he was young, one day, while he was reading the Holy Qur'an he came across an Ayah in which ALLAH Ta'ala said, "Be thankful to Me and be thankful to your parents." Hadrat Bayazid (Alaihir Rahmah) read this Ayah a second time and then thought about what it meant. He closed the book and immediately ran back to his mother. Now because he came home early from school, his mother became worried. She asked him, "What's wrong, my son? Did you run away from school? Is there something that happened?" "No, mother," Bayazid answered. "I read an Ayah from the Holy Qur'an today that said we have to be thankful to ALLAH and to our parents. This made me a little worried. I'm not real strong so how can I serve two masters? Mother, either keep me in your

service or give me up in the service of ALLAH." His mother paused for a second and smiled. Then she immediately grasped his hands in hers and said, "My son, I dedicate you to the service of ALLAH. To me, if you serve ALLAH you're serving me, too." Whenever the name of Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (Alaihir Rahmah) is mentioned, the stories of Karamaat (miracles) are essential. It is reported in "Tazkirat ul Awliya" that he predicted the birth of Hadrat Abul Hasan Kharqani (Alaihir Rahmah) while passing by Kharqan almost 100 years before he was born. Some people failed to understand his comments and beliefs and would exile the great Sufi leader from the city. However, little did they know that Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (Alaihir Rahmah) was a true follower of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and from his Seerah, learnt the ideas of patience and tolerance. Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (Alaihir Rahmah) fully practiced the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and so therefore became a great example for the modern Muslims. Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (Alaihir Rahmah) passed away in the year 874 CE (15th of Shabaaan) and his Mazaar Sharref is in Syria. Nevertheless, it is often said that before he passed away he was asked about his age. He replied with great wisdom that, "I am 4 years old". He further said that "For seventy years I was veiled. I got rid of my veils four years ago". His piety and connection with AALLAH Ta'ala was at the highest level that he did not need any praise or recognition from this world, so hence he openly devalued himself. May ALLAH guide us to follow His Path, act upon the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and learn from the great Sufis. Aameen.

Some of his sayings:

1. I never saw any lamp shining more brilliantly than the lamp of silence.
2. I went to a wilderness, love had rained and had covered earth, as feet penetrate snow, I found my feet covered with love.
3. I stood with the pious and I didn't find any progress with them. I stood with the warriors in the cause and I didn't find a single step of progress with them. Then I said, 'O ALLAH, what is the way to You?' and ALLAH said, 'Leave yourself and come.'

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I WOULD LIKE TO REPENT, BUT...

BY SHEIKH MUHAMMED SALIH AL-MUNAJJID

Risks involved in treating sins too lightly
You should know, may Allah (Azzawajal) have mercy upon you and me, that Allah (Azzawajal), glorified be He, has made repentance obligatory saying: "O you that have believed, turn to your Lord in a goodly way." (Al-Tahrim:8), and has granted us time to repent until the Scribes register the sin in our names. The prophet has said: "The Scribe on the left hand delays registering the sin of a Muslim for six hours. If he repents (within these six hours), and seeks Allah's forgiveness, they drop it off. If he doesn't, they write it down as a single sin." That is the first respite.

The second respite, even if it is registered, is until the appearance of death before our eyes. (If a man repents sincerely before that hour, it is taken off the records then).

But the problem with most people, is that they estimate not the Majesty of the Lord as they should. They disobey Him in multiple ways - day and night. To make things worse, there are some that are misled by the notion of what they call "minor sins", so that you will see them treating certain sins as inconsequential saying, for instance: "Of what harm will be a look (at that woman), or of what consequence a hand-shake with her?" In consequence, they stare freely at pictures of women in the magazines, or those appearing in the television. Some of them, when told about the sin in it, go a step further and inquire amusingly: "O.K. What's the magnitude of the sin involved? Is it a major one or minor?"

Compare this attitude with that of the Companions of the Prophet , on whom be peace, as recorded by Bukhari in his Sahih: 1. Said Anas, may Allah be pleased with him (to one of the followers): "You imagine certain sins to be more insignificant than a straw. But, at the time of the Prophet we used to count them among those that can destroy a man." 2. Ibn Mas'ud says: "A believer treats a sin as if it is a mountain over his head that may fall on him any moment. Whereas a regular violator looks at them as a fly that perked on his nose and he waived it away with his hand."

Will these people then learn something from the above, and from the hadith of the Prophet who said: "Beware of

the minor sins. For the example of the minor sins is like that of a group of travelers who broke their journey in a valley. Then one of them brought in a straw. Another came up with another (and a third with one more) until with their collection they were able to gather enough to cook their food. Remember! If a man is held for questioning (on the day of Judgment) for his minor sins, surely they will destroy him." In another version he is reported to have said: "Beware of minor sins. For they add on until they destroy the man."

The scholars say therefore that when minor sins are committed without any remorse, without the fear of Allah, and accompanied by contempt then they there is all the fear they will be counted as major sins. Hence the saying: "There isn't a minor with persistence, and there isn't a major with repentance." Hence we say to him who commits minor sins: 'Do not look at the sins if they are small or big. Look at Him in whose defiance you are committing them.'

It is hoped that these words about taking sins lightly will benefit those who are true in their faith, are not seduced by their delinquencies, nor are of those that insist upon their wrongs. These words will in fact benefit those who believe in the following words of Allah: "Tell My slaves: that I am very Forgiving, very Kind," (Al-Hijr: 49), and those who believe in: "But My chastisement is a severe chastisement indeed." (Al-Hijr: 50)



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LIVING WITH DIVINE LOVE

A Sufi is someone who has made a total commitment to return to the One by traveling the path of the heart, the path of love. Sufis are experts on the inner landscape of the heart. Sufis say it is only in the awakened heart that we can begin to taste and experience our true divine nature. The great Sufi mystics of the past gave us a model or map of the heart's road that leads back to the Source. Early writers such as al-Hakim al-Timiridh describes four primary layers of the heart, and subsequent writers elaborated on the 28 "stations" or subdivisions of the four primary layers of the heart.

For the sake of simplicity, I have found the "four-layers of the heart" model to be an extremely useful and timeless spiritual perspective on all aspects of my life, especially for understanding relationships. Put simply, the four layers of the heart are as follows:

Layer 1: the uppermost layer of the heart, or the ego self. Layer 1 is where the ego is rooted in the heart; it is the emotional underpinnings of the ego. We all need a healthy ego to function in the world but the downside comes from the ego needing to be in control, to dominate, criticize, put itself first, to grasp and hoard. The Sufi word for the lower tendencies of the ego is "the nafs". The ego uses emotions from the surface layer of the heart—such as anger, jealousy, fear—to fuel and justify its limited and separative view of itself and the world.

The ego also has a higher side—the rational mind with its capacity for logic and objectivity. The rational mind can hold and reflect a certain degree of spiritual light, according to the Sufis, if it is connected to the deeper layers of the heart.

Layer 2: the inner heart. In Arabic, the word for heart is "qalb" which means "that which turns". This definition is profound because the heart does seem to turn. Sometimes it feels open and full, other times it feels contracted and empty—oftentimes for no reason we can identify. Sometimes the heart faces the world and is overly influenced by externals that disturb it; other times the heart faces the Source within and finds itself at peace despite whatever is happening on the outside.

In Layer 2, the heart begins to free itself from the demands of the grasping ego. It is in Layer 2 that the expansive feelings of unconditional love, joy, compassion, awe, prayerfulness, gratitude, the appreciation of beauty, serenity and contentment are experienced. Greater sensitivity and the ability to attune to subtle shifts in feeling, atmosphere, mood (your's or others') come in at this layer.

Layer 3: the soul. This layer is less personal than Layer 2 and even further removed from an ego-based perspective. Sufis teach that it is in the soul where our spiritual jewels or divine qualities reside in seed form. The divine qualities are the archetypes that find expression in the world in manifold ways. Expressions of power, love, wisdom, justice and patience are examples of the divine qualities made manifest, although usually they are distorted by the personal heart and the ego. There is a deep stillness and profound silence to be experienced in the depths of Layer 3 that contrasts with the waves of emotion closer to the surface in Layer 2 of the heart. Layer 4: the secret. What is the secret? According to the Sufis, it is the truth of our oneness or unity with the Divine. It is difficult to use words to describe this

experience. At Layer 4, the bubble of the separate self dissolves and transforms into the Ocean. All definitions of ourselves—"I am this", "I am that"—are experienced as temporary illusions that veil us from the reality of our true Self.

Each layer of the heart has a corresponding inner "voice" that whispers advice in our ear and urges us to take certain actions based on its own perspective. Sufis learn to discriminate between these voices, to distinguish between the voice of the "nafs", for instance, and the voice of the deep heart.

So how can this Sufi map of the heart be applied to relationships?

When in relationship, particularly in romantic relationships, the first three layers of each person's heart, consciously and unconsciously, come into contact. When in the throes of "falling in love", the average person experiences feelings from Layer 2 at a deeper level than he/she usually does on their own. Those expansive feelings tend to recede after a few months because they are dependent on an outside source. Then the relationship gradually settles into default mode, an arrangement where person A's heart Layer 1 is relating to person's B's heart Layer 1. In other words, ego to ego.

That can work as long as each person's ego needs—for affection, passion, attention, security, material goods, laughter, excitement, whatever—are getting mostly fulfilled. But let something important change in that formula and then there's trouble. "My needs are no longer getting met in this relationship" goes the old refrain. "You're not the same as you used to be."

Partners who are listening to the voice of their "nafs" will blame, punish the other in various ways, manipulate, dominate, submit, threaten and strive to control the emotional climate and amount of intimacy permitted in the relationship.

Sufis are taught how to access the deeper feelings in the 2nd layer of their hearts without relying on another person or "falling in love" to awaken that capacity. Every heart is thirsty for love but once you realize that the Source of the love is within you, then you stop seeking or demanding it from another person. That doesn't mean Sufis become self-sufficient, no longer interested in relationships.

The shift that occurs is that a Sufi shares the love with a partner that he/she is already getting internally from the Source. When both partners are able to do that, then there is a qualitative difference in the nature of the relationship—it's lighter, sweeter, deeper, more expansive, with much less conflict of wills than in ego-based relationships.

A Sufi not only feeds the heart of his/her beloved but also strives to be a "container" during the times when the partner's heart is contracted with difficult feelings. This means staying grounded in one's own inner connection to the Source while "being there" for the other. Sufis learn the art of intuitive listening and the deeper skill of literally feeling into the heart of another person.

When your partner is talking, you listen not only to the words but, with inner ears and inner eyes, to the condition of the partner's heart. Healing love energy can be sent into the specific places in the other

person's heart where there is pain. This is done without giving advice which usually comes from the head and not the heart. I recall a trained Sufi healer and friend saying to me once, as I was sharing some difficult feelings, "Joe, when I look into your heart, here is what I see." And then she told me what she saw and it was totally accurate but not at all evident from the words I was speaking. I never felt so understood.

In this kind of relationship, person A's heart Layer 2 is primarily relating to person's B's heart Layer 2. In other words, deep heart to deep heart. The exchange of love is much more unconditional because the giving is not dependent on what you are receiving from the other person, but rather it is a sharing of what is received from the Source.

Partners listening to the voice of their deep heart will strive to understand, nurture, forgive, provide support, be generous with appreciation, and express their love in novel and creative ways. A Sufi friend of mine occasionally arranges surprise holidays for he and his wife--she doesn't know where they are going until they get on the plane. Is it possible to actually see and experience your partner's soul, to see beyond their personality to the spark of divinity that lies at Level 3 of their heart? This is what the great spiritual masters through the ages do. They are not interested in your personality, they are only interested in watering the seeds of your divinity that they can see in your soul. This ability is latent in all of us.

Of course you will only see in others what you see in yourself. Although there are certain moments when insight into the soul of another comes as a gift-- I have spoken to mothers who say that during pregnancy or shortly after birth, they became aware of their child's soul, the unique divine essence inhabiting the physical body of the child. Some could see the beautiful light that the child's soul carried with it into the physical plane.

Two people can live together for decades and never really know each other's deep heart or soul. One way to do this is during meditation when you are feeling connected to your own soul. Then spend a few moments traveling inwards and try to "see" your partner's soul. A Sufi teacher I know conducted family workshops where one of the exercises was for the parent to do that and to send love to their son or daughter's (who were not present) soul. It was not uncommon for a mom or dad to report back later that their teenager, who they had been in conflict with, had run up to them upon returning home and say with a big hug "I love you, mom!", "I love you, dad!" You can communicate with your partner's or to a family member's soul. You just have to connect to your own soul first and then move around in the borderless world of the 3rd layer of your heart to connect to the soul of a loved one.

Partners listening to the voice of their soul at heart Level 3 will support and encourage their partner's spiritual growth. They meditate together, read inspiring spiritual literature

to each other such as Rumi poetry, attend workshops with a spiritual theme together, do community service together or simply delight in the sparkle in their beloved's eyes that comes from his or her's joyful connection to the Source.

Sufis marry for the sole (soul) purpose of supporting each other on their journey Home. Experiencing the 4th layer of the heart, the secret, is an individual achievement. The 4th layer of the heart is deepest place within us that no one else can enter except the Real Beloved. You can't take another person there or go there with them. Two souls can temporarily merge as one in sexual union or at other times but that is not the final goal. Sufis understand this and therefore do not place unrealistic expectations on their partner. Unending union with the partner is not the goal; whereas unending union with the Real Beloved is. Knowing this fosters a healthy sense of spiritual independence rather than co-dependence.

Partners listening to the silent voice of the secret at heart Layer 4 keep that part of themselves hidden from everyone except the Real Beloved. No other human being can go there. It's the secret garden. In Sufi relationships, everything is given but something essential is withheld. That is why they work---because Sufis are married not only to each other but to the Real Beloved within.

What if one partner is a Sufi, and the other person isn't a Sufi? Will it still work?

Love is self-communicative. The partner with a Sufi perspective can awaken the other's deep heart and touch his/her soul with or without their conscious knowledge or participation. Research at Heartmath has demonstrated that the heart of a person feeling love or appreciation sends out frequency waves that alters the brain and heart rhythms of another person within a measurable distance of five feet (the distance is probably greater, the physical equipment is limited to a short range).

"Love has to spring spontaneously from within; it is in no way amenable to any form of inner or outer force. Love and coercion can never go together; but while love cannot be forced upon anyone, it can be awakened through love itself. Love is essentially self-communicative; those who do not have it catch it from those who have it. Those who receive love from others cannot be its recipients without giving a response that, in itself, is the nature of love. True love is unconquerable and irresistible. It goes on gathering power and spreading itself until eventually it transforms everyone it touches. Humanity will attain a new mode of being and life through the free and unhampered interplay of pure love from heart to heart." - Spiritual Master Meher Baba

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"O Mankind ! Eat of the lawful and good things from what is in the earth, and follow not the evil. Surely he is an open enemy to you (S2: V168)

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RECOMMENDED WAZIFAS FOR SHABE BARAAT

* After Asr Salaah Recite 70 Times:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ
"Astagh Firullaha Rabbi Min Kulli Zam Bin Wa A'tubu Elay"

* Thereafter Recite 70 Times
Durood Shareef

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ
"Allahumma Swalle Ala Muhammadew Wa Ala 'ale
Muhammadew Wa Barik Wa Sallim"

* Thereafter Recite 70 Times

"Yaa Hayyu Yaa Qayyoom"

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ

* Just before Sunset
Recite 40 Times

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ
"Laa Hawla Walaa Quwata Illa Billa Hil Aliyeel Azeem"

* Recite the last 3 verses of
Surah Hashr once:

Bismillah Hir Rahmanir Raheem

Huwal Laahul Lazi Laailaaha illaahu,
A'alimul Ghaibi Wash Shahadati Huwar
Rahmanur Raheem-Huwal Laahul Lazi
Laailaaha illaahu, Al Malikul Quddusus
Salaamul Mo'minul Muhayminul Azizul
Jabbaarul Mutakabbir, Subhaanal Laahi
Amma Yushrikoon. Huwal Laahul Khaaliqul
Baari-ul Musawwiru Lahul Asthma-ul-Husna
Yusabbihu Lahu Mafis Samaawaati Wal
Ard Wahuwal Azizul Hakeem.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ بِهِ
الْغَيْبُ وَالشَّهَادَةُ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ
هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ
الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ
الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا
يُشْرِكُونَ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ
لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

* Recite the Dua for Shabe Baraat
as many times as possible

(Allahumma) A'oozu bi Afwika Min Iqaabika
Wa A'oozu Biradaka Min Sakhatika Wa A'oozu
Bika Minka Jalla Wajhuka Laa Ohsi Sanaa'an
Alayka Anta Kama Asnaita Ala Nafsik.

O Allah I seek protection in Your forgiveness
from Your wrath and I seek shelter in Your
pleasure from Your displeasure and I seek
safety with You from You. Glory be to You
I cannot fully praise You as You have
praised Yourself.

(اللَّهُمَّ) أَعُوذُ بِعَفْوِكَ مِنْ عِقَابِكَ
وَأَعُوذُ بِرِضَاكَ مِنْ سَخَطِكَ
وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْكَ جَلَّ وَجْهُكَ
لَا أَحْصِي شَأْنًا عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ
كَمَا أَشْنَيْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ ط

IS THERE A PLAY STATION IN JANNAH?

BY UMM ISMAIL

Some years back my 11 year old son asked me if I thought there would be a PlayStation in Jannah(Paradise), because really, if there wasn't going to be one, then he didn't know if he still wanted to go there. While I was gratified to be thought so knowledgeable, I was also aware that my reputation as Oracle-In-Chief was now at stake.

So naturally I thought very carefully about how to respond.

His query reminded me of another, a few decades earlier. I attended Madressah(Islamic School) with an older aunt who graciously conceded to teaching me privately in the afternoons after school. When I started high school, she told me I would have to start wearing the hijab soon. Now this was the 80's – South Africa was in the grip of the last, bloody, grasp of institutional apartheid, the Rainbow nation hadn't yet been born, and a head-scarfed girl at my school wasn't an option.

So being 12 and opinionated, I asked her why, and whether I would have to wear it at school as well. I knew of other girls who wore it, then instantly discarded it at the school gate for the duration of the school day, only to put it on again when they went home. She replied that it would indeed be all right since hijab was for one's protection, and at school girls were protected (from what, I wondered!).

If wearing hijab was compulsory, my teen brain reasoned, then surely there had to be a proper reason. I also questioned why would it be ok to wear the hijab on one side of the school gate and unnecessary on the other side? Silently, I promptly decided never to wear hijab - until aeons later, at 17, when it made perfect sense!

When our children question us about Islamic principles, ethics or concepts, we often find it difficult to address their concerns head-on. We either react with self-righteous indignation, or sometimes we're just amiably dismissive, while pointedly informing them about what's allowed and what's not.

Our children however, are not pint-sized, programmable versions of adults, who after a few basic instructions – pray 5 times daily, learn all your Surahs(Quranic Verses), and don't forget the eating dua (prayer) – will then happily be on their way. Utterly complete human beings, endowed with a healthy curiosity and a growing intellect, they need to be engaged, debated with and have their sometimes misguided views, challenged. Their insecurities, preposterous or profound have to be entertained too.

The Quran constantly encourages us to ponder and use our 'aql (intellect): "And We have certainly left of it a sign as clear evidence for a people who use reason." (Quran:29:35) and again "And it is He who gives life and causes death, and His is the alternation of the night and the day. Then will you not reason?" (Quran23:80). Despite this, we consistently choose not to heed to seek reasoning, nor do we expect our children to. Indeed we expect them, ironically, to do as their forefathers did and inherit the faith we sometimes wear with weary familiarity. Why?

Perhaps it is because we assume that wanting to understand the essence of a Divine instruction is to question its validity. Perhaps, more often than not, we ourselves don't understand its logic and wisdom. But does this have to be so?

As Hazrat Ali (RA) taught us, and echoed by educationist Ken Robinson, we raise our children for a time other than our own, in fact for a future as yet, quite undetermined. In order for them to grow into the Caretakers that Allah SWT intended, their faith must grow organically; because faith, unlike Granny's antique cups, cannot be passed down to future generations.

Their first steps into the world of meaning and values must be infused with the continued appreciation of the Divine Presence. This primal awareness as created beings starts with the athaan (call to prayer) in the newborn's ear, settles in the heart as a fledgling seed, to be delicately nurtured with love and patient understanding (and a healthy dose of humour). Not for nothing did the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) spend the first 13 years in Mecca nurturing this seed – its blossoming is what enabled that collective cathartic moment years later when the Muslims were ordered to wash the stain of alcohol out of their lives In the words of my teen, how awesome was that?

If we want our children to be of those who "strive hard with their property and their persons" (9:88), who "invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong" (3:104), and whom Allah SWT "will love and who will love Him" (5:54), we will need to encourage them to find the answers to their questions from within the Quraan. Let us from the beginning encourage our children to reflect on and be amazed by the universe outside of (and within) us and then weave into that the Qur'anic ethos. This will enable them to view and practice Islam with understanding and love rather than Islam being viewed as sets of mechanical actions or regurgitation of the verses of the Quraan without passion and affection.

There is NO excuse today not to make the effort to educate ourselves. Books, the internet, YouTube, community classes, all abound. Indeed, it's our emphatic duty as parents to be exemplary in the desire for authenticity, to "ponder and reflect" together with our children, and to seek out well-researched, thoughtful answers to their queries like why exactly are we here, if Allah SWT is so merciful, why do people suffer, what happens to good atheists, and is there a PlayStation in Jannah?

So back to my son. I explained that not having made that trip, I obviously couldn't give him any specifics, but what I could say for sure was that Jannah is where we will be unimaginably happy and content. I asked him to recall his most satisfying memory, and to multiply that by a gazillion (words like gazillion always make an impact) – and if that included a PlayStation, then a version of a PlayStation would be awaiting him. He nodded sagely and never mentioned it again, satisfied that his mother clearly was the go-to person when weighty matters preoccupied the mind.

He's 15 now, and the other day he sheepishly recalled that incident and exclaimed, "Mum, can you believe I actually thought Jannah was going to be full of PlayStations and games", and giggling mischievously, he added, "now I know it's going to be full of beautiful girls!" - and disappeared before I could feign shock-horror. Sigh ... I suspect the "lower your gaze" talk is already overdue



BY MOULANA
SHAH FAISAL
KHAN SAHEB

SHABAAN-AL-MUAZZAM

Q) Could you please tell us about the excellence of Shabaan.

A) The way Allah has designed different seasons for our physical upbringing, likewise Allah has designed different spiritual seasons for our spiritual upliftment. Out of all different blessed seasons of our hearts and minds (or spiritual bring) one is the month of Shabaan. Describing the importance of Shabaan, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Shabaan is my month and Ramadhaan is the month of Allah." [Al-Jaamius Saghir]

Month of watering the seeds of goodness. Allama Safoori says, "Rajab is the month of sowing seeds, Shabaan is the month of watering them and Ramadhaan is the month of reaping the harvest." Therefore, if someone doesn't sow the seeds of worship in Rajab and doesn't water them with tears of remorse in Shabaan, then he will not be able to reap the harvest of divine mercy in the month of Ramadhaan. He further stated, "Rajab purifies the body, Shabaan purifies the heart and Ramadhaan purifies the soul." [Nuzhatul Majaalis]

Fasting in Shabaan to respect Ramadhaan
The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "After Ramdhaan, the best for honouring Ramadhaan are the fasts of Shabaan." [Shu'abul Iman]

Significance of Shabaan
Sayyiduna Usama bin Zaid stated, "I asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Ya Rasoolullah ﷺ, I have seen you fasting in the month of Shabaan so abundantly, that I have never seen you fasting so abundantly in any other month." Rasoolullah ﷺ replied, "This month is between Rajab and Ramadhaan. People are heedless of it. It is a month in which people's deeds are presented before Allah Ta'aala, so I wish my deeds be presented while I'm in the state of fasting."

Manifestation of special attribute on the 15th night (Shabe Baraat)

Sayyiduna Ayesha Siddiqah رضي الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah reveals his specific attribute on the night of 15th Shabaan. Allah forgives those who asks for forgiveness, and shows mercy upon those who ask for mercy, but leaves those who had malice in their hearts against each other." [Shu'abul Iman]

How should one approach the month of Shabaan

Sayyiduna Anas bin Malik رضي الله عنه stated, "When the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ would sight the crescent of Shabaan, they would busy themselves in reciting the Holy Quraan and pay Zakaat so that the weak and poor may also prepare for the month of Ramadhaan."

The governors would summon the prisoners to enforce sentence to those who were to be sentenced (by Shariah) and set the rest free.

Businessmen would pay their debts and collect their dues (in this way they would become free for worship before the appearance of the moon of Ramadhaan) and as soon as the month of Ramadhaan would approach, they would perform Ghusal and (some) would take part in Itikaaf for the entire month. [Guniyatut Talibeen]

Conclusion and Dua

We make dua that Almighty Allah through the medium of His Most Beloved Prophet ﷺ grant us strength and enthusiasm to have love and respect for this month of Shabaan and get prepared for the great and glorious month of Ramadhaan. May divine peace and prosperity be upon all the creation of Almighty Allah! Ameen!

METHOD OF PERFORMING SALAATUT TASBEEH

This is a four (4) Rakaat Salaah with one Salaam. After Takbeer-e-Tahreemah (i.e. The first Allahu Akbar) and Sana read the following *Tasbeeh* 15 times:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

"Subhanalahi wal Hamdulillahi wa laa ilaha illal laahu wallaahu Akbar."

Thereafter reciting Ta'Awuz and Tasmiya read Surah Fatiha, and any other Surah, then read the above *Tasbeeh* 10 times before going into Ruku:

Then go to Ruku. Read the *tasbeeh* of Ruku "Subhana Rabbi'al Azeem" thrice and read the above *Tasbeeh* 10 times.

Stand up from Ruku and after saying "Sami Allahu liman Hamida - Rabbana lakal Hamd", read the above *Tasbeeh* 10 times.

Then go into Sajdah. After "Subhana Rabbi'al 'Ala" thrice read the above *Tasbeeh* 10 times.

Between the two Sajdahs, in the posture of Jalsa read the above *Tasbeeh* 10 times.

Then go for the second Sajdah. After "Subhana Rabbi'al 'Ala" thrice read the above *Tasbeeh* 10 times.

This will amount to 75 times in one Rakaat.

The remaining three Rakaats should be completed in the same manner and the reciting of the *Tasbeeh* will amount to 300 in the entire 4 Rakaats Salaah.

SPENDING IN THE PATH OF ALLAH

BY MOULANA AHMED KHOROLO - SAABERIE CHISHTY DAWAH CENTRE

Allah gives us a simple way of getting guidance in his Holy Book whereby Allah says : you shall never attain virtue until you spend your favorite things in the path of Allah, and whatever you spend, is known to Allah (Al Quraan S3 V 92)

The word of virtue (good) refers to Piety and Allah's obedience. It could also mean paradise and all its bounties, by "attain" means priority in obtaining it. One should give in the way of Allah that which one loves the most, Hazrat Umar Bin Abdul Aziz would buy bags of sugar to give in charity. When he was asked why not just give its amount in charity, he would reply 'I love sugar' and would then recite this verse.

The acceptance of charity is dependent on ones sincere intention not on its quantity. As Allah Almighty is fully aware of what you have spent intentionally, and without intention, therefore spend it with total sincerity.

Spending in the path of Allah Develops the following in the giver.

- (a) The Attribute of generosity and kindness
- (b) Feeling and Sympathy for the less fortunate and destitute
- (c) Compassion and caring feeling for ones fellow being
- (d) Charity enhances nobility and one becomes worthy of praise

Giving charity eradicates from the giver the evil habits of:

- (a) Selfishness and callousness
- (b) Greed and Avarice
- (c) Haughtiness and Pride
- (d) Oppression

Allah say in the Holy Quraan in respect for those who give charity in the path of Allah "that which you give in charity seeking Allah's pleasure hath increase manifold".

In another verse Allah says" The like of those who spent their wealth in Allah's way is as the likeness of a grain of wheat, which grows into seven offshoots, and each offshoot contains one hundred grains, and Allah multiplies "(his rewards) to whom so ever He pleases and Allah is the encompassing, all knowing (2-26)

This verse was revealed to honour Hazrat Uthman Ghani (on whom be peace) who when the call of Jihaad was sounded in the streets of Arabia and the prophet of Allah had asked as to who would like to earn Jannah for himself by helping the needy Muslims with camels and armers to fight against Kuffar in the battle of Tabuk .

Sayyidina Uthmaan Ghani (on whom be peace) without any question went and chose thousand of his best camels with provision and donated for Muslim cause.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said protect your wealth with Zakaah and treat your sick ones with charity and counter the waves of calamity with dua and humility.

Apart from obligatory almsgiving, voluntary, charity, is a necessity for every Muslim. According to the Holy Prophet. It is an act of devotion highly treasured by Almighty Allah because He himself frequently

encourages believers to give him a goodly loan by giving charity to those in need. And He promises to repay that goodly loan several folds in this life and much more in the hereafter. In fact a sincere offering will be rewarded by him, a manner beyond all expectations, for he will. "Provide for him from an unseen source and means of living " (Quran65:2-3). If five conditions are present at the time of charity offerings. Then the offerings will certainly be acceptable to the creator of the heavens and the earth.

Khawaja Nizam-ud-Din has enumerated them as follows, of these conditions. Two are required prior to the giving of the charity. One of them is that whatever is given should have been legally obtained and permissible by religious law. The second condition is that it should be given to deserving people as mentioned in the Quran. The two conditions that should accompany the actual act of giving follow: (1) Charity should be given in humility, cheerfulness and an expansive heart (2) It should be given in secret. The highest form of charity occurs when a giver and the recipient do not know each other.

The fifth condition comes after the charity has been given. It is that one should not discuss or mention it to anyone and should forget about it. Money is not everything, that is what the Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized when he was asked "What if a person has nothing to give " - the Prophet replied "He should work with his own hands for his benefit and then give something out of such earning in charity" the companions asked " What if he is not able to work? The Prophet replied" He should help the poor and needy people "The companions asked "What if he is incapable of doing so? The Prophet said" He should check himself from doing evil. That is also charity

Any righteous act performed with sincerity and good intention for the sake of Allah without a desire for fame and compensation will without doubt result in pleasure and proximity of the Lord, as Almighty Allah said "so let him whoever hopes for the visual perception of his Lord, do righteous deeds and admit no other as partner in the worship of his Lord" (Quraan18:220)

We make dua that Allah may give us open hearts so that we can be amongst those who give in the path of Allah. Ameen

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ACHIEVING GOOD NUTRITION DURING RAMADAAN

COMPILED BY HASINA BEGUM SAYED

If you observe this month, then you're eating two main meals: before the fast (Suhour) and after the fast (Iftar). You might be having a snack or more at night too. How can you achieve good nutrition at these meals and snack?

Follow these six rules to keep nutrition in check while practicing your fast.

1. Hydrate.

In long hot August days, getting enough fluids when you can eat and drink should be a priority. Your first choice is water, and other beverages, such as juice, milk, coffee, and tea, count towards your daily fluid intake. You don't need to chug down 13 cups of beverages a day though. Soups, stews, and water-packed produce, such as tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, watermelon, and oranges, hydrate your body too. Go easy on sweetened beverages like sodas and fruit juices. Limit those to no more than one 8-oz cup a day since calories and sugar easily add up.

2. Think nutrient dense.

When there are only so many hours to eat, make every calorie count by choosing foods that are rich in nutrients. Your meals should consist of healthy carbohydrates, lean sources of protein, vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy, and healthy fats. Avoid fried foods, pastries, and others with too much fat and sugar that won't deliver much nutrition.

3. Focus on protein and fiber at Suhour.

While you can't completely prevent hunger pangs from happening, you can delay them by eating protein and fiber at Suhour. Examples of protein foods include eggs, cheese, peanut butter, beans, and meats. Oats, whole wheat bread, apples, and pears are high in fiber. Besides keeping you full, fiber helps you go, which is important for your digestive system health.

4. Skip dessert.

Enjoying traditional Ramadan desserts doesn't have to be a daily ritual. Instead of fried and syrup-drenched desserts, opt for a bowl of fruits with low-

fat yogurt several days of the week.

5. Be picky at social gatherings.

People tend to overeat when eating with others and when there's a variety of foods presented. Be picky about what you put on your plate. Ask yourself: What do I really want to eat? What is special on the menu tonight? If the food doesn't give you pleasure and you can easily have access to it later, then pass.

6. Consider a multivitamin and mineral supplement.

It can be challenging to eat 3-6 ounces of whole grains, 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables, 3 servings of dairy, and 5 ounces of meats and beans each day. A daily multi-vitamin and mineral supplement will give you the assurance that you're not missing out on any nutrients while you fast.

Source: Nour El-Zibdeh

Sayyidah Aisha ؓ said concerning Nabi ﷺ fasting during Sha'baan: He would fast during it entirely; he would fast during it except a little. -Sahih Muslim-

Imam Nawawi explained that during some year/s RasoolAllah ﷺ would fast the entire month of Sha'baan and in other year/s he would fast almost every day during Sha'baan.

Imam Nawawi goes on further to state that the reason for RasoolAllah ﷺ fasting particularly during Sha'baan was due to the fact that A'maal are raised during Sha'baan (ie the 15th of Sha'baan).

Thus we too should be aware that during this month our A'maal will be raised and we should increase our Nafl fasts both before and after the 15th of Sha'baan.



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RULES OF ENGAGEMENTS

BY FAIZEL KHAMKAR

It is common to find that in our engagements and interaction with each other irrespective if that engagement is in the political, economic or social levels rules for the engagement is set. These rules can be formal or informal, written or unwritten or obvious or implied regulate these engagements are constitutions, written agreements and regulated laws. . It is accepted that these rules and regulations is informed by accepted norms of morality and culture. The old saying that rules are made to be broken reflects the attitude towards honoring agreements. Known documents which normally govern such rules are flagrantly ignored, abused or interpreted to suit personal gain or agendas.

We only have to look at the events in Burundi to realize the irony of the manipulation of these rules and regulations. The incumbent President is only allowed to serve two terms in office as per the constitution of the country. His interpretation of "term" differs with the large majority of the populace of the country. It is reported that the courts of the country are in agreement with the interpretation of the President. The difference of opinion between the two views came at the cost of more than seventy thousand refugees, untold deaths, destabilizing of the community and economy and even an attempted coup. The central focus on the cause of all of these trials and tribulations has been the focus of the terms of engagement in terms of the period of rules. Who focused on the rules of engagement between an elected leader and his electorate? What consideration has been given to the implied principle of abiding by the wishes of the majority? There is an agreed relationship that the wellbeing of the masses must be considered. The security including that of housing and safety is a clear mandate in terms of this relationship. This principle rule has not only been abandoned but also ignored in public debate. The moral rule of accepting that it is necessary to step down when the people no longer desires your leadership has also been thrown away.

Coming back to home soil we find that the rule in

respect of the welfare of the child is of such paramount importance that the high court is legally regarded as the ultimate guardian of a child. The law was introduced to outlaw corporal punishment on the basis of the possible psychological effect it would have on the child. The maintenance of children is constantly under review. A public register has been introduced whereby any one found guilty of child abuse would find their names entered into that register in order to ensure that a safety net has been created to protect other children from known children abusers. All these laws, rules and regulations have been introduced as a protective means as part of the rules of engagements with children. The rules in respect to children should be wholesome and not confined only to a particular pocket such as finance, psychological, physical or mental. It then seems strange that a new set of rules are being propagated to destroy the moral fiber of children. The new set of rules would allow for the distribution of condoms to children as young as ten years old. The problems of teen age pregnancies, HIV Aids and other related problems are real and should not be ignored. However the children are not the source of the problems. The deep lying social and economic ills of our society at large should be the focused on if we believe that the problem should be dealt with holistically. Political expediency has prevented a comprehensive study on the real issues at hand. The financial moguls will be the real beneficiaries of the implantation of these new rules. The reality of problems is that it will not go away nor will it significantly reduce the ill effects of what we as a society faces. The beneficiaries will be the rulers of power and greed. The reality of this can be found on studying the effects of the abortion law, which had the same intent, where the negatives far outweigh the positives. The end result is that the moral outlook of children will change having far reaching negative effects on the children even in years going beyond childhood.





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INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOCUS

BY FAKIR HASSEN

Berlin – GERMANY - Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière has called for differentiation between extremists who exploit Islam in their terrorist acts and the innocent Muslims living in peace in Western societies and are involved in various peaceful activities. "The West should not forget that Muslims were the first victims of the terrorist organizations, and we have to prevent the exploitation of Islamic faith in these terrorist acts through strengthening unity among various communities within Western societies," Maizière said.

Makkah, SAUDI ARABIA - The new pedestrian road leading to Arafat from Makkah is nearing completion and will be opened before the next Haj season, according to Hisham Shilly, director of the municipality's department of parks and public utilities "The road will no doubt be the longest walkway in the whole world," he said. Work on the road project started about two years ago and will be officially launched sometime in September. The director said the third and final phase of the walkway will be covered by tiles and rugs and will have sales points, security centress, and ambulance services.

Singapore, SINGAPORE - Halal travel site Crescent Ratings has launched a travel aggregator called the Muslim Travel Warehouse aimed at helping tour agents arrange tailored packages for Muslim travelers. Crescent Rating CEO Fazal Bahardeen says the site will help agents take advantage of a rapidly growing market worth around \$145 billion last year, according to a travel survey it conducted in partnership

with MasterCard. The new travel aggregator will develop tour packages to places based on things like their access to halal food and prayer places. Visits to Islamic sites would also be part of the mix.

London, UK - A Muslim group seeking to establish Britain's first female-led mosque is to consult on its plans for a prayer space "managed by women primarily for women". The Muslim Women's Council (MWC) says the facility would be open to Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Early plans include facilities specifically tailored for Muslim women to cater for their religious beliefs including services for divorce, bereavement, legal advice, parenting, and feeding the homeless.

Venice, ITALY - The first mosque in the city, built on the ruins of a Catholic church that was abandoned 40 years ago, has finally been opened. This was after several failed attempts by Muslim community to obtain a permit from the authorities to build a mosque in the city, where Venetian Muslims from 29 nationalities live.

London, UK - 13 Muslim MPs, up from 8 in 2010, have been elected in one of the most unpredictable and extraordinary general elections in Britain, and eight of them are women. In Scotland, four Muslim candidates won seats for the first time for the opposition party and added to five who were re-elected. Labour has nine Muslim MPs, the Tories three and the SNP one.

Xinjiang, CHINA - Authorities in northwestern China's Xinjiang region have ordered Muslim shop owners

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DELIVERIES TO ALL AREAS

and restaurateurs in a mainly Muslim Uyghur village to sell alcohol and cigarettes or face closure of their establishments, China recently launched a series of "strike hard" campaigns to weaken the hold of Islam in the western region.

Tokyo, JAPAN - Sophia University in Tokyo has started offering halal food lunches for sale in the university, bringing relief to Muslim students. The University of Tokyo was the first to incorporate halal meat into its meal options in 2010, and four universities in the region have followed suit.

Xian, China (HINA) - A university in central China city of Xian has imposed a new ban on Muslim students' hijab, ordering them to remove the religious attire inside the campus, Xian has traditionally seen few restrictions on its multi-ethnic population, which includes at least 50,000 minority Hui Muslims, many of whom live in the narrow streets around the city's Great Mosque, the oldest in China.

Sydney, AUSTRALIA - Australia's first all-Muslim women football team is preparing itself to make history when it plays a historic curtain-raiser at Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) next month. It will be the first time a Muslim women's team has played before an Australia Football League (AFL) crowd at the MCG.

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