

The MESSAGE

Magazine



Spreading The Light of Knowledge

Free of charge

Issue 1, Volume 1 October 2004

A NEW BEGINNING!

In the name of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

Hopefully insha' Allah you are holding in your hands the beginning of something new and good for Bristol. As many of us are aware there is not a single dedicated Islamic bookshop in Bristol. This is surprising considering the size of the Muslim population here. In fact most people would be shocked to discover that there is not a single Islamic bookshop throughout the whole of the South West of England.

If we want to buy books then most of will have to go to our nearest bookshops in Birmingham, London or Cardiff or order via the internet or via a catalogue we may have. Some of us will even only buy books at the Islamic Cultural Fayre every year when we are presented with that once in a year opportunity.

The Message was put together to help us as a community gain a better understanding on various aspects of our faith. Islamic knowledge is important for every Muslim as without it where do we learn to distinguish between right and wrong. It is also the only way we will start to distinguish between cultural islam that some of us have been brought up with and correct islam as practiced by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and his companions.

This publication is not out to promote any particular group and does not side with any one group. It's only job is to help us gain a better understanding of our faith in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah.

The first issue is a special double sized issue incorporating a second section tackling Ramadhan. Sadly nowadays many of us do not make the best of this blessed month when the doors of forgiveness are wide open. Hopefully this section will encourage us to gain more benefit from the month of Ramadhan.

Enjoy the magazine and please let us know what you think in terms of content and look.

Finally, a very special thank-you to the children of Bristol Taleem-ul Islam(Trust) (BTIT) who kindly sponsored the first issue of this publication.

All good that comes from this magazine is from Allah and any mistakes are ours so please forgive us for any shortcomings.

The Message Team

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Contents

- 2 The World Of The Jinn**
Are they all bad? What powers do they have? Here we present a brief overview into their world.
- 5 Why I Chose Islam**
As part of a regular series, one sister describes her journey to Islam
- 7 Friends**
Have you ever fallen out with another Muslim friend? Have you decided you never want to speak to them again? What does Islam have to say on this issue.
- 8 Easy Good Deeds**
Some very easy to do good deeds with big rewards.
- 8 Hadith Corner**
Some thought provoking hadith
- 9 Reality & Obligation in Ramadhan**
Are you really making the best of this special month?
- 11 The Night of Al-Qadr**
What is it? When should you seek it?
- 12 Fasting Ramadhan, Its Virtues & Rulings**
- 15 Fasting & Medical Issues**
A few medical issues in relation to fasting answered.
- 16 Prophet Muhammad's (saws) Farewell Sermon**

This issue was sponsored by the children of Bristol Taleem-ul Islam(Trust) - (BTIT)

The World Of The jinn

The Qur'aan and Sunnah indicate that the jinn exist, and that there is a purpose for their existence in this life, which is to worship Allaah Alone, with no partner or associate. Allaah says (interpretation of the meanings):

"And I (Allaah) created not the jinns and humans, except they should worship Me (Alone)." [al-Dhaariyaat 51:56].

"O assembly of jinns and mankind! Did there not come to you Messengers from amongst you, reciting unto you My Verses...?" [al-An'aam 6:130]

The world of the jinn is an independent and separate world, with its own distinct nature and features that are hidden from the world of humans. Jinns and humans have some things in common, such as the possession of understanding and the choice between the way of good and the way of evil. The word jinn comes from an Arabic root meaning "hidden from sight". Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"... Verily he [Shaytaan] and his qabeeluhu [his soldiers from the jinn or his tribe] see you from where you cannot see them..." [al-A'raaf 7:27]

Allaah has told us in His Book the essence from which the jinn were created. He says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And the jinn, We created aforetime from the smokeless flame of fire." [al-Hijr 15:27]

"And the jinns did He create from a smokeless flame of fire." [al-Rahmaan 55:15].

According to a hadeeth narrated by 'Aa'ishah, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The angels were created from light, the jinn were created from fire, and Aadam was created from that which has been described to you." (Reported by Muslim, 5314).

Types of jinn

Allaah has created different types of jinn. Among them are some who can take on different forms, such as dogs and snakes; some who are like flying winds with wings; and some who can travel and rest. Abu Tha'labah al-Khushani said: "The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'The jinn are of three types: a type that has wings, and they fly through the air; a type that looks like snakes and dogs; and a type that stops for a rest then resumes its journey.'" (Reported by al-Tahhaawi in Mushkil al-Athaar, 4/95, and by al-Tabaraani in al-Kabeer, 22/214).



The jinn and the sons of Aadam

Every individual among the sons of Aadam has a jinn who has been appointed to be his constant companion (qareen). Ibn Mas'ood said: "The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, 'There is not one of you who does not have a jinn appointed to be his constant companion.' They said, 'And you too, O Messenger of Allaah?' He said, 'Me too, but Allaah has helped me and he has submitted, so that he only helps me to do good.'" (Reported by

Muslim, 2814). Al-Nawawi said in his commentary on Muslim (17/175): "He has submitted' ...he became a believing Muslim. This is the apparent meaning. Al-Qaadi said: Know that the ummah is agreed upon the fact that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was protected from Shaytaan, physically and mentally, and with regard to his speech. This hadeeth contains a reference to the warning against the fitnah (temptation, trial) and whispers of the qareen (constant companion from among the jinn). We know that he is with us so we should beware of him as much as possible."

Their powers

Allaah has given the jinn powers that he has not given to humans. Allaah has told us about some of their powers, such as the ability to move and travel quickly. An 'ifreet from among the jinn guaranteed to the Prophet Sulaymaan (peace be upon him) that he would bring the throne of the Queen of Yemen to Jerusalem in a moment faster than that needed for a man to get up from where he was sitting. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"An 'ifreet (strong one) from the jinns said: 'I will bring it [her throne] to you before you rise from your place (council). And verily, I am indeed strong, and trustworthy for such work.' One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said: 'I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!' then when Sulaymaan saw it placed before him, he said, 'This is by the Grace of my Lord...' [al-Naml 27:39-40].

The food and drink of the jinn

The jinn eat and drink. Ibn Mas'ood said: "The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'Someone from among the jinn called me, and I went with him and recited Qur'aan for them.' He took us and showed us the traces of where they had been and the traces of their fires. They asked him for food and he said, 'You can have every bone on which the name of Allaah has been mentioned that comes into your possession, as meat, and all the droppings as food for your animals.' The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, 'So do not use [these things] for cleaning yourselves [after relieving oneself], for they are the food and provision of your brothers.'" (Reported by Muslim, 450). According to another report: "A delegation of jinn from Naseeben came to me, and what good jinn they are! They asked me for food and I prayed to Allaah for them, so that they would not pass by bones or droppings, but they would find food on them." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 3571). The believing jinn may eat any bone on which the name of Allaah has been mentioned, because the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did not permit them to have anything on which Allaah's name has not been mentioned those are for the disbelievers among the jinn.

The beasts of the jinn

According to the hadeeth narrated by Ibn Mas'ood, that we have quoted above, the jinn asked the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) for provision, and he said to them: "... and [you can have] all the droppings as food for your animals."

The dwelling-places of the jinn

The jinn live on this earth where we do. They are mostly to be found in ruins and unclean places like bathrooms, dunghills, garbage dumps and graveyards. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) taught us to take precautions when entering such places, by reciting the adhkaar (prayers) prescribed by Islam. One of these was reported by Anas ibn Maalik (may Allaah be pleased with him), who said: "When the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) entered the toilet, he would say, 'Allaahumma innee a'oodhu bika min al-khubuthi wa'l-khabaa'ith (O Allaah, I seek refuge with You from the evil ones, male and female).'" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 142; and Muslim, 375). Al-Khattaabi explained that khubuth is the plural of khabeeth (evil or dirty masculine form), and khabaa'ith is the plural of khabeethah (evil or dirty feminine form), and that what is meant is male and female shayaateen.

Some jinns are Muslims and some are non-Muslims

Allaah tells us that some of the jinn said (interpretation of the meaning):

"'And some of us are Muslims, and of us some are al-qaasitooon (disbelievers those who have deviated from the Right Path). And whosoever has embraced Islam, then such have sought the Right Path. And as for the qaasitooon, they shall be firewood for Hell.'" [al-Jinn 72:14-15]

The Muslims among the jinn are of different levels as regards to righteousness and taqwa. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"[Some jinn said:] 'There are among us some that are righteous, and some the contrary; we are groups, each having a

different way (religious sects, etc.)'" [al-Jinn 72:11]

The story of how the first jinn of this ummah became Muslim was narrated by 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Abbaas, who said: "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) went out with a group of his Companions heading for the marketplace of 'Ukaaz. This was when the shayaateen were prevented from getting any news from heaven, and shooting stars had been sent against them. The shayaateen went back to their people, who said, 'What is the matter with you?' They said, 'We cannot get news from heaven, and shooting stars were sent against us.' Their people said, 'Nothing is stopping you from hearing news from heaven except some new event that must have happened. Go and look in the east and the west of the earth, and see if you can find out what it is that is stopping you from hearing news from heaven.' Those who went out in the direction of Tihaamah came upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in Nakhlah, when he was on his way to 'Ukaaz, and found him leading his Companions in Fajr prayer. When they heard the Qur'aan, they listened to it and said, 'By Allaah, this is what is stopping us from hearing news from heaven.' When they went back to their people, they said, 'O our people, we have heard a wonderful Recital (the Qur'aan). It guides to the Right Path, and we have believed therein, and we shall never join (in worship) anything with our Lord (Allaah). [al-Jinn 72:2 interpretation of the meaning]. Then Allaah revealed to His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) the words (interpretation of the meaning): 'Say (O Muhammad): 'It has been revealed to me that a group of jinns listened (to this Qur'aan)...' [al-Jinn 72:1], and Allaah revealed to him what the jinn had said.'" (reported by al-Bukhaari, 731).



Their reckoning on the Day of Resurrection

The jinn will be called to account on the day of Resurrection. Mujaahid (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, concerning the aayah (interpretation of the meaning): "...but the jinns know well that they have indeed to appear (before Him) (i.e., they will be brought to account)" [al-Saffaat 37:158]: "They will be brought to judgement." Saheeh al-Bukhaari, Baab Dhikr al-Jinn wa Thawaabihim wa 'Iqaabihim.

Protection from the harm of the jinn

Because the jinn can see us while we cannot see them, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) taught us many ways to protect ourselves from their harm, such as seeking refuge with Allaah from the accursed Shaytaan, reciting Soorah al-Falaq and Soorah an-Naas (the last two Soorahs of the Qur'aan), and reciting the words taught by Allaah in the Qur'aan (interpretation of the meaning): "Say: 'My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings (suggestions) of the shayaateen (devils). And I seek refuge with You, my Lord, lest they may attend (or come near) me.'" [al-Mu'minoon 23:97-98]

Saying Bismillaah (in the Name of Allaah) before entering one's home, before eating or drinking, and before having intercourse will also keep the Shaytaan from entering the house or partaking with a person in his food, drink and sexual activity. Similarly, mentioning the name of Allaah before entering the toilet or taking off one's clothes will prevent the jinn from seeing a person's 'awrah or harming him, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "To put a barrier that will prevent the jinn from seeing the 'awrah of the sons of Aadam, let any one of you say

'Bismillaah' when entering the toilet." (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, 551; Saheeh al-Jaami', 3611).

Strength of faith and religion in general will also prevent the jinn from harming a person, so much so that if they were to fight, the one who has faith would win. 'Abd-Allaah ibn Mas'ood (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: "A man from among the Companions of Muhammad met a man from among the jinn. They wrestled, and the human knocked down the jinn. The human said to him, 'You look small and skinny to me, and your forearms look like the front paws of a dog. Do all the jinn look like this, or only you?' He said, 'No, by Allaah, among them I am strong, but let us wrestle again, and if you defeat me I will teach you something that will do you good.' The human said, 'Fine.' He said, 'Recite, 'Allaah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever-living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists...'" [Aayat al-Kursi al-Baqarah 2:255 interpretation of the meaning]. The human said, 'Fine.' He said, 'You will never recite this in your house but the Shaytaan will come out of it like a donkey breaking wind, and he will never come back in until the next morning.'" (Reported by al-Daarimi, 3247).

This is a brief summary about the jinn, and their nature and characteristics. Allaah is the Best of protectors and the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

For more information see 'Aalam al-Jinn wa'l-Shayaateen by 'Umar Sulaymaan al-Ashqar. (www.islam-qa.com)

Article from www.islam-qa.com.

Recommended reading
The World of the Jinn and the Devils
by Dr. Umar Sulaiman al-Ashqar
Published by Al-Basheer Publications

Ibn Taymeeyah's Essay on the Jinn
Translated by Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips
International Islamic Publishing House

The Jinn in the Qur'an and Sunnah by
Mustafa Ashour
Published by Dar Al Taqwa

The Exorcist Tradition in Islam
By Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

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Coming next issue:

THE WORLD OF ANGELS

— Part One —

Did You Know?

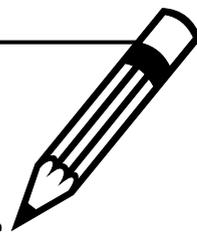
The Arabic for Angels in the Qur'an is Al-Mala'ikah and occurs 88 times in the Qur'an. The word for Devil or Satan is Al-Shayateen and this also occurs 88 times in the Qur'an.

Also the word for Life is Al-Hayat and occurs 145 times in the Qur'an. The word for death is Al-Maout and you guessed it, this also occurs 145 times in the Qur'an.

**Next issue out in 2 months
insha' Allah. Don't miss it!**

Further copies of The Message may be obtained from the Bristol Muslim Cultural Society office on 101A St Mark's Rd, Easton, Bristol / 0117 939 2559

Why I Chose Islam...



Sister Natassia

I was raised to believe in God from childhood. I attended church nearly every Sunday, went to Bible school, and sang in the choir. Yet religion was never a really big part of my life.

There were times when I thought myself close to God. I often prayed to him for guidance and strength in times of despair or for a wish in times of want. But I soon realized that this feeling of closeness soon evaporated when I was no longer begging God for something. I realized that even though I believed, I lacked faith.

I perceived the world to be a game in which God indulged in from time to time. He inspired people to write a Bible and somehow people were able to find faith within this Bible.

“Someone once told me that I am better off than some people who were born into Islam, in that I had to find, experience, and realize the greatness and mercy of Allah. I have acquired the reasoning that seventy years of life on earth is nothing compared to eternal life in Paradise.”

As I grew older and became more aware of the world, I believed more in God. I believed that there had to be a God to bring some order to the chaotic world. If there were no God, I believed the world would have ended in utter anarchy thousands of years ago. It was comfort to me to believe there was a supernatural force guiding and protecting man.

Children usually assume their religion from parents. I was no different. At

the age of 12, I began to give in depth thinking to my spirituality. I realized there was a void in my life where a faith should be. Whenever I was in need or despair, I simply prayed to someone called Lord. But who was this Lord truly? I once asked my mother who to pray to, Jesus or God. Believing my mother to be right, I prayed to Jesus and to him I attributed all good things.

I have heard that religion cannot be argued. My friends and I tried to do this many times. I often had debates with my friends about Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism. Through these debates I searched within myself more and more and decided I should do something about my emptiness. And so at the age of 13, I began my search for truth.

Humankind is always in constant pursuit of knowledge or the truth. My search for truth could not be deemed as an active pursuit of knowledge. I continued having the debates, and I read the Bible more. But it did not really extend from this. During this period of time my mother took notice of my behavior and from then on I have been in a "religious phase." My behavior was far from a phase. I simply shared my newly gained knowledge with my family. I learned about the beliefs, practices, and doctrines within Christianity and minimal beliefs and practices within Judaism.

A few months within my search I realized that if I believe in Christianity I believed myself to be condemned to Hell. Not even considering the sins of my past, I was on a "one way road to Hell" as southern ministers tend to say. I could not believe all the teachings

within Christianity. However, I did try. I can remember many times being in church and fighting with myself during the Call to Discipleship. I was told that by simply confessing Jesus to be my Lord and Savior I would be guaranteed eternal life in Heaven. I never did walk down the aisle to the pastor's outstretched hands, and my reluctance even increased my fears of heading for Hell. During this time I was at unease. I often had alarming nightmares, and I felt very alone in the world.

People are often amazed at how a fifteen year old can make such an important decision in life

But not only did I lack belief but I had many questions that I posed to every knowledgeable Christian I could find and never really did receive a satisfactory answer. I was simply told things that confused me even more. I was told that I am trying to put logic to God and if I had faith I could simply believe and go to Heaven. Well, that was the problem: I did not have faith. I did not believe.

I did not really believe in anything. I did believe there was a God and that Jesus was his son sent to save humankind. That was it. My questions and reasoning did, however, exceed my beliefs.

The questions went on and on. My perplexity increased. My uncertainty increased. For fifteen years I had blindly followed a faith simply because it was the faith of my parents.



Something happened in my life in which the little faith I did have decreased to all but nothing. My search came to a stop. I no longer searched within myself, the Bible, or church. I had given up for a while. I was a very bitter person until one day a friend gave me a book. It was called "The Muslim-Christian Dialogue."

I took the book and read it. I am ashamed to say that during my searching never did I once consider another religion. Christianity was all I knew, and I never thought about leaving it. My knowledge of Islam was very minimal. In fact, it was mainly filled with misconception and stereotypes. The book surprised me. I found that I was not the only one who believed there was simply a God. I asked for more books. I received them as well as pamphlets.

"I cannot express the joy I felt. I cannot express the weight that was lifted from my shoulders. I had finally received my peace of mind."

I learned about Islam from an intellectual aspect. I had a close friend who was Muslim and I often asked her questions about the practices. Never did I once consider Islam as my faith. Many things about Islam alienated me.

After a couple months of reading the month of Ramadan began. Every Friday I could, I joined the local Muslim community for the breaking of the fast and the reciting of the Quran. I posed questions that I may have come across to the Muslim girls. I was in awe at how someone could have so much certainty in what they believed and followed. I felt myself drawn to the religion that alienated me.

Having believed for so long that I was alone, Islam did comfort me in many ways. Islam was brought as a reminder to the world. It was brought to lead the people back to the right path.

Beliefs were not the only thing important to me. I wanted a discipline to pattern my life by. I did not just want to believe someone was my savior and through this I held the ticket to Heaven. I wanted to know how to act to receive the approval of God. I wanted a closeness to God. I wanted to be God-conscious. Most of all I wanted a chance for heaven. I began to feel that Christianity did not give this to me, but Islam did.

I continued learning more. I went to the Eid celebration and jumua and weekly classes with my friends.

Through religion one receives peace of mind. A calmness about them. This I had off and on for about three years. During the off times I was more susceptible to the temptations of Satan. In early February of 1997 I came to the realization that Islam was right and true. However, I did not want to make any hasty decisions. I did decide to wait.

Within this duration the temptations of Satan increased. I can recollect two dreams in which he was a presence. Satan was calling me to him. After I awoke from these nightmares I found solace in Islam. I found myself repeating the Shahadah. These dreams almost made me change my mind. I confided them in my Muslim friend. She suggested that maybe Satan was there to lead me from the truth. I never thought of it that way.

On March 19, 1997 after returning from a weekly class, I recited the Shahadah to myself. Then on March 26, I recited it before witnesses and became an official Muslim. I cannot express the joy I felt. I cannot express the weight that was lifted from my shoulders. I had finally received my peace of mind.

It has been about five months since I recited the Shahadah. Islam has made

me a better person. I am stronger now and understand things more. My life has changed significantly. I now have purpose. My purpose is to prove myself worthy of eternal life in Jannah. I have my long sought after faith. Religion is a part of me all the time. I am striving everyday to become the best Muslim I can be.

People are often amazed at how a fifteen year old can make such an important decision in life. I am grateful that Allah blessed me with my state of mind that I was able to find it so young.

Striving to be a good Muslim in a Christian dominated society is hard. Living with a Christian family is even harder. However, I do not try to get discouraged. I do not wish to dwell on my present predicament, but I believe that my jihad is simply making me stronger. Someone once told me that I am better off than some people who were born into Islam, in that I had to find, experience, and realize the greatness and mercy of Allah. I have acquired the reasoning that seventy years of life on earth is nothing compared to eternal life in Paradise.

I must admit that I lack the aptitude to express the greatness, mercy, and glory of Allah. I hope my account helped others who may feel the way I felt or struggle the way I struggled.

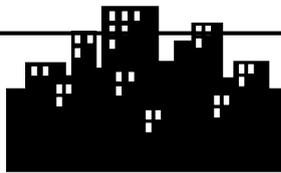
As salamu alaikum wa rahmatullahee wa barakatuhu,

Natassia M. Kelly

***Islam has made me a better person.
I am stronger now and
understand things more.
My life has changed significantly***

END

F.R.I.E.N.D.S



After looking at the above title anyone expecting an article about a very popular American sitcom revolving around the lives of a group of thirty-something close friends is going to be very dissatisfied as this article is a little bit more serious than that. The importance of family & good friends in this life can never be underestimated especially in times where life is a constant rush and we never seem to have enough time for ourselves let alone anyone else. This article will only deal with the issue of friendship between Muslims and hopefully will deal with the issue of family and family ties in a separate article.

One of the more disturbing things the author of this article has noticed in recent years is the ease with which people will cut off their ties of not only friendship but even worse family ties as well without realising how disliked these things are in Islam.

Nowadays we are very quick to stop speaking to our fellow muslim friends over the most trivial of situations without full well realising the gravity of our actions from an Islamic perspective.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "It is not permissible for a man to forsake his brother for more than three nights, each turning away if they meet. The better of the two is the one who is the first to greet the other with salaam."

Below is an extract from a book Called Prohibitions that are taken too lightly by Sheikh Muhammed Sali

Al-Munajjid (www.islam-qa.com) which shows how serious this matter really is, especially in light of the sayings of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) he quotes in relation to maintaining these ties...

Abandoning a Muslim brother for more than three days with no legitimate reason

This is one of the ways in which Shaytaan causes division among Muslims, and those who follow in the footsteps of Shaytaan may forsake a Muslim brother for no legitimate reason, but because of a dispute over money or some trivial disagreement.

This division may continue for a lifetime, with one swearing that he will never speak to the other and vowing never to set foot in his house, turning away if he sees him in the street and ignoring him if he happens to encounter him in a gathering, shaking hands with everyone else but him. This is a cause of weakness in the Muslim community, hence the ruling concerning this is decisive and the warning against it is stern. Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "It is not permitted for a Muslim to forsake his brother for more than three (days); whoever does this and dies, he will enter Hell." (Reported by Abu Dawud, 5/215; see also Saheeh al-Jaami', 7635).

Abu Khuraash al-Aslami (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever forsakes his brother for a year, it is as

if he has shed his blood." (Reported by al-Bukhaari in al-Adab al-Mufrad, hadeeth no. 406; see also Saheeh al-Jaami', 6557).

It is bad enough that division among Muslims results in their being deprived of the forgiveness of Allaah, may He be glorified. Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The deeds of the people are shown to Allaah twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays; He forgives all His believing slaves, except for the one between whom and his brother is enmity. He says, 'Leave these two until they reconcile.'" (Reported by Muslim, 4/1988).

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "It is not permitted for a Muslim to forsake his brother for more than three (days); whoever does this and dies, he will enter Hell."

Whichever of the two parties repents to Allaah must then go back to his brother and greet him with salaam; if he does this and the other person ignores him, then the former is free of blame and the responsibility falls upon the latter. Abu Ayyoob reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "It is not permissible for a man to forsake his brother for more than three nights, each turning away if they meet. The better of the two is the one who is the first to greet the other with salaam." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, Fath al-Baari, 10/492). There may be cases where there is a legitimate reason for forsaking a person, such as his not praying, or



Friends continued from page 7

persisting in immorality. If forsaking him will benefit him by bringing him to his senses and making him see the error of his ways, then it is obligatory to forsake him, but if it will only make him more stubborn and persistent in his sin, then it is not right to forsake him, because nothing is achieved by doing so. Forsaking him will only make matters worse, so the right thing to do is to continue treating him kindly, and advising and reminding him.)
(end of extract)

The aforementioned sayings of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) should be enough to cause anyone to try to mend relations with friends they have fallen out with as the author of this article well knows.

Recently after having fallen out with a friend of 13 years and not having spoken to each other for over 5 months and having read the above hadith I had to swallow my pride and make the first move to make peace for the sake of Allah. Especially as from reading the above extract it is quite clear that if one of us didn't we'd both end up in hellfire which is a place no one wants to go...

For anyone thinking the above advice only applies to males we have to remember that normally the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) advice was aimed at both sexes unless he specifically said it was for a particular sex.

So next time you fall out with another Muslim or there's someone from the past you've fallen out with and decide you don't want to speak to them ever again and ignore them, think well of the consequences of such actions first..

end

Easy Good Deeds

Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "Is anyone of you incapable of earning one thousand Hasanah (rewards) in a day?". Someone from his gathering asked, "How can any one of us earn a thousand Hasanah?". He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "Glorify Allah^[1] a hundred times and a thousand Hasanah will be written for you, or a thousand sins^[2] will be wiped away."

(Sahih Muslim)

Notes

^[1] To glorify Allah means to say SUBHAAN ALLAH.

^[2] Sins being wiped away refers to minor sins.

Abu Umamah Al-Bahili, (may Allah be pleased with him) related of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), that he said: "He whosoever recites the verse (Surah 2: Ayah 255 [Aayat al-Kursi]) after every obligatory (fardh) prayer will not be forbidden to enter Jannah except due to death." (This Hadith was reported by Nasaiee, Ibn-ul-Sanee and others in The Sound Hadith Series, Hadith #972.)

Did You Know?

The word for Day in the Qur'an is Al-Yawm- which occurs 365 times in the Qur'an... which happens to be the number of days in a year.

Also the word for month is Al-Shahr and surprise, surprise this occurs in the Qur'an 12 times - the number of months in a year!

Hadith Corner

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said :

" I guarantee a house in the surroundings of Paradise for a man who avoids quarelling, even if he were in the right; a house in the middle of Paradise for a man who avoids lying, even if he were joking."

Narrated Abu Hurairah: We were in the company of Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) when we heard a terrible sound. Thereupon Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said. "Do you know what this (sound) is?" We said Allah and His Messenger know better." He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), That is a stone which was thrown seventy years before into Hell and it has been constantly slipping down and now it has reached its bottom."
(Sahih Muslim)

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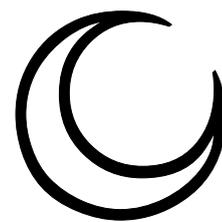
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Reality & Obligation in

RAMADHAN



During this Ramadhan do not let the sweetness of our deeds vanish into the night, leaving only emptiness. When one contemplates the texts on fasting, its wisdom and goals in Shariah, and looks at the reality of the Muslim communities, one realizes a wide gap between the reality and our obligations. Remember that Ramadhan is a bounty that Allah blessed His servants with, to strengthen their faith, and increase their piety (Taqwa). Allah said: "O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious." (Al-Baqarah 2:183).

This article is an attempt to present the essential causes of this gap and some remedies. The primary reason for the gap is ignorance about the goals of fasting and the wisdom behind it. Many Muslims ignore the purpose and wisdom of fasting. Fasting is done merely to conform to the social environment without contemplation. If one is not aware of the divine wisdom of Shariah and its fruits in this world and in the hereafter, one will not apply it in the right way.

Goals of Fasting

Achieving Taqwa: is one of the most important wisdom of fasting. Fasting brings on Taqwa as it lessens the desire of the stomach and mutes the sexual appetite. Whoever fasts frequently would overcome these two desires more easily. This deters against committing abominations and sins and assist in controlling life leading to Taqwa.

Strengthening willpower and acquiring patience: The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam called Ramadhan the month of patience as it increases one's will power to control his desire and the selfishness of his soul. This training allows him to be strong in following Allah's commands. The most important being to carry the Message and propel it forward. The person trains himself to be patient in obeying Allah by stopping at the limits set by Allah both by way of action and abstention. Allah said: "These are the limits set by Allah, so approach them not." (Al-Baqarah 2:187)

Fasting is pure worship: The fact that he is abstaining from food and drink both in public and in secret shows his honest faith and strong love of Allah, and his knowledge and feeling that Allah is all-knowing of everything. For this reason Allah has made the reward for fasting greater than for any other type of worship. Allah said in the hadith Qudsi: "Every deed of the son of Adam will be multiplied [in rewards], the good deed by ten of its like, up to seven hundreds, up to whatever Allah wills, except fasting, it is for Me and I will reward it. He abandons his desire and his food for My sake.."

(Related by Muslim) Ibn al-Qayyim said: "...And people may see that a person is not eating in front of them, but the fact that he is really abandoning his food and his desire for the sake of God is a thing that nobody can find out about, and that is the essence of fasting." (Zaad al-Ma'ad 2/29).

Relieving Muslims from life's distractions: Eating, drinking, and socializing all distract a person and weaken ties with Allah. It is by the Mercy of Allah that Muslims are ordered to fast so as not to be bothered by the intrusion of these activities. Nor by the thought about them nor the anticipation for them when devoting themselves to all types of worship. Either reading the Qur'an, offering additional prayer or making I'tikaf. For this reason the Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said: "Fasting is a shield, and a secure fortress against Hell fire" (Related by Ahmad).

Discovering Allah's Blessings: A person experiences the hardship of the poor. He should then be thankful to Allah Who has blessed him with His bounty while others are deprived. This should make him more sympathetic and willing to share this bounty. The poor rediscovers that fasting helps a person be more devoted to worship. More able to concentrate and meditate. He should then be able of this devotion all year long, a blessing he should thank Allah for.

Acquiring strength and endurance: It has been discovered that depriving the body of food for a period of time helps its defense and endurance mechanism. This in turn protects the body from certain diseases.



Remember that fasting is not only dependent on abstentions: Many believe that fasting consist only of certain abstentions, forgetting that Allah established certain acts of worship with fasting. Among which are:

Qiyamul-layl: The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said: "Whoever performed the night prayer during Ramadhan out of belief and anticipating God's rewards, will be forgiven his previous sins." (Related by Muslim). Performing Umrah: The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said: "An Umrah during Ramadhan is like a Hajj with me." (Related by al-Hakim).

Offering Iftar (meal) to those who fasted. The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said: "Whoever feeds a fasting person has the same reward as him, except that the reward of the fasting person will not be diminished." (Related by Ahmad).

Reading and completing the Qur'an: The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said: "Fasting and [reading] Qur'an will intercede for the person: fasting will say: O Lord I forbade him eating and drinking so let me intercede for him, and the Qur'an will say: I deprived him from his night sleep so let me intercede for him," he then said: "So they will intercede." (Related by Ahmad). The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam used to recite the whole Qur'an to Angel Jibreel each Ramadhan.

Giving in charity: Ibn Abbas radhiallahu anhu said: "The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam was the most generous among people, and he was more generous during the month of Ramadhan." (Related by Muslim).

I`tikaaf: which is to confine oneself in the masjid for prayer and invocation leaving the worldly activities. Ibn Abbas radhiallahu anhu said: "The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam used to perform I'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadhan." (Related by Muslim). It is surprising that many people have abandoned I'tikaf though the Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam never abandoned it from the time he arrived to Madinah until he died.

Supplication: In the verses dealing with fasting, Allah said: "And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, then answer them, I am indeed near to them. I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me." (Al-Baqarah 2: 186). This is an encouragement for the fasting person to increase his invocation. The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said: "Three invocations will be answered: The invocation of

the fasting person, the invocation of the oppressed, and the invocation of the traveler." (Related by Muslim).

Repentance: Ramadhan is the time of repentance and return to Allah, for it is a time when the devils are chained, and when many people are saved from hell fire every night by the grace of Allah.

Applying oneself in all good deeds in the last ten days of Ramadhan: Aysa radhiallahu anha said: "When the last ten days come, he sallallahu alayhe wa sallam would pray most of the night and wake his family, and apply himself, and tighten up his loincloth.", and she also said: "The Messenger of Allah sallallahu alayhe wa sallam used to strive in the last days of Ramadhan more than he did during the other days." (Related by Muslim).

Abstaining from vain talk: Sins decrease the reward of fasting although they do not annul it. The Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said: "Fasting is not [only] abstaining from eating and drinking, but abstaining from vain and obscene talk, so if someone insulted you or wronged you say: I am fasting." (Related by al-Hakim) and he also said: "Whoever does not abandon lying, then Allah does not need him to abandon his food and drink." (Related by al-Bukhari).

Common errors made during Ramadhan

Excessive spending: Ramadhan should be a time to avoid being wasteful, and learning to be prepared in facing harder times by distinguishing the needs from the luxuries. Unfortunately, many people go beyond their limits to spend during Ramadhan. Whether in the varieties of food that they savor each night, or by the other types of spending.

Staying awake during the night and sleeping during the day: Some people sleep during most of the day when they are fasting. Ramadhan is not a time of being lazy, and this do not allow the full benefit from the experience of fasting. It is as if they have only inverted their nights into days and vice versa. In addition, some may spend a great portion of the night indulging in eating and drinking and socializing

Spending more time in socializing: Because people invite each other more often during Ramadhan they do tend to spend more time socializing with friends, and relatives. While it is a good deed to feed the fasting person, this should not result in precious time lost in vain talk. Use the occasion for remembering Allah and offering additional prayers, and for the Da'wah to Allah.



Insisting on performing a certain number of Rakaas during the Tarawih (night) prayer to the point of not praying behind the Imam and thus forfeiting the benefit of congregational prayer. This might also bring hatred and disagreement between the Muslims of one community.

Reading Qur'an too fast: Some insist on finishing the whole Qur'an once or more, even if they have to read very fast. Although reading the Qur'an many times is desirable, this should not be done hastily, especially during the Tarawih prayer without pondering upon its meaning. Allah ta'ala said: "This is a Book which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its verses," (Saad 38:29), and the Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam said: "Those who read the Qur'an in less than three days do not grasp [its meaning]"

Socializing in l'tikaf: Many people are eager to do l'tikaf but some confine themselves in the masjid not to pray and worship Allah but to talk and socialize.

The ways of doing good are numerous in Ramadhan. Many people try to perform more than they are able to. By going beyond their capabilities, they end up not performing any deed in the desired way.

Scholars and Dai'ahs should assume a more prominent role in educating the people - both by talking to them and by giving the best example in their behavior which should comply to the Shariah and following the Sunnah.

The Muslim should realize that his priorities dictate that he does what benefits him in the Hereafter and should not put worldly interests first.

The Muslim should apply himself to deepen his sense of following the Sunnah of the Prophet sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, in every aspect of his life, at all times and especially during the month of Ramadhan. This necessitates seeking more knowledge about the Fiqh of fasting and its etiquette, assimilating the wisdom and goals of fasting, and facilitating the means that allow all the Muslims to benefit from their fasting.

We ask Allah to accept our fast and our good deeds.

From Al-Jumuah Magazine, Vol 8, Issue 9

Source: Islaam.com

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Night of Al-Qadr

Its virtue:

The night of Al-Qadr is the most virtuous night of the year. Allah says in the Qur'an: "We revealed it on the night of power [that is, Al-Qadr]. What will tell you what the night of power is? It is better than a thousand months." Any action therein, for example, reciting the Qur'an, making remembrance of Allah, and so on, is better than acting for one thousand months which do not contain the night of Al-Qadr.

It is preferred to seek this night:

It is preferred to seek this night during the last ten nights of Ramadhan, as the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, strove his best in seeking it during that time. We have already mentioned that the Prophet would stay up during the last ten nights, would wake his wives, and then would remain apart from them to worship.

Which night is it?

Scholars hold different opinions as to the night, which is the night of Al-Qadr. Some are of the opinion that it is the 21st, some say the 23rd, others say the 25th and still others say it is the 29th. Some say that it varies from year to year but it is always among the last ten nights of Ramadhan. Most scholars, though, vouch for the 27th.

Ahmad recorded, with a Authentic chain, from Ibn `Umar that the Prophet said: "He who likes to seek that night should do so on the 27th. 'Ubayy ibn K`ab said: By Allah, and there is no god but Him, it is during Ramadhan-and He swore to that-and by Allah, I know what night it is. It is the night during which the Prophet ordered us to make prayers, the night of the 27th. Its sign is that the sun rises in the morning white and without any rays." (Related by Muslim, Abu Dawud, Ahmad, and by At-Tirmidhi who called it Authentic.)

Praying and making supplications during the night of Al-Qadr:

Al-Bukhari and Muslim record from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said: "Whoever prays during the night of Al-Qadr with faith and hoping for its reward will have all of his previous sins forgiven."

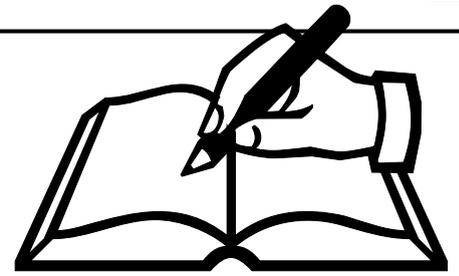
As to the supplication during the night of Al-Qadr, `A'ishah said: "I asked the Messenger of Allah: 'O Messenger of Allah, if I know what night is the night of qadr, what should I say during it?' He said: 'Say: O Allah, You are pardoning and You love to pardon, so pardon me.' " (Related by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and by At-Tirmidhi, who called it Authentic.)

Editors note: It is preferable and better to seek this night during the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadhan, i.e the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th and 29th nights. If one finds this too much they should try their best to at least seek it on the odd nights of the last 7 days, i.e 25th, 27th and 29th nights rather than just trying on the 27th night as the night of Qadr changes from year to year.

From www.islamonline.net

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Fasting Ramadhan, Its Virtues & Rulings



By Br. Isa al-Bosnawi

Published in the 11th issue of Nida'ul Islam magazine, January-February 1996

Abu Umaamah r.a.a. said: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allah, tell me of an action by which I may enter Paradise'. He said: 'Take to Fasting, there is nothing like it.'" [An-Nasaa'ee, Ibn Hibbaan, Al-Haakim, Saheeh]

In this hadeeth, the Prophet (s.a.w.) singled out fasting when asked about a deed that leads its doer to the best of rewards, Paradise. This fact alone is sufficient for us to understand the greatness of fasting.

Mere knowledge of the importance and superiority of fasting, however, is not enough for a Muslim to attain Allah's pleasure and then, in shaa' Allah, His great reward.

Indeed, the Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Perhaps a person fasting will receive nothing from his fasting except hunger and thirst." [Ibn Maajah, Ad-Daarimee, Ahmad, al-Baihaqee, Saheeh] This hadeeth should raise our concern about fasting and increase our desire to perform this act of worship with the best intention and in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet (s.a.w.).

The first step for a Muslim to realise is the fact that fasting the month of Ramadhan is obligatory and that Allah has prescribed it for us in His Book:

"Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain taqwaa." [2:183]

Thus Allah Ta`aalaa teaches us that Fasting is an obligation and a means to attain taqwaa, that which increases believers in their ranks with Allah swt:

"The most honoured by Allah amongst you are those best in taqwaa." [49:13]

Furthermore, we should realise the words of the Prophet (s.a.w.) in which he tells us that Allah the Exalted said: "The most beloved deeds with which my slave comes closer to Me are the obligatory deeds." [Saheeh al-Jami']

Virtues of Fasting as mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah

- The reward for fasting is immense, as mentioned in the following Hadeeth:

"Every action of the son of Adam is given manifold reward, each good deed receiving ten times its like, up to seven hundred times. Allah the Most High said, 'Except for fasting, for it is for Me and I will give recompense for it, he leaves off his desires and his food for Me.' for the fasting person there are two times of joy; a time when he breaks his fast and a time of joy when he meets his Lord, and the smell coming from the mouth of the fasting person is better with Allah than the smell of musk." [al-Bukhaaree]

Also, Sahl ibn Sa`d said that the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Indeed there is a gate of Paradise called ar-Rayyaan. On the day of Resurrection those who fast will enter through it; no one enters it except for them, and when they have entered, it is closed so that no one enters it, so when the last of them enters it, it is closed, and whoever enters it drinks, and whoever drinks never becomes thirsty." [Ibn Khuzaimah, Saheeh].

- Fasting is a shield against the Fire:

"Fasting is a shield with which a servant protects himself from the Fire." [Ahmad, Saheeh]

- On the Day of Judgement, "Fasting will say: O My Lord I prevented him from food and desires so accept my intercession for him." [Ahmad, al-Haakim and Abu Nu'aim, Hasan]

- Fasting is a means for one's sins to be forgiven. The Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "He who fasts Ramadhan, due to Iman and hoping for reward (from Allah) then his past sins are forgiven." [al-Bukhaaree, Muslim]

- The supplication of the fasting person is answered: "There are in the month of Ramadhan in every day and night those to whom Allah grants freedom from the Fire, and there is for every Muslim a supplication which he can make and will be granted." [al-Bazzaar, Ahmad, Saheeh]

- Fasting is an expiation for various sins, as mentioned in the Qur'aan, in verses: 2:196, 4:92, 5:89, 5:95 and 58:3-4.

- The fasting person will be among the true followers of the prophets and the martyrs: `Amr ibn Murrah al-Juhaanee r.a.a. said: "A man came to the Prophet (s.a.w.) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, what if I testify that none has the right to worshipped but Allah and that you are the Messenger of Allah, and I observe the five daily prayers, and I pay the zakaah, and I fast and stand in prayer in Ramadhan, then amongst whom shall I be?' He said: 'Amongst the true followers of the prophets and the martyrs.'" [Ibn Hibbaan, Saheeh]

- Fasting is a shield against one's base desires, as the Prophet (s.a.w.) told the youth: "O youths, whoever amongst you is able to marry then let him do so, since it restrains the eyes and protects the private parts, and he who is unable, then let him fast because it is a shield for him." [al-Bukhaaree, Muslim]

Once we realise the greatness of fasting and what achievement it leads to, we must put all our efforts in performing fasting in the best manner possible. And since fasting is worship, it must be done solely for Allah's sake, and no intention is accepted, other than pleasing Allah and seeking His Face with all one's sincerity. Without a correct intention, no deed is of any value in the Hereafter. We Muslims must constantly verify our intentions and consider why we perform fasting. Do we do so merely because it is the practice of our parents and friends, or do we do so because it is part of our tradition, or perhaps because we simply want to conform to our environment in order to avoid any problems? A Muslim who realises that only that which is with Allah remains, and that He (Swt) is the only One who grants and withholds, would not be of those to which the Prophet (s.a.w.) alluded in the Hadeeth: "On the Day of Judgement, a caller will cry out, 'Whoever performed a deed for someone other than Allah may seek his reward from that for which he performed the deed'" [Saheeh al-Jami].

Certain Aspects and Rulings related to fasting

- For the obligatory fast in the month of Ramadhan, it is incumbent on everyone to have intention before the appearance of Fajr.

- Fast is performed between the time of True Fajr (that which makes food forbidden for the fasting person, and makes Fajr prayer lawful, as explained by Ibn `Abbaas r.a.a.) and the time as soon it is seen that the sun has set.

- The interval between the end of suhoor (the pre-dawn meal) and the start of the obligatory prayer is the interval sufficient to recite fifty Aayaat, as indicated by the Prophet (s.a.w.) and related by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

The Prophet said: "He who gives food for a fasting person to break his fast, he will receive the same reward as him, except that nothing will be reduced from the fasting persons reward."

Eating the pre-dawn meal (suhoor) contains many blessings and the Prophet (s.a.w.) ordered us to do take it, forbade us from leaving it and told us to take suhoor to make a distinction between our fast and the fast of the People of the Book. In spite of this, Ibn Hajar reports in Fathul-Baaree that there is Ijmaa` that it is mustahabb (recommendation). Allah knows best.

- Falsehood, ignorant and indecent speech are to be avoided as they may render one's fasting futile.

- A fasting person can begin fasting while in the state of Janaabah (major state of impurity that requires bath due to a sexual intercourse), as explained in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

- Use of Siwaak (tooth-stick) is permitted. Likewise, washing the mouth and nose is permitted, but it should not be done strongly.



- The Prophet forbade a youth to kiss while fasting, while he allowed an old man since he is able to control himself.
- Giving blood and injections which do not provide nourishment does not break the fast. Also, there is no harm in tasting food, provided it does not reach the throat.
- Pouring cold water over one's head and taking a bath contain no harm to a fasting person.
- It is Sunnah of the Prophet and the practice of his companions to break the fast as soon as the Sun sets even if some bright redness remains upon the horizon. Muslims are strongly encouraged to hasten breaking the fast. The Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "The Deen will not cease to be uppermost as long as the people hasten to break the fast, since the Jews and the Christians delay it." [Abu Daawood, Ibn Hibbaan, Hasan]
- The Prophet (s.a.w.) used to break his fast before praying and he used to break it with fresh dates, if not then with older dates. And if not with dates, than with some mouthfuls of water.
- The supplication of the fasting person when he breaks his fast is not rejected. The best du`aa' (supplication) is that reported from Allah's Messenger, pbuh. He used to say when breaking the fast: "Dhahaba-DH-DHama'u wabtallatil-`urooqu, wa thabatal ajru inshaa Allah." (The thirst has gone, the veins are moistened and the reward is certain, if Allah wills.) [Abu Daawood, al-Baihaqee, al-Haakim and others, Hasan]
- The Prophet said: "He who gives food for a fasting person to break his fast, he will receive the same reward as him, except that nothing will be reduced from the fasting persons reward." [Ahmad, at-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah, Ibn Hibbaan, Saheeh]. Also, a fasting Muslim should not reject invitation of another Muslim to break fast.
- Deliberate eating and drinking, making oneself vomit, menstruation, after-birth bleeding, sexual intercourse and injections containing nourishment all nullify the fast.
- As for Lailatul-Qadr, the Night of Decree, that is better than a thousand months (see Soorah Qadr (97)), the Prophet (s.a.w.) told us: "Seek it in the last ten, and if one of you is too weak or unable then let him not allow

that to make him miss the final seven." [al-Bukhaaree, Muslim]. That which is the most specific states, "seek it on the (twenty) ninth and the (twenty) seventh and the (twenty) fifth." [al-Bukhaaree]

- The Prophet (s.a.w.) used to exert himself greatly during Lailatul-Qadr. He would spend the nights in worship, detaching himself from women and ordering his family with this. So every Muslim should be eager to stand in prayer during Lailatul Qadr out of Iman and hoping for the great reward.

The Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Whoever stands (in prayer) in Lailatul Qadr out of Iman and seeking reward then his previous sins are forgiven." [al-Bukhaaree, Muslim]

- The supplication that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.) taught `Aa'isha, radiyallaahu `anhaa, to say when seeking the Night of Decree is:

"O Allah you are the one who pardons greatly, and loves to pardon, so pardon me." [at-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah, Saheeh]

- It is Sunnah to pray Taraweeh in congregation and the one who knew best the practice of the Prophet (s.a.w.) at night, `Aa'isha, radiyallaahu `anhaa, said: "Allah's Messenger did not increase upon eleven rak`ahs in Ramadhan, or outside it." [al-Bukhaaree, Muslim]
- All who are capable should take advantage of the month of Ramadhan and perform I`tikaaf, i.e. fully attach oneself to worshipping in the mosque. One should inquire how the Prophet (s.a.w.) performed I`tikaaf.
- Zakaatul Fitr is prescribed by Allah as a purification for those who fasted from loose and indecent talk, and to feed the poor Muslims as a provision for `Eidul Fitr. One should inquire further about rulings related to it, especially upon whom it is obligatory and what is its quantity.

- The last but not the least, we should strive to constantly improve our worship and obedience of Allah the Most High, including once the month of Ramadhan is over, inshaa' Allah.

By Br. Isa al-Bosnee [This article was published in the 11th issue of Nida'ul Islam magazine (<http://www.islam.org.au>), January-February 1996]

From www.Islaam.com

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Fasting & Medical Issues

There are many medical issues surrounding fasting which cause confusion amongst people and through lack of knowledge we sometimes bring about hardship on ourselves whilst fasting forgetting that Islam is a religion of ease that takes a middle road. The short discussion below will hope to clarify some medical situations in relation to fasting that do and do not break the fast..

Among the things that break the fast are things that are classified as being like eating or drinking, such as taking medicines and pills by mouth, or injections of nourishing substances, or blood transfusions.

Injections that are not given to replace food and drink but are used to administer medications such as penicillin and insulin, or tonics, or vaccinations, do not break the fast, regardless of whether they are intra-muscular or intravenous. (Fataawa Ibn Ibraaheem, 4/189). But to be on the safe side, all these injections should be given during the night.

Kidney dialysis, whereby the blood is taken out, cleaned, and put back with some chemicals or nourishing substances such as sugars and salts added, is considered to break the fast. (Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 10/190).

According to the most correct view, suppositories, eye-drops, ear-drops, having a tooth extracted and treating wounds do not break the fast. (Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam, 25/233, 25/245).

Puffers used for asthma do not break the fast, because this is just compressed gas that goes to the lungs it is not food, and it is needed at all times, in Ramadaan and at other times.

Having a blood sample taken does not break the fast and is permissible because it is something that is needed. (Fataawa al-Da'wah: Ibn Baaz, no. 979).

Medicines used by gargling do not break the fast so long as they are not swallowed. If a person has a tooth filled and feels the taste of it in his throat, this does not break his fast. (From the fataawa of Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz, issued verbally).

The following things do NOT break the fast:

- o Having the ears syringed; nose drops and nasal sprays so long as one avoids swallowing anything that reaches the throat.
- o Tablets that are placed under the tongue to treat angina and other conditions - so long as one avoids swallowing anything that reaches the throat.
- o Anything inserted into the vagina, such as pessaries, douches, scopes or fingers for the purpose of a medical examination.
- o Insertion of a scope or intra-uterine device (IUD or "coil") and the like into the uterus.
- o Insertion into the urethra for males or females of a catheter, opaque dye for diagnostic imaging, medication or solutions for cleansing the bladder.
- o Dental fillings, tooth extractions, cleaning of the teeth, use of siwaak or toothbrush - so long as one avoids swallowing anything that reaches the throat.

- o Rinsing, gargling or applying topical mouth sprays - so long as one avoids swallowing anything that reaches the throat.
- o Subcutaneous, intramuscular or intravenous injections except for those used to provide nourishment.
- o Oxygen.
- o Anaesthetic gases so long as the patient is not given nourishing solutions.
- o Medications absorbed through the skin, such as creams and patches used to administer medicine and chemicals.***see below about nicotine patches.
- o Insertion of a catheter into veins for diagnostic imaging or treatment of blood vessels in the heart or other organs.
- o Use of a laparoscope (instrument inserted through a small incision in the abdomen) to examine the abdominal cavity or to perform operations.
- o Taking biopsies or samples from the liver or other organs so long as this is not accompanied by the administration of solutions.
- o Gastroscopy so long as this is not accompanied by the administration of solutions or other substances.
- o Introduction of any instrument or medication to the brain or spinal column.

***Please note that using nicotine patches does not break the fast - good news for those attempting to give up smoking (- hopefully insha' Allah the topic of smoking will be tackled in a future issue).

With regard to mucus coming from the head (nose and sinuses) and phlegm coming from the chest by coughing and clearing the throat, if it is swallowed before it reaches the mouth, this does not break a person's fast, because it is a problem which all people have; but if it is swallowed after it reaches the mouth, this does break the fast. However, if it is swallowed unintentionally, it does not break the fast.

Inhaling water vapours, as may happen to people working in desalination plants, does not break the fast. (Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 10/276).

Not a medical issue but it is worth mentioning that it is disliked (makrooh) to taste food unnecessarily, because this carries the risk that the fast may be broken. Examples of cases where it is necessary to taste food include a mother chewing food for an infant when she has no other way to feed him, tasting food to make sure that it is OK, and tasting something when making a purchase. It was reported that Ibn 'Abbaas said: "There is nothing wrong with tasting vinegar or anything that one wishes to buy." (Classed as hasan in *Irwa' al-Ghaleel*, 4/86; See al-Fath, commentary on *Baab Ightisaal al-Saa'im, Kitaab al-Siyaam*).

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Prophet Muhammad's (saws) Farewell Sermon

Ramadhan is a golden opportunity for the Muslim to renew their iman and character and we should all strive our utmost to make the best of this Ramadhan as it could easily be our last one. After Ramadhan one should emerge a better Muslim and person - if we don't then we need to look at why not. The Prophet Muhammad's (saws) last sermon contains advice we should incorporate into our lives during Ramadhan and continue to live by. This was his final or farewell sermon before his death during his last Hajj and was given to over 124,000 pilgrims. As microphones didn't exist then, miraculously all the pilgrims heard it including people in their houses as well.

[This sermon was delivered on the Ninth Day of Dhul-Hijjah 10 A.H. in the 'Uranah valley of Mount Arafat' in Mecca.]

After praising and thanking Allah the Prophet (saws) said:

"O People, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

O People, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that he will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah has forbidden you to take usury (interest), therefore all interest obligations shall henceforth be waived. Your capital is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity. Allah has judged that there shall be no interest and that all the interest due to Abbas ibn 'Abd'al Muttalib [the Prophet's uncle] be waived.

Every right arising out of homicide in pre-islamic days is henceforth waived and the first such right that I waive is that arising from the murder of Rabiah ibn al Harith.

O People, the unbelievers indulge in tampering with the calender in order to make permissible that which Allah forbade, and to forbid that which Allah has made permissible. With Allah the months are twelve in number. Four of them are holy, three of these are successive and one occurs singly between the months of Jumada and Shaban.

Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope of that he will be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right, then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with anyone of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste. O People, listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers, fast during the month of Ramadhan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over a white - except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not therefore do injustice to yourselves. Remember one day you will meet Allah and answer your deeds. So beware: do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.

O People, no prophet or apostle will come after me, and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O People, and understand my words which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the Qur'an and my Sunnah and if you follow these you will never go astray.

All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O Allah, that I have conveyed Your message to Your people."

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