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WISDOM

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AL-TINOLUH

ISLAM AND ECOLOGY



Osman Nuri Efendi
The Qur'ân and Contemplation

Dr. Ahmet Yaman
Ecology: A Neglected Trust

Ali Riza Temel
Islamic Measures To Project
The Ecological Balance

Aisha Itimat Nur • The Benefits Of Prayer / Pearls of Wisdom / Ismail Lutfi Cakan • Freedom From Desires

EDITORIAL

*D*ear Readers,

“If a Muslim plants a tree, the fruit of that tree that is eaten is definitely charity for that person. Fruit stolen from that tree is again charity for him. Fruit eaten by wild animals is also charity. What birds eat is also charity. Whatever fruit is eaten is charity for the one who planted the tree.” (Buhari, Adab, 27)

Allah, Who created everything in the right place and the right amount, has provided us with laws on how we, His servants, should live our lives on this earth. According to the science of ecology, which is a matter that concerns both humanity and the environment, everything in the universe has been created in the right place and in the right balance. When humanity, the most honored of creation, a being that has been graced with reason, does not fulfill the duties of their creation, they begin to pollute themselves and the environment. This situation is expressed in the Qur’ân as: “Mischief has appeared on land and sea because of (the meed) that the hands of men have earned, that (Allah) may give them a taste of some of their deeds: in order that they may turn back (from Evil).” (Rum:30/41)

In this issue our topic is Islam and Ecology. In this issue, you will be able to read the 3rd section of the written series, ‘The Qur’ân and Contemplation’, by our beloved teacher, Osman Nuri Efendi. In the article written by Ali Riza Temel tell us the measures of protecting the ecologic balance in Islam. Dr. Ahmet Yaman explains to us how and why, in the light of the Qur’ân and the Sunnah, we need to protect the world and environment, which have been entrusted to us, in his article Islam and Ecology.

In the Qur’ân, Allah says: “O Children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters”. (Araf,7/31) As a Muslim we have to comply with this order with absolute care and we have to bring up our children in awareness of it. The most important component to prevent pollution is to adhere to the immutable principles of Islam as an individual and to obey Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in every matter. Thus, we can leave following generations a clean and inhabitable world.

We hope that you will read this issue with great pleasure and that you will have a future life spent in awareness of how the Qur’ân and Sunnah approach the environment. Looking forward to being with you in the next issue.

Elif Kıpıcı
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The Qur'ân and Contemplation 3

The Qur'ân is a roadmap which with its boundaries of wisdom and guiding light leads man along the straight path. Paying attention to its dictates with presence of the heart is needed; a true believer is he who continues the battles against his ego seeking support throughout from the Qur'ân.

Allah the Almighty has charged man with servitude to Him; everything in the heavens and the earth has been subjugated for man in order to fulfil the Creator's commands. Allah has gifted the heart of man with the ability to contemplate so that he is able to live in servitude with complete emotional involvement. He has blessed us with by sending Messengers as a goodly example of how to abide by His guidance thereby allowing those of perfect faith to tread the path to ultimate union.

The Divine guidance of the Messengers is presented in its most perfected form with the Qur'ân, brought to the whole of mankind by the last Messenger. Allah the Almighty deserves eternal gratefulness for all of the Divine blessings He has bestowed on us, particularly His making us from amongst the community of the Prophet Muhammad



The Qur'ân is far in advance of all other knowledge, satisfying human curiosity and contemplation with new discoveries every passing day, demonstrating how great and prosperous a resource it is.

(pbuh) and the beneficiaries of the Holy Qur'ân. In the natural world, magnificent trees grow from the planting of miniscule seeds into fertile soil. Likewise, a heart which is nourished by the wisdom of the Qur'ân will blossom to become a perfect receptacle of faith. A believer must realise that his receiving of Qur'ânic guidance is an act of Divine kindness. There continue to exist people who worship natural phenomena, such as: statues created by their own hands, animals, other human beings, and so forth. There are those who have no object of worship, and who live as atheists without any belief in Divine justice. Worse yet are those who are honoured with faith but forsake this for the pursuing of their desires and worldly pleasures: these are the ones who have become blind to the Divine call. Pondering the pitiful state of those around us is one way to appreciate the perfect blessing of Islam.

In these times, there are two fundamental duties required of a believer: the first is an acknowledgement of the infinite blessings he receives and gratitude for them; the second is to believe that Divine benevolence is manifest in many forms, to have pity for those deprived and to make every effort to judge reality as it is.

The Qur'ân says: **“Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity.”** (Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 104)

“Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness,

and says, ‘I am of those who bow in Islam?’” (Fussilat, 41: 33)

In order to deliver the message of Islam with the enthusiasm that it requires, we should engage ourselves intellectually and spiritually with the Qur'ân, live by its guidance and honour the code of morality which it upholds.

It would appear, since the so called enlightenment, or renaissance, of Europe, that materialism has only produced degradation and misery for people. This outcome was inevitable since man has relied solely on the powers of his reason, neglecting all other faculties, and thus failed to deal adequately with the reality that confronts him. The Qur'ân addresses such men sixteen times, saying: “O ye men of understanding”, and many times with warnings like: “Have ye no understanding, o ye with eyes to see, will ye then consider not”.

The Qur'ân is far in advance of all other knowledge, satisfying human curiosity and contemplation with new discoveries every passing day, demonstrating how great and prosperous a resource it is.

As Muslims, we must think of the responsibility we have, to be an example to people, and to be adequate in explaining and awakening the awareness of the excellence of the Qur'ân to mankind.

While the Qur'ân has confirmed the thousands of discoveries throughout the centuries, spreading this knowledge of faith with its true value is the duty of all believers

with all the resources and means we have. Not doing so will result in us having to give account, in the presence of Allah, for those who live in blindness, and this only increases our responsibility.

Research in our time is very much easier than that of past centuries, for proof and explanation, of the metaphysical realities of religion.,

The Qur'ân displays the realities of every age according to the person's level of knowledge, and ability to understand. Without doubt this is by divine compassion. For example, the marvellous particulars of human creation, and the great discoveries in the skies and on earth, the social systems and programmes that eventually lead to intellectual disaster, etc. If these had all been discovered scientifically before they were clearly explained in the Qur'ân, then mankind would have accepted and confirmed all these events according to their levels of mentality and knowledge of that time. As a result, it would not have been possible for them to be inspired by the Qur'ân to follow Islam.

Looked at like this, studying the Qur'ân is like digging for treasure, and the deeper you dig the more treasure appears. It is our duty to read the Qur'ân with affection from our hearts, stretching our minds in understanding its vast contents.

Finding profound understanding of the

world in this book, and observation of the wisdom and mystery of the universe, can be achieved by the contemplation of a tamed soul. In this verse, Allah the almighty calls the whole of mankind to contemplate:

“Do they not travel through the land, so that their heart (and minds) may thus learn wisdom and their ears may thus learn to hear? Truly it is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts which are in their breasts.”
(Hajj, 22: 46)

“And in the earth are tracts (diverse though) neighbouring, and gardens of vines, and fields sown with corn, and palm trees-growing out of single roots or otherwise: Watered with the same water, yet some of them We make more excellent than others to eat. Behold, verily in these things there are signs for those who understanding!”
(Ra'd, 13: 4)

Being a true believer begins by awakening the heart to contemplation .

Man functions through both his heart and mind. If only the mind is given attention to, thought it may acquire vast amounts of information, to neglect the heart would mean that the container of all that knowledge will lack such qualities as kindness, compassion, warmth and other important emotions.

A believer with a heart containing such qualities, will reflect these qualities in his speech, as he speaks with his language of



It is essential to study the Qur'ân with upright teachers whose souls are filled with love of the Divine; this is so the student gains from their spiritual ocean, and is led towards deep feelings and contemplation.

While the Qur'ân has confirmed the thousands of discoveries throughout the centuries, spreading this knowledge of faith with its true value is the duty of all believers with all the resources and means we have.



condition. A human's looks, dress and attitude are all a reflection of himself. Everyone has their own 'language of condition' and everything about a person is apparent according to this. Imagine how incredible an experience it would be for a person blind from birth to suddenly gain sight; what would he feel to look at the sea for the first time, or the trees, the birds, the sky and all his surroundings. He would surely exclaim that Allah has created everything so beautifully, yet we look out at this beauty each and every day of our lives; unfortunately, most of the time we do not even perceive the profundity of the moment. Without contemplation or the ability to feel emotion, we would continue our lives like a rock which never gets its share of the passing April showers. The Qur'ân invites us to ponder:

"And in the alternation of night and day, and the fact that Allah sends down sustenance from the sky, and revives therewith the earth after its death, and in the change of the winds--(in these) are signs for those that are wise." (Jâthiya, 45: 5)

"And a Sign for them is the night: We withdraw therefrom the day, and behold they are plunged in darkness; And the sun runs unto a resting place, for him: that is the decree of (Him), the exalted in Might, the All-Knowing. And the Moon, We have measured for her stations (to traverse) till she returns like the old (and withered) lower part of a date-stalk. It is not permitted to the sun to catch up the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day: Each (just) swims along in

(its own) orbit (according to laws)." (Yâsîn, 36: 37-40)

"And such are the parables We set forth for mankind, but only those who have knowledge understand them." (Ankabût, 29: 43)

Man's experience of Divine love is contingent upon his righteous deeds. The degree to which a person engages throughout his life in contemplation will affect the degree of happiness he experiences both here and in the Hereafter. Throughout the ages Messengers, saints and scholars have been living examples of the fruits to be gained from contemplating the wisdom the world. Mankind in the depths of its nature and conscience has ingenuity from Allah. This ingenuity is the natural ability to acknowledge the creator, a feeling of truth, and a concealed need for belief and commitment.

Feeling the need to beg the help of the divine power are all necessary for human purpose in life. The heedless one who ends up in difficulty, or the one who denies faith and spends his life unprotected in a depression of dreadful loneliness, need to turn to the creator for guidance and the natural wealth of the creation,

But for those who are blind to this ability, those who are far away and a stranger to the divine power and the artistic wonders of the universe, and those who are dim-witted and frowning, will still carry on the game of hide and seek in the hereafter. Allah says:

"...Truly it is not the eyes that are blind,

but the hearts which are in their breasts.”
(Hajj, 22: 46)

“Those who were blind in this world, will be blind the Hereafter, and most astray from the Path.”(Isrâ, 17: 72)

It is essential to study the Qur’ân with upright teachers whose souls are filled with love of the Divine; this is so the student gains from their spiritual ocean, and is led towards deep feelings and contemplation.

A man once asked the Holy Prophet: “Who has the best voice for the recitation of the Qur’ân?”

The Prophet answered: *“When you hear his recitation it causes you to you fear Allah”* (Dârimî)

In contrast, a recitation that does not come from the heart does not induce a person to contemplate the infinite horizons of the Qur’ân. Thus we must take notice of the following warning of the Prophet:

“There will appear some people among you whose prayer will make your own look deficient but when they recite the Qur’ân it will not exceed their throats and they will leave the faith like an arrow leaves a bow.” (Bukhârî)

We must read Qur’ân with ever more care, contemplate the verses in our heart, and live according to this. If we do otherwise we can expect misfortune. The Qur’ân calls believers to contemplate and to feel moved by what they hear:

he creation of human beings of different colours and nations is just another shade of Divine wisdom. And in this diversity, there is no such thing as one race being superior to another. The single quality which may raise a person’s rank over that of another is their taqwa.

“...And We have sent down unto you the Message; That you may explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought.” (Nahl, 16: 44)

Allah the Almighty commands us as humans to reflect upon the evidence pointing to His Divine existence and the deep wisdom underpinning the blessings he has bestowed upon us; among these evidences are the different colours and languages we see in the world:

“And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours: verily in that are signs for those who know.”(Rûm, 30: 22)

It is not likely that many languages spoken in the world were formed as a result of a cooperative effort amongst men. It is observed that some languages start the sentence with a verb, others start with the subject and end with a verb. These are not choices of conscience it is actually an endowment of Allah. Apart from this Divine gift, the creation of human beings of different colours and nations is just another shade of Divine wisdom. And in this diversity, there is no such thing as one race being superior to another. The single quality which may raise a person’s rank over that of another is their consciousness (*taqwâ*) of Allah. Allah the Almighty declares:

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nation and tribes, that you may know each other. Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).” (Hujurât, 49: 13)

Yet in all the diversity and coupling which Allah has created, unity is limited to Himself alone.

Men and women are created in pairs as completion for one another. From the family life that started between Adam and Eve in the heavens, from a marital match constituted by

As a requirement of the divine trial, mankind has a nature of combativeness and uneasiness with the acceptance of justice. However, the verses of the Qur'ân are adorned with various examples for all kinds of natures and temperaments, applying to all until the Day of Judgment.



Allah the almighty, we, the children of Adam, were born, and we found perfection with the religion of Islam.

Allah the Almighty states:

“And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your(hearts): Verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.” (Rûm, 21)

Allah the merciful made marriage an abundance to the community: A marriage in the shadow of the Qur'ân and the Sunnah made life in the world a heaven of happiness. With marriage, two strangers become matched, which leaves the mind in amazement at this precise instruction and mystery of wisdom.

Two strangers who leave their parents' homes, and Allah the merciful joins their souls with kindness and affection, living a more desirable and intimate life than they were before: this is a great manifestation of divinity, and a holy lesson that should be contemplated deeply.

As a requirement of the divine trial, mankind has a nature of combativeness and uneasiness with the acceptance of justice. However, the verses of the Qur'ân are adorned with various examples for all kinds of natures and temperaments, applying to all until the day of judgment.

Stated in this verse:

“We have explained in detail in this Qur'ân, for the benefit of mankind, every

kind of similitude: But man is, in most things, contentious.” (Kahf, 54)

The Qur'ân invites mankind to contemplate its explanations, and tells people about the example in life:

“If We grant long life to any, We cause him to be reversed in nature: Will they not then understand?” (Yâsin, 68)

Another verse points out a person's natural tendency for either sinning or belief:

“By the soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its inspiration as to its wrong and its right;- Truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!” (Ash-Shams, 7-10)

With resurrection, the divine power of Allah will display the human's weakness and divine reality of his potential:

“Doth not man see that it is We Who created him from sperm? Yet behold! He (stands forth) as an open adversary! And he makes comparisons for Us, and forgets his own (Origin and) Creation: He says, “Who can give life to (dry) bones and decomposed ones (at that)?” Say: He will give them life Who created them for the first time! For He fully knows all creation.” (Yâsin, 77-79)

The Qur'ân reminds the person running after time, that time is important.

“The Day they see it, (it will be) as if they had tarried but a single evening, or (at most till) the following morn!” (An-Nâzi'ât, 46)

All these statements that call man to

reflect show that actions of the heart and mind are obligatory. The Prophet (pbuh) said: *“There is no worship like contemplation”* (‘Alî al-Muttaqî,) In this hadîth we see that contemplation, and the prosperity of the heart which it induces, is considered at the same level as physical acts of worship which are performed; it can even be said to be a requirement before other acts of worship because understanding the importance and true nature of our deeds is possible only through reflection. Over 1400 years ago, very many Qur’anic verses and hadith advised contemplation, and in our age, considering the explanations above, the importance of thought has most certainly increased. We must make right action in conveying the truth and promoting goodwill.

The Qur’ân is a roadmap which with its boundaries of wisdom and guiding light leads man along the straight path. We must realise that to simply listen to it or glance at it is not enough. Paying attention to its dictates with presence of the heart is needed; a true believer is he who continues the battles against his ego and his desires seeking support throughout from the Qur’ân.

May Allah the Almighty fill our hearts with the prosperity and adorn our hearts with affection for the blessed Prophet. May He grant us the joy of being among those who will accompany the Prophet on the Day of Judgment, those for whom he will intercede.

Give our world of Islam prosperity in conquest and abundance.

O Allah! Place us among those who look with admiration at the universe and all its phenomena with presence of heart! And give our hearts the blessing of Your Mighty command: “Read”!

‘Âmîn.



Mankind in the depths of its nature and conscience has ingenuity from Allah. This ingenuity is the natural ability to acknowledge the creator and a concealed need for belief and commitment.



Environment Awareness During *The Time Of* THE PROPHET

The Prophet, who was familiar with this Divine Command, participated in the construction of Medina, and made great efforts to develop the city in which he lived into a well constructed area.

Muslims are taught to respect and protect everything in existence, knowing that **"The seven heavens and the earth, and whoever is therein, glorify Him. There is nothing that does not glorify Him with His praise."** (Isra 17:44) Therefore, no Muslim should knowingly cause harm to the environment nor mistreat nature in any way.

Required is awareness of the needs of one's environment. A person with such awareness will be ever mindful of his dealings in the environment, and therefore act accordingly. At the very least he will accept creatures of the environment as his friends and aids. As he benefits from these creatures, he will also take care not to disturb the balance of nature. The Qur'an's declarations that waste is a sin, and extravagance is the brother of the Satan (Araf 7:31, Isra 17:26-27) and the Prophet's advice not to waste water while performing ablution, even if it was a flowing river (Ibn Majah) is a pertinent warning which arouses environmental awareness within Muslims.

Quddus, one of the attributes of Allah means sacred and pure. As a manifestation of His name, the ecology created by Allah continuously purifies the constant pollution

The Prophet (pbuh) gave advice and orders regarding keeping the city clean, and was very particular about the protection of both animals and plantation. The Prophet then gave orders that the mosques should be cleaned and smell of scent (Tirmidhi, Jum'ah 64).



of nature on earth. The bodies of thousands of animals that die every season, and the dried remains of plantation, are subjected to chemical transformation and deposited into the soil. Additionally, the earth is virtually swept by the wind, and purified by rainfall. At this point, every Muslim should act with the understanding that the duty of keeping himself and his environment clean is a reflection of the name Quddus.

The Qur'an declares that God charged humans with the duty of improving the earth. In one of the verses, it states: **"It is He Who hath produced you from the earth and settled you therein"** (Hud 11:61) On the basis of this verse, Islamic scholars relate that constructing houses, establishing drainage systems and planting trees is an obligatory duty of society. Whether as a mundane or a religious duty, it is only natural that humans construct on earth.

The Prophet (pbuh) was an example to all Muslims in this regard. The Prophet, who was familiar with this Divine Command, participated in the construction of Medina, and made great efforts to develop the city in which he lived into a well constructed area. In addition to Mecca, the Prophet also forbade the cutting down of trees and hunting in the regions of Medina and Taif. Adi bin Zayd reported that the Prophet declared the 1000 sq m distance around the whole of Mecca a conservation area, and forbade the cutting down of trees and breaking branches within these boundaries (Abu Dawood).

At Zuraib-Tawil, the Banu Harith's grazing

pasture close to Medina where the Prophet camped on return from the Dhu-Qard expedition, they described the area as the place where animals grazed and women could roam freely. The Prophet said, "Whoever cuts down a tree in this area must plant another in its place." When the people of Taif sent a delegation to Medina to become Muslims, in the agreement the Prophet had prepared, he added a clause declaring that the valleys of the Taif region were under conservation, that destroying the plantation and hunting animals in the region was forbidden and that those who disobeyed this ban would be punished.

During the Caliphate of 'Umar, basing his decision on this written decree, Sa'ad b. Abi Waqqas punished a person who disobeyed the ban (Abu Dawud). Again, the Prophet prohibited the cutting of cedar trees and desert plantation which travelers and animals used for shade, and cursed anyone who cut these trees (Abu Dawud).

The Prophet (pbuh) gave advice and orders regarding keeping the city clean, and was very particular about the protection of both animals and plantation. The Prophet then gave orders that the mosques should be cleaned and smell of scent (Tirmidhi, Jum'ah 64), that the forecourts and yards be cleaned (Tirmidhi, Adab 41), that no one should urinate in still waters (Bukhari, Wudu 68) and that no waste should be thrown near sources of drinking water. We should also remember the hadiths which inform us of the man who was granted Paradise for drawing water from a well with

his shoe to feed to a dog whose tongue was hanging with thirst (Bukhari, Adab 27) and an old woman who was damned to Hell for imprisoning a cat in her house and leaving it to starve.

These examples prove that the Prophet was a most excellent example to others in the manner in which he would protect the environment, keeping it clean just as he himself would like to be in all matters.

In addition, the Prophet (pbuh) also encouraged the planting of trees: “Even if you fear that the Last Day has arrived, plant the sapling you hold in your hand” (Bukhari); “Whoever plants a tree will be rewarded the amount of its produce by God” (Ahmed b . Hanbal, Musnad); “If someone revives an empty infertile piece of land, he will be rewarded by God for this action. And when any living creature benefits from this land, it will be recorded as charity for the one who revived the land” (Munawi). If a Muslim plants a tree, the produce eaten from that tree is most certainly charity for him. And the produce stolen from that tree is also recorded for him as charity. Whatever is eaten of the produce by wild animals is also recorded as charity, the produce eaten by birds is charity, all the produce eaten from that tree is charity for the one who planted it” (Bukhari, Adab). These hadith are a clear indication of the encouragement to bring environmental concerns to the attention of others.

The Companions, who implemented every action of the Prophet, followed the

Prophet’s example and guided us in regard to environmental awareness. For example, Abu Bakr warned the army leaving on an expedition: “Do not uproot or burn palm trees, or cut down fruit-bearing trees. Do not slaughter a cattle or sheep except for the purpose of food...” (Ibnu’l-Asir)

When our master ‘Umar sent Abu Musa al-Ash’ari to Basra as governor, he ordered him to pay particular importance to the cleanliness of the streets (Darimi, Sunan).

One day, as Abu Darda, one of the reputed companions, was planting trees in Damascus, a man who was passing by thought this was strange and asked:

“O Abu Darda, you are a Companion of the Prophet, why are you planting trees?”

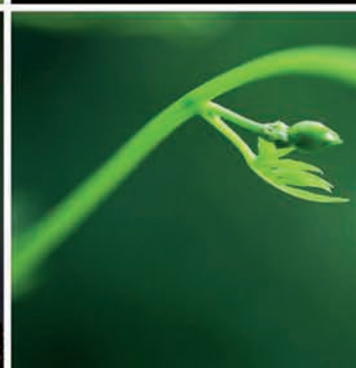
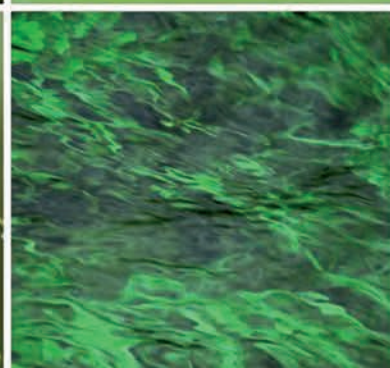
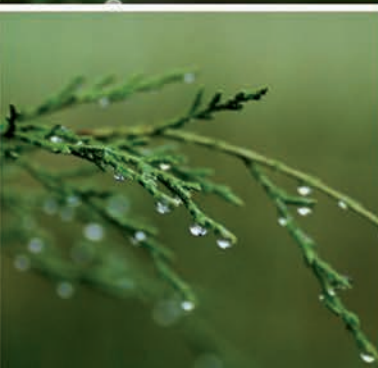
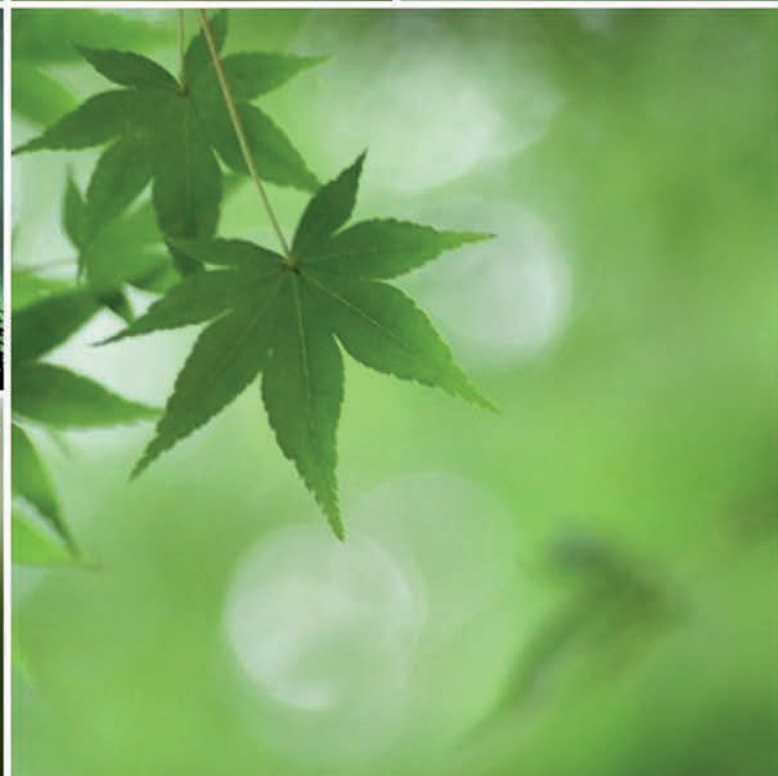
Abu Darda replied: “I heard the Prophet say, ‘If a person plants a tree, the fruits eaten by any human or any of God’s creatures will be recorded as charity for the one who planted it.’” (Tajrid-i Sarih)

On another occasion, our master ‘Uthman was planting a tree late at night when a passer-by called out, “O Caliph! Are you planting trees at this time?” He replied, “When you pass, it is better for you to see me doing good deed like this, than to see me like the rebels.”

To embed the Companions’ awareness of the environment into the minds of Muslims today we must continue to live in harmony with nature, and constantly remember the universe and its creatures that Allah provided as an entrustment.

The Companions, who implemented every action of the Prophet, followed the Prophet’s example and guided us in regard to environmental awareness. Sayyidina Abu Bakr warned the army leaving on an expedition: “Do not cut down fruit-bearing trees. Do not slaughter a cattle or sheep except for the purpose of food...” (Ibnu’l-Asir)





ECOLOGY: A Neglected Trust

The Qur'ân describes how Allah created the universe with absolute precision and balance. It then goes onto detail how Allah presented services owed to His creation as a duty upon mankind, and with great poignancy the Qur'ân refers to this duty as a 'Trust.'



“Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and in the sea because of what the hands of people have earned.” (Ar-Rûm 30:41)

The ecologic terms deriving from the Greek words *oikos* (house) and *logos* (wisdom); are used in the science of studying plants and animals, and the relation between their animate and inanimate surroundings.

The industrial revolution of the West in the 19th century, resulted in rapid technological advancement and growth but the increasing industrialization also eventually led to the blind destruction of the environment. The release of manufacturing waste into nature, increasing air pollution and unplanned urbanization lead scientists to consider the ever growing environmental issues. The term “ecology” was initially used by the German Zoologist Ernst Haeckel in 1866.

These modern themes of ecology in environmental science, which supposedly emerged in America with E.A Birge and H.C. Cowles in 1891; F.A Forel in Sweden 1892; and E.B Warming in Denmark 1896, was in fact

recognized in the East much earlier.¹ With his concept of 'Economy of Nature' Biruni, an Islamic scholar who lived during the 11th century, pointed out the natural balances of nature, the 'eco system' as we know it today. (see Mehmet Bayraktar, Islam and ecology. Ank. 1992)

The principle topics of ecology are; the nourishment of living creatures, their habitation, and the environment in which they can survive and grow. These topics were studied extensively by Ibn Khaldûn, who lived during the 14th century, and who laid the foundations for sociology.²

This article shall seek to educate the reader on the duties of a Muslim towards the environment, as laid out in the Qur'ân and Prophetic sayings. Thereby, as we study the concepts for the foundations of modern ecology, we will clearly see that this concept in fact emerged fourteen centuries earlier in a system already present in the East.

Allah clearly states that the universe was created in total harmony and balance: **"Allah is He Who has created the heavens and the earth, and sends down water from the sky with which He brings forth fruits for your provision. And He has made the ships serviceable for you, so that they run upon the sea by His command; and He has made the rivers serviceable for you; And He has made the sun and the moon constant in their courses, [and so] serviceable for you; and He has made the night and the day of service to you."**³

"Surely, We have created each and every thing by [precise] measure."⁴

"And the heaven - He has made it high [above the earth], and He has set up the balance; So you must not go beyond the balance"⁵

In fact, Allah is the Creator of beauty and excellence, and as a result His creation can be nothing less than excellent and beautiful.

The Qur'ân describes how Allah created the universe with absolute precision and balance. It then goes onto detail how Allah presented services owed to His creation as a duty upon mankind, and with great poignancy the Qur'ân

refers to this duty as a 'Trust'.⁶

Unfortunately, the balance of the universe has been spoilt by humans who, over a period of time have distanced from the Divine Commands; absolving themselves from the Divine duties bestowed upon them. Therefore the eco-system has suffered great damage. **"Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and in the sea because of what the hands of people have earned (of evil deeds)."**⁷

The manmade corruption of the existing balance is a total betrayal of trust, but all the while Islam, portrays humans as believers among the whole of the existence on earth that glorifies and praises the Creator, and asks for His forgiveness.⁸

During his lifetime, the Prophet of a religion so susceptible to the balance of nature also conveyed orders aimed at protecting the eco-system. These orders regarding the environment that we as modern humans, only realized in the twentieth century, were in fact conveyed fourteen centuries ago. Not only did this Noble Prophet (pbuh) guide followers towards a duty of care towards the environment, he (pbuh) went into detailed matters concerning this duty.

The Prophet (pbuh) announced a twelve mile area from the boundaries of the City of Medina, as a conservation area, and prohibited people from harming any animals, flowers or trees within this area.⁹ A place called Al-Ghabe, outside this twelve mile area, had already been allocated for the people to cut restricted amounts of wood to provide for their needs. However, those who wanted to cut a

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tree could only do so under the condition that they planted another.¹⁰

In ² Tâif, another city close to Mecca, the Prophet designated Wajj Valley that had its own mountain pasture, as a conservation area and ordered: "The thorny trees and bushes of Wajj valley are forbidden [to you from being cut down] and the animals there are not to be hunted. Whoever disobeys these orders will have his clothing removed, and be whipped. If, regardless of his punishment, the person continues to disobey, he will be caught and then brought to the Messenger of God."¹¹

The Prophet, who throughout his life planted five hundred trees, advised Muslims to plant the sapling of a tree, even if they feared the Day of Judgment had arrived, and said: **"Whoever cuts down a tree in the desert which travelers, and animals use for shade will be thrown headfirst into the hellfire by God."**¹²

The Prophet also gave great importance to environmental cleanliness, in fact he continuously stressed that any kind of purification was a part of faith. Therefore, if he saw an impurity on the road, he would avoid passing the same spot until it had been cleaned. He condemned any person who relieved themselves in public places, where others walked, or rested in the shade.¹³

All those centuries ago, the Prophet showed a great interest in planned urbanization, one of the main topics of environmental science, and defined a specific distance between the

houses being built at that time, and personally appointed the road widths within the city. Considering the requirements of that period, and allowing for the flow of traffic, the roads within the city planning were defined as 5.5 meters wide.¹⁴

Paradise, the place where those Muslims who fulfill the duty of 'Trust' in this world hope to unite, is a kingdom of greenery where the clear rivers flow, a place where all its habitants live in total harmony.¹⁵

It is evident that the main issues of ecology that emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the West, were in fact presented 13-14 centuries earlier by Islamic sources. Ignoring these environmental issues, which make up some of the commands in Islam that embrace every aspect of life, is contradictory to both the characteristics and order of the ecosystem.

This so called modern system, that every year releases 57% of the world's carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, refused to sign an agreement for the "Protection of the various plantation and creatures living on earth" due to the opinion that such a scheme would damage their country's economic structure...if only these leaders would recognize the distinction and value of these previous civilizations, and understand that **"God is beautiful, and loves beauty"** then the world would be a much better place.

Endnotes

1 E. Britannica vol 7/ 914

2 Muqaddimah 1/107; E. Britannica vol 7/914

3 Ibrahim 14:32-33

4 Al-Qamar 54:49

5 Al Rahmân 55:7-9

6 Al-Ahzab 33:72

7 Al Rûm 30:41

8 Al Isra 17:44; Al Taghâbun 64:1 Al Jumu ah 62:1

9 Bukhâri, Jihad 71; Muslim, Hajj 458

10 Bukhari A³ imah

11 M. Hamidullah, The Prophet of Islam 2/332; Al-Wasaiq 236

12 Abu Dawûd, Adab 5239

13 Muslim, ²ahâra 68

14 Bukhâri, Mazalim Mazalim 29; Muslim, Musaqat 31; The Prophet of Islam 1/297

15 see M.F Abdalbaki Al- Mu'jem-ul Mufahras Paradise



ISLAMIC MEASURES TO PROTECT The Ecologic Balance



Allah the Almighty transformed the earth into a virtual Paradise and tells us in the Qur'an: "And so We enable grain to grow therein, and grapes, and edible plants, and olive trees and date palms, and gardens dense with foliage, and fruits and herbage as means of livelihood for you and your livestock."

1 - EDUCATION

The spreading of environmental awareness is aimed at portraying the potential dangers to the health and lives of humans caused by pollution, and guiding people to be cautious in their actions. In addition to the various means of education and teachings, learning such topics in religious teachings from books, and from mosques where religious education is given in the most detailed manner is also essential. There is no denying the positive effects on the human soul when presenting the problems, and the means of solving these problems in the religious terms.

There are huge advantages to guiding human behavior amidst an atmosphere of worship, for example; the main reason for people not cutting down trees in graveyards is due to an understanding of requirement laid down by one's faith.

Acknowledging that every blessing is the most valuable entrustment bestowed on us

by Allah, and treating the environment with respect and kindness is a form of worship that leads humans to be more sensitive towards the environment.

2 - CLEANLINESS

One of the principle aims of Islam is to guide humans towards both physical and spiritual purity. When a human is pure in his thoughts, words and actions, and clean in what he wears, eats and drinks, in both his home and environment, he reaches excellence, and is sure to enter Paradise, the Abode of the Pure. “When they finally arrive there, its doors will be opened, and its keepers will welcome them saying: Peace be upon you! Well you have faired and are purified, so enter it (Paradise) to abide!” (1)

Those who come into this world in a state of purity and free of sin, and then pollute the universe will not be accepted by Allah. The Prophet said “Allah is pure, and He loves those who are pure.” (2)

In the first revelations sent to the Prophet was the command: “And keep your clothing clean!”(3) The acceptance of worship depends on; the cleanliness of the body and place of prayer, from both evident and unseen impurities.

The Prophet (pbuh) said: “The entire earth has been made for me a purified place of worship.” (4)

The environment should be kept clean, and cared for just like places of worship.

The Prophet (pbuh) continuously warned and advised the people regarding environmental cleanliness, here are some of the Prophets words of advice:

“Keep your yards and surrounding areas clean.” (5)

When Abu Barga went to the Prophet and asked, “O messenger of God! Tell me something that will be of benefit” the Prophet replied: “Remove anything from the road that may cause harm to the Muslims.” (6)

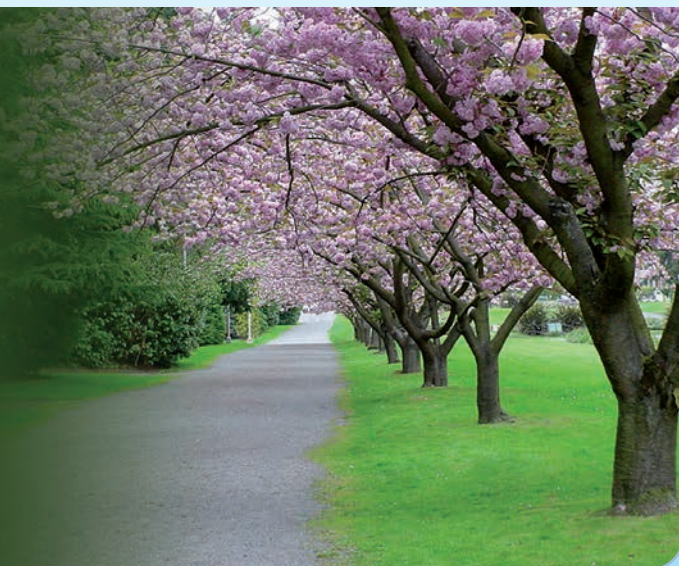
“Whoever removes something harmful from the paths where Muslims pass, will be rewarded. And Allah will grant Paradise to those He rewards.” (7)

When the Prophet told the companions, “Beware of those acts which cause others to curse” They asked, “What are those acts?” He said, “Relieving yourselves in the people’s walkways or in their shade.” (8)

The Prophet (pbuh) prohibited the disposal of waste in public places. When the Prophet cut his nails after Friday prayers, he asked Anas to bring a piece of hard soil to bury the nails in, and then ordered him not to throw it on the road, but to place the soil in a crevice in the wall. (9)

The Prophet (pbuh) was very particular

There is no greater expression possible than these words of the Prophet, to stress the importance of planting trees. “If any of you have a date sapling in your hands when the Day of Judgment shall commence he should plant it if possible.”





Acknowledging that every blessing is the most valuable entrustment bestowed on us by Allah, and treating the environment with respect and kindness is a form of worship that leads humans to be more sensitive towards the environment.

regarding the cleanliness of water, as water is the main means of purity. Water must be clean and unused¹ for the acceptance of ablutions, there must be no change in the basic quality, for example the taste, colour, or odor of the water.

The Prophet ordered: “None of you should urinate in still water,” (10) and ordered that the animal compounds should be at least forty yards away from the wells, and that a twenty five yard vicinity around wells should remain empty. (11)

Principally, according to Islam flowing streams and pastures are the communal property of all who seek a need from it. No one can take advantage of these places as he pleases. Regarding the subject, the Prophet said: “A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim, the waters and pastures are the joint property of all Muslims.” (12)

Every human must be more particular regarding property that belongs to the community. Unfortunately, the most polluted areas at present are the water sources. Every year, there are millions of tons of petrol leaking into the sea, and industrial waste, acid, sulfur and drainage systems are destroying rivers, lakes and oceans.

“And He it is Who has made the sea to be of service so that you eat from it fresh meat, and draw out from it ornaments that you wear. And you see the ships plowing their course through it so that you may go forth in quest of His bounty and give thanks”. (13)

3 - PROTECTING PLANTATION AND GREENERY

The role of trees and greenery in purifying the air, of rain protecting the earth, and transforming the earth into a paradise with the colourful flowers and leaves, various fruits, refreshing shade and outstanding views is obvious.

The word ‘Paradise’ means orchards, gardens, and shade. Allah the Almighty transformed the earth into a virtual Paradise and tells us in the Qur’ân: “And so We enable grain to grow therein, and grapes, and edible plants, and olive trees and date palms, and gardens dense with foliage, and fruits and herbage as means of livelihood for you and your livestock.” (14)

In the Qur’ân, the Creator mentions the names of hundreds of trees, plants, orchards, gardens in various forms, and even takes an oath on olives and figs, therefore emphasizing the importance of plantation.

The Prophet (pbuh) encouraged the planting of trees, and personally planted five hundred palm trees. (15) At this point I would like to mention some of the Prophets recommendations on the subject.

“When a Muslim plants a tree, whatever is eaten from it is charity from him and whatever is stolen is charity and whatever is subtracted from it is charity. If a Muslim plants a tree, or sows a field and men and beasts and birds eat from it, all of it is charity from him.” (16)

In the treaty the Prophet (pbuh) made with the people of Taif, he added the conditions of protecting the surrounding trees, prohibited the hunting of game in the area, and deemed those who disobeyed the rules punishable by law.



“Whoever plants a tree, and cares for the tree until it matures and produces fruit will be rewarded by Allah.” (17)

There is no greater expression possible than these words of the Prophet, to stress the importance of planting trees. “If any of you have a date sapling in your hands when the Day of Judgment shall commence he should plant it if possible.” (18)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) not only advised those around him regarding the subject, he actually took measures regarding the protection of woodland. For example, in the region of Al Ghâba (forestry area) a distance away from Medina, the Prophet gave conditional permission for cutting down trees, those who wished to cut down a tree could do so on the condition that he planted another in its place. (19) In addition, the Prophet declared the twelve mile area surrounding Medina, a conservation area and forbade the cutting of trees.

The Prophet (pbuh) assigned Bilal b. Haris as warden of the conservation area, and he continued this duty during the period of Muawiyya, until the time of his death. (20) The Prophet strongly opposed cutting trees, and said: “Whoever cuts down a tree in the desert that travelers and animals use for shade, will be thrown into the flames of Hell by Allah.” (21)

Umar bin Abdulaziz expressed his abhorrence of the cutting down of trees

within the sacred boundaries with the words: “If a man came loaded with wine, it would be better than him bringing anything cut within the sacred boundaries.” (22)

Even during the periods of war, destroying crops, unnecessarily cutting down trees or sacrificing more animals than they required for food was not permitted. (23)

4 - MONITORING AND PUNISHMENT

Every offence committed against the environment, is an offence against the whole of mankind, for the environment is the joint heritage of humanity. Harming communal property for the sake of personal benefits is not permitted. According to Islam, the communal advantages are more important than personal benefits. (24)

A special ‘Environmental protection society’ or ‘Environmental Policing Team’ should be established to define the crime, the punishment for damaging the environment, and to pursue those who cause harm to nature. Every kind of nuclear, chemical and biologic weapons should be prohibited in the world in general.

In the treaty the Prophet (pbuh) made with the people of Taif, he added the conditions of protecting the surrounding trees, prohibited the hunting of game in the area, and deemed those who disobeyed the rules punishable by law. (25) Environmental scientists should

not underestimate the sensitivity the Prophet portrayed regarding the environment 1400 years ago.

5 - PLANNED URBANIZATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

When Ibn Khaldûn, the Muslim sociologist defined matters to be considered while establishing a city, he stressed that places easy to maintain, with clean air, plenty of water, close to fields and agricultural areas should be chosen, and that places where there is less oxygen and no wind will cause illnesses. (26)

There are inspiring examples of modern and healthy urbanization throughout Islamic history. The plans and site of Basra city was personally determined by ‘Umar, and a ten mile waterway was dug from the Tigris River leading to the city. (27)

‘Umar gave clear instructions regarding the plans and construction of Kufah city, according to these orders, the main roads were constructed 40 yards wide, the second roads 30, third roads 20 and the side roads 7 yards wide. Vast areas were left empty around the mosque where forty thousand Muslims could pray. (28)

In Islamic history, there are interesting examples regarding the exceptional cleanliness and maintenance of the cities. Qurtuba, now known as Cordoba was one of

Europe’s largest, most modern cities, with 300 Turkish baths and 50 hospitals. As the cities of Europe wallowed in filth and gloom, the streets of Qurtuba were washed frequently with oxcarts, and the streets lit up with lamps mounted on the house walls.

The wind towers used to cool the houses, and the cool basements constructed to escape the summer heat, and the underground cisterns prepared for the cold and for supplies is all evidence of these modern structures. (29) Utilizing the natural sources of energy that has no waste, for example wind and sun energy, is one of the many measures that greatly reduces pollution.

6 - THE CAMPAIGN FOR FAITH AND LOVE

According to the Qur’ân everything on earth, animate or inanimate, glorifies Allah.

“Do you not see that all that is in the heavens and the earth, and the birds flying in patterned ranks with wings spread out glorify Allah. Each knows the way of its prayer and glorification.” (30) The Prophet said: “Creation is the family of Allah, and the most beloved of all creation to Allah is he who is good to His family.” (31)

In a world, where the numbers of many species of animals decrease, and eventually become extinct; employment will be scarce,



In the Qur’ân, the Creator mentions the names of hundreds of trees, plants, orchards, gardens in various forms, and even takes an oath on olives and figs, therefore emphasizing the importance of plantation.



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and the earth will be unappealing and unfruitful. Allah the Almighty told Noah: “Embark in it (ark) a pair of each kind (living creatures)” (32) The Qur’ân mentions the names, and the habitations of various animals and insects, for example bees and ants.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: “Fear Allah in these dumb animals, ride them when they are fit to be ridden, and sacrifice animals without causing them pain.” (33)

Ibn Masud reported an incident: “We were with the Prophet on a journey. He went to relieve himself. We saw a bird with her two young ones and we captured her young ones. The bird came and began to spread its wings flying around above us. The Prophet returned and said: Who cause this bird distress for its young ones? Return the young ones to it immediately.” (34)

As a result, the decline in the ecologic balance is evidence of the decay in the human mind and soul. The most effective, and permanent means of preventing the pollution and destruction of the environment is; educating both individuals, and societies to respect the Creator, and His entire creation.

ENDNOTES

- (1) Surah Zumar: 73
- (2) Ajluni, Kashfu’l-Hafa, 1/224 Beirut 1351
- (3) Surah Muddessir: 4
- (4) Buhari, Tajrid-i Sarih, Hadis no: 223
- (5) Ajluni, 1/224.

- (6) Munziri, Et-Targhib, 3/613
- (7) Munziri, Et-Targhib
- (8) M. A. Nasif, et-Taj 1/93 Beirut 1961
- (9) Sha’rani, Kashfu’l-Ghumma 1/180 Egypt 1964.
- (10) Abu Dawud
- (11) Ibn Majah,
- (12) Ebu Ubeyd Kitabu’l-emval
- (13) Surah Nahl: 14
- (14) Surah Abese: 27-32
- (15) Al-Hindi kenzu’l Ummal 3/309
- (16) Tajrid-i sarih 7/122
- (17) Sharani a.g.e. 2/16
- (18) Tajrid-i Sarih 7/124
- (19) Balazuri Futuhu’l-Buldan 1/17
- (20) Yakut el-Hamevi, Mucemu’l-Buldan 5/87.

Beirut 1957

- (21) Ebu Davud 2/650-51
- (22) Yakut el-Hamevi
- (23) M. Hamidullah
- (24) Majalla
- (25) M. Hamidullah el-vesaik. 236-238-240 Beirut 169
- (26) Ibn Haldun Mukaddime sh: 313-314 Egypt
- (27) Shibli Numani,
- (29) Dr. Sigrid Hunke
- (30) S. Huseyin Nasr, Islam and Science
- (31) Surah Nur: 41, Isra: 44
- (32) Hafiz el-Munziri 40 Hadis
- (33) Surah Hud: 40, Tefsir-i Ibn Kesir, 4/254
- (34) Sharani, Kashfu’l Ghumma 2/155

1 i.e The water must not have already been used for purification purposes, thereby being “unused”.

That Lives In Us

Rumi

*If you put your hands on this oar with me,
they will never harm another, and they will come to find
they hold everything you want.*

*If you put your hands on this oar with me, they would no
longer lift anything to your mouth that might wound your
precious land- that sacred earth that is your body.*

*If you put your soul against this oar with me,
the power that made the universe will enter your sinew
from a source not outside your limbs, but from a holy realm
that lives in us.*

*Exuberant is existence, time a husk.
When the moment cracks open, ecstasy leaps out and
devours space; love goes mad with the blessings, like my
words give.*

*Why lay yourself on the torturer's rack of the past and
future?
The mind that tries to shape tomorrow beyond its capacities
will find no rest.*

*Be kind to yourself, dear- to our innocent follies.
Forget any sounds or touch you knew that did not help you
dance.
You will come to see that all evolves us.*

*If you put your heart against the earth with me, in serving
every creature, our Beloved will enter you from our sacred
realm and we will be, we will be so happy.*



The Benefits Of Prayer

A devoted Muslim prays because worship is one of the commands of Allah. The Divine Commands bear great wisdom, and various benefits. Certainly, whatever Allah has prohibited is harmful. Today, some of these benefits have been defined by medical experts. No conception or religion, has ever given the importance that Islam gives to the subject of health. Some of the benefits prayer provides regarding health matters are:

- 1 – Movements during prayer are gradual, so therefore does not strain the heart, and because prayer is performed at various times during the day, it constantly keeps us energetic.
- 2 – When a person places his forehead on the ground eighty times every day in prostration, a vaster amount of blood rhythmically reaches his brain. So, because the brain cells are well nourished, memory and personality defections are less common in those who pray, and such a person less likely to be affected by the illness known in modern medicine as ‘Senile Dementia.’
- 3 – Due to the continuous bowing and rising movements during prayer, a greater circulation of blood reaches the eyes, in which case these actions can prevent an increase in glaucoma, and also ensures that there is a constant change in the eyes fluid.
- 4 – The isometric movements during prayer, ensures that the intake of food is digested well in the stomach, allows the bile in the gallbladder to be release. It also prevents any

accumulation in the gallbladder, assists the pancreas in secreting enzymes, and plays a huge role in preventing and curing constipation. The actions during prayer, ensures that the kidneys and urinary passages are well flushed, therefore assisting in emptying the bladder, and also prevents the formation of kidney stones.

- 5 – The rhythmic action of a person who prays, exercises the muscles that are not normally used in daily activity, so therefore prevents muscle pain, and bone diseases like arthritis and bone calcification.

6 – Indeed, hygiene is important for the health of every human. Ablutions and bathing is a physical and spiritual form of purification. Prayer is the embodiment of purification, for prayer cannot be performed without both physical and spiritual purification. Ablutions and bathing ensures physical cleanliness, so a person who performs the duty of worship is spiritually refreshed and purified.

- 7 – Physical exercise at specific periods of the day is very important in preventive medicine. The prescribed prayer times, are the most appropriate times to refresh the blood circulation, and revive respiration.

8 – Prayer is one of the most important factors which contribute to regulating the sleeping pattern. In fact, the accumulation of electrical static in the body is earthed by prostrating on the ground therefore; the body once again reaches physical vitality.

Pearls of Wisdom

"Do never forget two things: Allah and the death. And forget other two things: The favor you make and the evil you receive."

Loqman Hakim

"Eloquence and good speech must be performed by the heart. It is futile the tongue utters good words."

AbdulQadir Gaylani

"It is better to be enchained because of telling the truth than to be unchained because of lying."


Sheikh Sadi

"A piece of good deed that is done sincerely is preferred to a pile of deed that is done insincerely."

Said Nursi

"The person who knows speaking to the point, does not need to apologize."

Fatih Sultan Mehmet



"I am astonished by the one who demands the world in spite of knowing the transcendence of the it."

Sayyidina Uthman

"The sympathetic words resemble to the honey which trickles drop by drop. They add zest to the spirit of people"

Anonymous

"A candle does not lose anything from its light by lightening another candle."

Rumi

"It is gratitude to use the blessing that Allah bestowed in the way that He is pleased with, and it is ingratitude to use it in the way He is not pleased with"

Imam Ghazali

"Do not bow down before a wrong , because you lose your dignity besides your rights."

Sayyidina Ali



SHAYTAN'S *Art Of* *Deception*

Knowing Shaytan's art of deception is only half of the coin. For a believer to be successful in this life and in the next, we also have to know Allah, our Religion and ourselves.

He (Shaytan (satan)) makes promises to them, and arouses in them false desires; and Shaytans (satan) promises are nothing but deceptions. (Al Qur'an 4:120)

Allah warns us about our enemy Shaytan.:

O you who believe! Enter perfectly in Islam (by obeying all the rules and regulations of the Islamic religion) and follow not the footsteps of Shaitan (satan). Verily! He is to you a plain enemy. (Al Qur'an 2:208)

Did I not ordain for you, O Children of Adam, that you should not worship Shaitan (satan). Verily, he is a plain enemy to you. (Al Qur'an 36:60)

Shaytan's hatred for the human being began at the creation of Adam and stems from his narcissistic preoccupation with the self. Shaytan felt himself to be superior to that of the creation of Adam and thus Iblis as he was known then refused to prostrate to Adam upon the command of Allah.

As Shaytan protested in the Qur'an:-

(Iblis (satan)) said: "I am better than he, You created me from fire, and You created him from clay." (Al Qur'an 38:76)

Shaytan's aim is to deceive us into following his path of destruction. He is the complete antithesis of all that is good and pure. His methods are usually psychological, attacking the mind and preoccupying the thoughts of the human with deception and false desires.



The arrogance of Shaytan led to his ultimate demise.

On the expulsion of Shaytan from the heavens, Shaytan declared the following statement:

(Iblis) said: *"Because You have sent me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them (human beings) on Your Straight Path. Then will I assault them from before them and behind them, from their right and their left: Nor wilt thou find, in most of them, gratitude (for thy mercies)."* (Al Qur'an 7:16-17)

"Knowing Your Enemy"

Shaytan's outcome is written in stone; an outcast to the eternal gardens of bliss, which originated from his belief in self superiority. Shaytan's aim is to deceive us into following his path of destruction. He is the complete antithesis of all that is good and pure. His methods are usually psychological, attacking the mind and preoccupying the thoughts of the human with deception and false desires.

He has been developing and revising his destructive techniques for centuries. Although his methods are weak, if unprepared and ignorant we may fall victim to his destructive deceptive tricks.

The Psychological Tricks of Shaytan

The Foot in the Door Technique

This is a simple yet highly effective compliance technique. The idea behind this method is that once you have entered into the home of a potential client, it is much easier to influence and secure the sale. The

effect is not so overt at first. The approach is gradual, little by little. Shaytan will not come and attack you directly with the whispers of worshipping others besides Allah, but he will gradually attempt this by a lesser approach. First Shaytan will encourage you to perform smaller sins or encourage you to start neglecting your good deeds. Then once you have submitted to his will he will slowly he will increase his influence until you have left the worship of Allah alone completely.

Once you have complied to Shaytan's lesser request, you will be more likely to comply to his larger request (Myers 2007).

The All or Nothing Rule

Every slave of Allah will inevitably at some point in their lives fall into error. But Alhamdulillah Allah is All-Forgiving. Shaytan knows this weakness of us all to well and thus he takes full advantage of this. If the slave of Allah can only partly commit to a good deed Shaytan will try to whisper the words 'There is no point in doing things by halves', 'if you cannot do it properly why bother doing it at all.' For example a sister may feel that because she doesn't cover her hair she shouldn't bother in covering the rest of her body. However, it is better to be modest partially than not all. Every tiny bit of effort is recorded with Allah. And Allah loves all of our efforts.

The Belittling of Sins

As the subtitle suggests, Shaytan's trick here is to instil in the mind of the believer that the minor sins he or she may fall into are not important. Once the believer believes

they are not important they are more likely to engage in them.

The Beautification of Sins

Shaytan often tries to make sins seem pleasurable, and enjoyable. But the reality is far from this. Take the consumption of alcohol, what pleasure lies in the act. People often describe its taste and aroma as being unpleasant, yet they still desire to consume it. Each glass destroys precious neurons in the brain, and prolonged consumption damages major bodily organs such as the kidneys and the liver, it erodes teeth, creates bad breath, alters the figure by the infamous 'beer belly gut'. Mental processes becomes blurred and slower, inhibitions are lowered, motion and reaction is impaired, and the temporary effects remain in the system for approximately 24 hrs. And that dreaded morning after feeling either from regretful action or just from the mind numbing headache is definitely not desirable at all.

The Door in Your Face Technique

This involves a basic persuasion tactic. Shaytan persuades the believer to engage in the most severe sin. When this is refused by the believer, he then continues to persuade the believer to perform a lesser sin than the other previously mentioned sin, which is more likely to be accepted. Upon analysis the believer is persuaded into thinking that they are doing a lesser sin. But, in reality it is what Shaytan intended all along. For example,

Shaytan will persuade the believer to 'get drunk', when this is refused he will persuade the believer to 'just have one glass'.

Procrastination

Shaytan adores the delayment of an action. Why? Because tomorrow may never happen. "I will do it tomorrow" is Shaytan's hidden phrase. No soul knows what tomorrow will bring, we may die, suffer ill-health, or lose our wealth. Yes it is true, we will be rewarded one good deed for every one good intention, but we will also be rewarded 700 times or even more, which ever Allah the Most Generous decides, for every good action. So lets all 'Seize the moment'.

Distraction

Our minds are never empty. We are constantly engaged with the thoughts/ideas of something. Thus, it is easy for Shaytan to intercept our good deeds with the distracting thoughts/notions of something which is either less important or bad. For example Shaytan may whisper to the praying muslim, 'You should give some money away to charity'. While this is a good intention, contemplating this thought during the prayer is not appropriate.

All of our concentration should be upon conversation and words that we are engaged in with Allah. At other times, Shaytan may try to entice us into engaging in other seemingly pleasurable activities when we are busy cleaning, helping the needy etc.



First Shaytan will encourage you to perform smaller sins or encourage you to start neglecting your good deeds. Then once you have submitted to his will he will slowly he will increase his influence until you have left the worship of Allah alone completely.

Taking for Granted the Concept of Repentance

This is where Shaytan whispers to the believer, 'Go on, Allah will forgive you anyway'. Yes, Allah is All-Forgiving, but this type of thinking ruins the sincerity of the repentance. Based upon Shaytan's ideas a person can perform any evil deed continuously and expect Allah's forgiveness. We should however remember, that every deed is judged by its intention. There are certain criteria for repentance to be accepted from the believer and this particular cognitive thinking nullifies the acceptance of a person's repentance.

Social Proof

People throughout history have always done things that they have seen others doing. Shaytan works by exposing the sins of others. He does this by removing the feeling of shame in the person performing the sin so that he/she will perform the sin in front of others.

"Sheep will always follow, and most of us are sheep." (L J Dhar)

Commitment

Shaytan knows that humans are committed beings. What I mean by this is that people love commitment, if people commit to something either in writing or orally they are more likely to honour that commitment, regardless of whether or not incentive and motivating factors are removed or not.

Mula's

Shaytan loves to corrupt Mula's (popular and influential people). Why? Because we are more likely to follow key people in our society. We all have someone in our society that we admire or desire to emulate and usually these people are the mulas.

Scarcity

'Just try it once', is the phrase Shaytan will use to persuade you into thinking that you will only perform that bad deed just once in your life. But in reality this is merely the beginning.

Focusing on the Unimportant

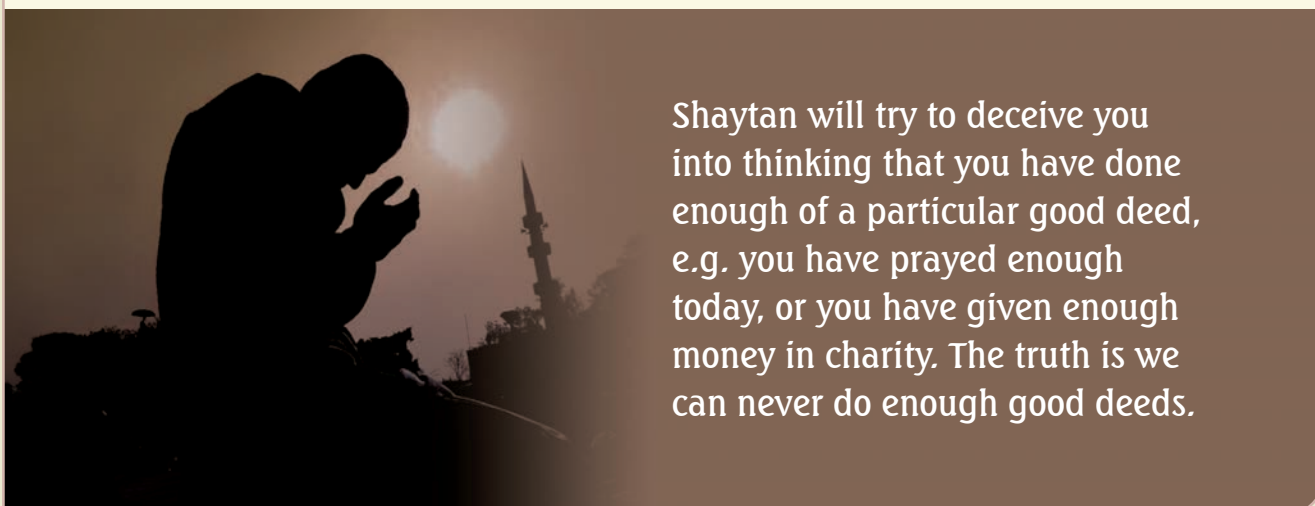
Shaytan tries to preoccupy our minds with things that are of no real importance.

For instance, he may try to make us love chess, football etc, so much so that before we notice it, our passion consumes all of our time. He may make us love things that bring us no substantial benefit or reward in this or in the next.

Justification

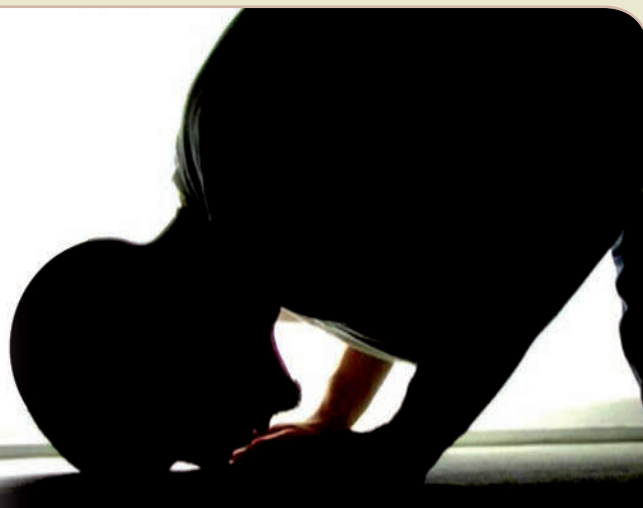
'Drinking one glass of wine a day is very beneficial for the health', 'if I smoke it will reduce my stress level', 'it is better I have a one night stand than to take a wife when I am not ready for the responsibility anon anon.'

Shaytan will continuously whisper excuses to us.



Shaytan will try to deceive you into thinking that you have done enough of a particular good deed, e.g. you have prayed enough today, or you have given enough money in charity. The truth is we can never do enough good deeds.

Our minds are never empty. We are constantly engaged with the thoughts/ideas of something. Thus, it is easy for Shaytan to intercept our good deeds with the distracting thoughts of something which is either less important or bad.



As Allah reminds us in the Holy Qur'an:

"I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Shaitan (satan) has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allahs) Way, so they have no guidance," (Al Qur'an 27:24)

Dissatisfaction with Qadr

The 'Ifs', the 'buts', the 'whys' are all the words of Shaytan.

"Verily in Every affair of the Believer there is Good".

These ifs, buts, and whys, negate the belief in the above sentence from Allah. Verily the promise of Allah is true.

Ego Elation

Shaytan will try to deceive you into thinking that you have done enough of a particular good deed, e.g. you have prayed enough today, or you have given enough money in charity. The truth is we can never do enough good deeds.

Negative Compensation Twist

Here Shaytan will try to encourage us that because we have performed a good deed we can now perform a bad deed as the good deed will allow us to engage in the bad deed. This is a cognitive reversal of the Sunnah, where if we perform a bad deed we are encouraged to follow it with a good deed as that will cancel the bad deed out.

Bribery

Shaytan may offer us favours through the use of magic etc. Shaytan being a jinn, has different capabilities.

For example, they possess the power to travel over large distances in a very short space of time, they can take various other forms and shapes, their presence often goes undetected etc, Shaytan and his companions may use these abilities to entice the believers into engaging in sin, and in return, the jinn may perform special favours for them. Many people who engage in black magic, have to perform vile acts before the jinn accept the individuals request.

Knowing Shaytan's art of deception is only half of the coin. For a believer to be successful in this life and in the next, we also have to know Allah, our Religion and ourselves. Our lack of knowledge of our Deen and our lack of recognition of our weaknesses, coupled with Shaytan's deceptive tricks may be the source of our ultimate downfall.

I leave you with the words and understanding of Sun Tzu, a 6th Century famous Chinese military strategist;

"So it is said that if you know your enemies and know yourself, you will fight without danger in battles.

If you only know yourself, but not your opponent, you may win or may lose.

If you know neither yourself nor your enemy, you will always endanger yourself."

"The Art of War" Sun Tzu, 6th Century



Abdurrahman Hegedus was born in 1982 in Hungary and became Muslim 4 years ago. He has been married to Afra Adel for 3 years. He earned a Master and a PhD degree in biological physics at Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest. Since then he has been working as a postdoctoral scientist. While in Budapest, he started to work actively in the HANIF Islam Cultural Foundation, which is devoted to maintaining a Hungarian Islamic community and to inform non-Muslim people about Islam.

If you maintain a good intention,

ALLAH

will make it easy for you to find the Truth.

I came across some books contained passages and quotes from great sheikhs like Rumi or Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi. Their influence was so overwhelming that I wanted to know more and more about Islam, the Qur'ân and Tasawwuf. The living spirituality of our religion and its crystal clear, undistorted Message led me to surrender to Allah via Islam.

WHY DID YOU AND YOUR WIFE DECIDE TO CONVERT TO ISLAM? CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO INVESTIGATE OTHER RELIGIONS?

The way from complete heedlessness towards the Light of Islam, by the Mercy of Allah Almighty, is unique for all who embark on this journey. For a Westerner who was born and who had grown up within what was essentially an atheist and materialist atmosphere, however, the process of embracing Islam is usually quite long, and can even take years. In our case, the course towards the acceptance and witnessing of Islam took place like this. The stories of our conversion would probably fill several pages, but certainly there were incidents and decisive turning-points which laid down the traces to be followed along the path.

My wife had grown up as a Christian and attended a high school of the Reformed Church. While she believed in God and was actively seeking contact with Him, she felt a great distraction because of some obscure theological questions, for which she was unable to find a satisfying answer during her studies. At the same time, she was not really

certain whether she was able to sincerely worship God in the way she had been taught. The turning point was a trip to Egypt, which, initially, she intended for tourism purposes, but it ended up creating an enthusiasm towards Islamic architecture and calligraphy, in which she had already had an interest when studying art history. These experiences led her to seek more knowledge from books about Islamic Art as well as about Islam itself as religious path; before much time had passed she had gotten in touch with some Muslim sisters in Hungary. She not only discovered the beauty of Islamic Art, which still influences her today, but also the beauty of Islamic behavior, as a reflection of the perfect example of our Beloved Prophet (pbuh). In this way she finally embraced Islam among the sisters in our community (the HANIF Foundation).

As for my personal story, I was an atheist and had not had a religious upbringing. Instead, I had put my entire faith into modern science and having completed my high-school studies I was preparing to dwell deeper into the study of modern physics at university. I had sincerely expected that I would receive answers to the most important questions about human life; but I soon realized that neither the origin nor the purpose of existence, in the sense of a concrete truth, can be really grasped through the theories or ideas presented by science. Subsequently, I came across some books about religions and some of them

completely fascinated me; these were directly or indirectly related to Sufism (Tasawwuf), and contained passages and quotes from great sheikhs like Rumi or Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi. Their influence was so overwhelming that I wanted to know more and more about Islam, the Qur'ân and Tasawwuf. The living spirituality of our religion and its crystal clear, undistorted Message led me to surrender to Allah via Islam.

WHAT WERE YOUR FAMILIES' REACTIONS TO YOUR CONVERSIONS?

Right at the outset, after embracing Islam, our families' reaction was outright objection. This is quite understandable, as what people know about Islam today, which is misrepresented, is that it is widely considered to be a religion associated with violence or terrorism. Naturally, our parents were fearful that we might have entered some obscure sect and would be deviated from the course of a normal life and appropriate morals. They were also afraid that we might be stigmatized because of our religion in society, in our workplace or studies and that other people might treat us with hostility. These objections may have been totally baseless, but from their viewpoint this was quite a natural reaction, as Islam was something truly foreign to them, particularly as far as its outward appearance in religious rites and associated customs were concerned. True, we experienced some hard times with them at the beginning, but

We used to say that we 'converted' to Islam. But the word 'conversion', in its true sense entails the conversion of everything in our perception, tracing it back to the root of the Absolute Truth, thus revealing their real worth. And as some wise men would say: there is only one conversion: Conversion to Reality.



Right at the outset, after embracing Islam, our families' reaction was outright objection. This is quite understandable, as what people know about Islam today, which is misrepresented, is that it is widely considered to be a religion associated with violence or terrorism.



Allah Almighty showed us that by keeping to appropriate behavior, as prescribed by the example of Our Prophet (pbuh), by keeping to the Straight Path and showing mercy and patience towards our parents, we would be able to attain the fruits of such actions, sooner or later. Today our relationship is harmonic and peaceful again.

WHAT CHANGES HAS ISLAM MADE IN YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF THIS LIFE AND THE HEREAFTER?

First of all, Islam brings to life the perception of the very existence of the Akhirah, something that seems little more than a fairy tale to many people today, even for some with religious backgrounds. Of course, there is a huge difference between merely accepting the belief that we will witness the Day of Judgment and the Next Life and the perception of these in our heart. Embracing Islam is surrendering to this belief; however, we need a transition from this first phase towards sensing it as something that is real, ultimately close, something that is almost here and now. Naturally, it is difficult for us to reach this high level of consciousness, as this is something that pertains to the level of the Awliya, and they are far above us, just as the stars are above the Earth. But certainly we can take some steps towards this perception, especially by reading the Qur'ân and regularly remembering death. At the same time our perception about this life is beginning to change. We gain more certainty about our ephemeral existence and things in this world appear with different values than what

appeared before. For example, many worldly things that were pleasant for us have now begun to seem repellent, as we perceive that they turn us away from the Remembrance of the Straight Path and thus they threaten the peace of our heart. Also, we have begun to realize that the world is not solely governed by materialistic effects or causes; Allah is the First Cause, and nothing happens without His Permission.

We used to say that we 'converted' to Islam. But the word 'conversion', in its true sense entails the conversion of everything in our perception, tracing it back to the root of the Absolute Truth, thus revealing their real worth. And as some wise men would say: there is only one conversion: Conversion to Reality. May Allah allow us to achieve this profound change in our lives.

HOW IS ISLAM PERCEIVED IN HUNGARY?

Hungary is a country of 10 million inhabitants, while there are only about 30,000 Muslim people. The number of native Muslims is even less; there are approximately 5,000 Hungarian brothers and sisters. These numbers already suggest that Islam is not a widely circulated topic in Hungarian daily life. In fact, most Hungarian people are not familiar with Islam at all and the little they know usually originates from the media and the press. But, in spite of such misrepresentations of our religion in the press, the people are usually not hostile towards Muslims. When they understand that you are following Islam, they are interested and ask you to describe your

religion, sometimes even asking to clarify certain questions which might have caused misunderstandings for them beforehand. Of course, there are certain Islamic customs that can prove quite difficult to accept. The history of Hungary proves that we have had quite a few connections with Islam; when our state was founded (1,000 years ago), there were some Muslim tribes in the area and centuries later a part of our country became a region of the Ottoman caliphate. Today few things remain from these as a living memory for our people, and thus they identify Islam as a foreign culture. It is of course not easy to make Islam familiar to them, and it is only possible - this in fact is our duty - if we are able to show them the true face of Islam with a particular stress on the fact that peace and mercy are inherent in it.

DO YOU HAVE ANY MESSAGES FOR THOSE WHO ARE LOOKING FOR THE TRUTH?

First and foremost, the most important thing is sincere intention when seeking the Truth. Allah Almighty, the Infinitely Merciful, will never abandon anyone who is sincerely seeking connection with Him. He will show the seeker clear signs of how to approach Him. At first, these might appear unfamiliar to our initial ideas, but if we maintain a good intention, Allah will make it easy for us to accept and find the Way and our peace. At the same time, what causes us to reach the certainty of belief is finding people around us who demonstrate the beauty of the right behavior that should pertain to a believer. Of course, the greatest blessing is to meet living examples of spiritual perfection, who are the rays of light of our Prophet (pbuh): the Sufis, spiritual masters, are called in this way not by a mere name; this is their actual state. They are capable of showing the true and deep reality of Islam and can attract the hearts to the Truth. We pray that May Allah grant every seeker of truth Closeness with Him.

The greatest blessing is to meet living examples of spiritual perfection, who are the rays of light of our Prophet (pbuh): spiritual masters, are called in this way not by a mere name; this is their actual state. They are capable of showing the true and deep reality of Islam and can attract the hearts to the Truth.



Quiz For Children



1. Who is the first muezzin of Islam?
 - a. Sayyidina Bilal
 - b. Sayyidina Umar
 - c. Sayyidina Talha
 - d. Sayyidina Ali
2. What is the third month of the Islamic Calender?
 - a. Muharram
 - b. Rabi' ul Awwal
 - c. Ramadan
 - d. Shaban
3. Where did the first group of Muslims migrate?
 - a. Egypt
 - b. Syria
 - c. Abyssinia
 - d. Yemen
4. How many surahs are there in the Qur'an?
 - a. 114 surahs
 - b. 112 surahs
 - c. 110 surahs
 - d. 108 surahs
5. Which surah is called the heart of the Qur'an?
 - a. Surah Ta-Ha
 - b. Surah Yasin
 - c. Surah Feth
 - d. Surah Ikhlas
6. Name the surah which if recited three times merits the same reward as reciting the whole Qur'an?
 - a. Surah Falaq
 - b. Surah Nas
 - c. Surah Ikhlas
 - d. Surah Kafirum
7. Which surah of the Holy Qur'an contains Ayat al-Kursi?
 - a. Surah Yusuf
 - b. Surah Yunus
 - c. Surah Anfal
 - d. Surah Baqarah
8. In which year did the Muslims conquer Makkah?

a. 632	b. 628
c. 630	d. 633
9. Name the angel with whom the Prophet Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam went on Miraj with.

a. Jibreel	b. Mikail
c. Israfil	d. Azrail

Hey Kids! Maybe you can win a prize!

The first 25 entries that have all of the questions correct will win. Circle your answers, fill out the form, and mail to: Wisdom - Quiz, 8508 So. 71st East Ave. Tulsa, OK 74133 USA

Name: Age:

Address:

Parent's Name (for consent purposes only):

☐ Please send me information about starting a subscription to Wisdom Magazine.



Freedom From Desires

True freedom will be attained only after overcoming the obstacle that is presented by the *nafs*, because Islam is a system and environment of complete freedom and happiness; it is free from all connections or lack of connections that are outside the realm of Islam.

Abdullah b. Amr b. al-As said: “The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said, ‘Unless desires are in keeping with the truth that I have brought (Islam), one cannot be a true believer.’” (1)

There is some terminology in the above hadith, which is extraordinary in that it indicates how to overcome the *nafs*. *Hawa* (desire, eagerness), when used in a general sense, means an inclination away from Allah. In Turkish, the word used is *heva* or *heves* (desire, enthusiasm). As a religious term, *hawa* connotes the *nafs*’ inclination to oppose the requirements of the Shari’a. The greatest harm is announced in the verse:

“O David! We did indeed make thee a vicegerent on earth: so judge thou between men in truth (and justice): Nor follow thou the lusts (of thy heart), for they will mislead thee from the Path of Allah: for those who wander astray from the Path of Allah, is a Penalty Grievous, for that they forget the Day of Account.” (Sad, 38/26)

Hawa is not just mere inclination. In the same way that love and desire is found in every inclination, *hawa* means being inclined to something with affection. As indicated in

the verse, the danger of being diverted is the result of inclinations based on such love and affection.

Feelings and desires are far removed from empty, unrestrained concerns but include emotional actions. In such a state, commitment, discipline, order, standards and contemplation are not appreciated. However, the life of human beings is neither empty nor meaningless, but it is one for which they will be held accountable in every aspect. Thus, the only solution is to bind these indifferent desires to genuine commitment, to the “revelation,” and this will result not only in pleasure in this life, but offers the only solution for the Afterlife. In fact, this matter is explained in the following verse:

“And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord’s (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from lower desires, their abode will be the Garden.” (Naziat, 79/40-41)

Sayyidina Ali said: “I worry about two things on your account; obeying your *hawa* and prolonged ambition...Heeding the *hawa* prevents one from seeing the Truth and heeding the Truth; prolonged ambition makes one forget the next life...” (2)

HEEDING THE TEACHINGS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

The actual message of the hadith is that in order to be a mature believer one must

make one’s emotions and ambitions obedient to that which was brought by the Prophet Muhammad. This is possible if the mind can sufficiently and freely be enlightened by the Revelation. However, the emotions and ambitions do not leave the mind free at this point; if this were the case, naturally, the mind would heed the revelation. When the situation is reversed, then it is not the mind, but rather the emotions and ambitions that reign supreme. This matter is touched upon in the Qur’ân in the following verses:

“But if they hearken not to thee, know that they only follow their own lusts: and who is more astray than one who follow his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Allah? for Allah guides not people given to wrongdoing.” (Qasas, 28/50)

“Have you seen him who takes his low desires for his god? Will you then be a protector over him? Or do you think that most of them do hear or understand? They are nothing but as cattle; nay, they are straying farther off from the path.” (Furqan, 25/44-45)

FAITH DEMANDS UNITY

Faith demands unity. Allah Almighty says: “O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the evil one; for he is to you an avowed enemy.” (Baqarah, 2/208) The interpretation of the above hadith made by Aliyyu’l Qari tells us that it is possible to interpret the phrase



While love and respect for Allah can be identified as heeding the Prophet, following one’s emotions and desires will bring endless error, bid’at (innovation) and superstition, things that cause nearly irrevocable damage, both religiously and spiritually.

It should not be forgotten that the desire and demands of the nafs, the basis of all errors and sins, should be subjected to the reason and the orders of the faith.



“one cannot be a true believer” as being an expression of the denial of actual belief; a person who does not adopt the principles of the belief brought and taught by the Prophet Muhammad is not a believer. In fact, we, even though we accept the principles of the beliefs of Islam, have faults in following the orders; those who appear to be heeding the orders of Allah, but in fact have not accepted them are known as *munafiq* (hypocrites).

The expression “no one can be a believer” is interpreted by Aliyy’ul Qari to mean the non-existence of perfection in belief and to indicate that it is possible to conclude that those whose emotions and eagerness have not accepted complying with the orders and prohibitions found in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad are not true Muslims (Mirkat, 1,201-202). We prefer this second meaning.

THE ERROR OF “IN MY OPINION”

While remaining committed and bound to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad in every period and every matter of one’s life is truly salvation and happiness for a Muslim, the perception of believers as people who are committed to desires or bound to their emotions indicates the existence of a serious disturbance in the emotions. We are living in a very confusing environment; this is so corrupt that it has legitimized an erroneous interpretation of “modernity” that deifies the emotions and desires. It can be seen that most people act in keeping with their feelings, applying to the minds very little. Everyone interprets their own emotions and desires as a standard of “being Muslim” or “being

religious” and in keeping with this desire to be Muslim, they imitate others.

When the matter is interpreted from the aspect of “in my opinion”, the emotions and ambitions are defeated; we fail to realize that we have fallen into discrimination, provocation, that we are not free from the anarchy of ideas, a lack of discipline or eccentricity. Even worse, we cannot understand, or so it seems, that it is not possible to be Muslim according to our own personal desires and emotions.

It should not be forgotten that the desire and demands of the *nafs*, the basis of all errors and sins, should be subjected to the reason and the orders of the faith. While love and respect for Allah can be identified as heeding the Prophet, following one’s emotions and desires will bring endless error, *bid’at* (innovation) and superstition, things that cause nearly irrevocable damage, both religiously and spiritually.

THE SOLUTION

The solution, as clearly and succinctly expressed in the hadith, is to accept emotions and desires that are in keeping with what has been taught by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). That is to say, emotions that are mature in belief are those that are included in being a Muslim, as it is in this way that emotions and desires are made subservient to what Prophet Muhammad has taught us.

It is necessary to accept the rulings brought by the Prophet Muhammad, to follow in his steps, to enjoy his Sunnah, to adopt his cause, to surrender to Allah in every manner; in

short to form a good *ummah* and thus attain freedom of belief. At the same time this will mean the freedom of desires and happiness. Allah Almighty tells us:

“But no! by your Lord! they do not believe (in reality) until they make you a judge of that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then do not find any straitness in their hearts as to what you have decided and submit with entire submission.” (Nisa, 4/65)

What can be understood from this verse is that we can overcome the *nafs* only by following the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. True freedom will be attained only after overcoming the obstacle that is presented by the *nafs*, because Islam is a system and environment of complete freedom and happiness; it is free from all connections or lack of connections that are outside the realm of Islam.

When speaking of emotions and desires, it is obvious that if the desires of the *nafs* are fulfilled this will only serve to strengthen the dominion of the *nafs*. Therefore, in order to prevent the *nafs* being a great obstacle in the way to the Truth, different solutions to limit its effect have been investigated. One of these is the struggle that has been defined as “preventing the joys of the *nafs*; not fulfilling the rights of the *nafs*”. Our hadith makes the following determination here: “(one should) comply with the teachings of Prophet Muhammad about emotions and desires. (*hawa*)” In Islam, it is a general principle that, not only should no rights be infringed upon, they should be protected. Anyone who truly follows the way of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) cannot possibly infringe upon the rights of any other person. For this reason in the hadith that we have selected on this matter, the Prophet Muhammad does not call people, in general – or more specifically believers – to an emotional life; rather, he calls them to the freedom that is rooted in a life of reason and belief, consciousness and introspection. We are told that it is the emotions and desires which are the forces



employed in counteracting this call. It is indicated that the success of Muslims standing against their external enemies is connected with their victory against these internal forces. Perhaps it is because fundamentally this is a continuous and multi-faceted type of *jihad* that this struggle has been called the “*jihad-i akbar*”.

Thus, it is only by grasping onto the lifeline offered by the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad that one can extricate themselves from the maelstrom of these emotions and desires; it is necessary that we hold on to this lifeline with all our might. This is because the success offered by such an effort means being blessed with the gifts and bestowals of Allah Almighty and with the blessings of friendship and the subsequent great happiness:

“And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, these are with those upon whom Allah has bestowed favors from among the prophets and the truthful and the martyrs and the good, and a goodly company are they!” (Nisa, 4/69)

Endnote

1- Beğavî. *Mesfibihu's-sunne*, 1,160; Şerhu's-sunne, 1,212-213 Hatib Tebrizi, *Miškatu'l-mesabih*, 1,55; Nevevî, *Kırk Hadis* (hds.No:41), Hadis sened açısından değerlendirmesi için bk. İbn Receb el-Hanbelî, *Camiu'l-ulul ve'l-hikem*, s.364-365, 2- *Edebu'd-din ve'd-dunya*, s13