



# THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

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# THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

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## Great influence on Human Race

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The Quranic teachings gave birth to a rationalist trend in the widest sense of the term taken etymologically and historically. It made a deep impact on arts and literature and human civilization all over the world in such a way as if a new window had been opened to let in light and fresh air. Islam broke open the lock with which human intellect had been fastened for ages by the enemies of reason, masquerading as representatives of religion. It was then that the humanity woke up after its long sleep of several centuries, removed the hurdles placed in its way and set its foot on the road to enlightenment and progress. ●

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## Wisdom of Qur' an

"Such was 'Isa son of Maryam, a word on truth wherein they are doubting." (Surah Maryam: 34)

### Commentary:

"People have always been in grave doubts regarding 'Isa ibn Maryam and have, therefore, disputed between themselves. Some said, like the Jews, that he was a magician, a soothsayer, and an illegitimate child. The Talmud consigns him to Hell, along with dogs. Others said, he was a Son of God, yet others that he was God himself; a few that he was one of a Trinity of gods. It was only a handful who believed in Christ's own claim which can be found in today's Gospels also that he was no more than a messenger of Allah (Ibn Jarir with some addition)

Some scholars have noted however, says Qurtubi, that it was only once that 'Isa ibn Maryam spoke in infancy. Once Maryam's chastity was established, he grew up as a normal child Ibn Abbas has said that his mother and Yusuf the carpenter took him away to Egypt fearing attempt on his life. They brought him back after 12 years, (and, to be sure, he immediately started preaching and making evoking enmity: Au.)

Mawdudi's comment touches on another aspect, "The thrust of the argument so far clearly reveals that the Christian belief in Jesus is false. Although John was born in a miraculous manner, this birth did not make him God's son. Similarly, although Jesus too was born by means of another miracle, this to be God's son. Jesus' birth was no more miraculous than John's and there are no grounds for referring to John as God's son. Remember that according to Christians, both John and Jesus were born miraculously. ●

## Pearls From the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

"It is related, on the authority of Qatadah (Tab'ee), (by way of a Mursal), that the Apostle of God said: "When you go to anyone's house, make the salutation of the inmates, and when you leave, by making the salutation of farewell."

(-Baihaqi)

### Commentary:

The term is applied pre-eminently to Muslim doctors who followed the immediate Ashab or Companions of the holy Prophet, and whose reports and narratives regarding the prophet form a part of the Sunnah.

Sometimes a Tab'ee relates a Tradition, but does not mention the Sahabi, i.e. The holy Companion through whom it had reached him. Such a Tradition is called Mursal in the special usage of Islam. ●

It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of God said: "Whoever is offered a sweet-smelling flower should accept it, and not reject it because it is a very ordinary thing. Its fragrance is a thing of joy."

### Commentary:

If an ordinary thing like a flower was refused, the giver might feel that his gift had been refused because of its ordinariness, and it hurt his feeling. In another Tradition, quoted in Tirmizi, it is stated that "whoever is offered a sweet-smelling flower should not decline to accept it for a sweet-smelling flower is a gift of paradise". In Sahih Muslim, it is, further, mentioned, on the authority of Hazrat Anas, that "the practice of the Apostle of God was that he never refused a perfume." ●



## Sharia Laws

India is a secular state and a nation of multiple religions. The lives of its citizens are enriched and challenged by a thick pluralism. It has a largest Muslim minority. Numbering around 150 million, this minority community is second only to world's largest Muslim majority in Indonesia.

Indian constitution provides freedom to its citizens in respect of their religious following and freedom of their ritualistic activities. However, all Indians irrespective of their caste, community, religious and regional affinity are governed by the criminal laws enforced in the country. The Indian Penal Code or Indian

Criminal Procedure Code do not distinguish any one and are expected to be followed by all and one. But certain civil and Revenue Laws at certain stages come in conflict with Islamic Sharia. But often certain provisions in the Criminal laws when come in conflict with Islamic Sharia Indian courts offer their interpretations.

Recently a division bench of Delhi High Court of Justices S. Ravindra Bhat and S.P. Garg ruled in favour of the 15-year old girl Shumala to live with her husband Mehtab. Though under Indian Laws the marriageable age of the girl is 18 year. The Bench

quoted the Mohammedan Law which allows a girl to marry without her parents consent after attaining puberty. But realizing the delicacy of the case they ruled that certain Safeguards had to be placed to protect the girl. These included the condition that when she turned 18, she could, if she so wished, declare the marriage void. The judgment led to the usual social buzz. Views were polarised along the expected lines of condemnation and approbations.

Often such petty issues assume alarming situation as was happened in Shah Bano case. The Supreme court

overruling the Mohammedan Law decreed that husband of Shah Bano make regular payment for her maintenance as provided in section 125 of the criminal Procedure Code. Here we do not want to discuss Shah Bano case or its resulting effects but wish to emphasise that members of the Community should avoid indulging in disputes and then running to the Courts. Instead they should seek guidance from the Sharia Courts and act accordingly. That is the peaceful and respectable way of getting the problems solved.

**S.A.**

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# The Message of Ramadan

O Believers! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you. That you may become pious. (Al-Baqarah 2: 183)

The above Qur'anic verse lays down that fasting is a religious duty incumbent on all Muslims. Until the last Day the command embodied in this verse remains valid. Embedded in the verse is thus much food for thought.

First, the command is addressed to believers. For the command involves doing something which is difficult. It calls for courage and patience to fast. Accordingly, mention is made first of faith. The believers are asked to discharge this duty. For they have pledged their servitude to Him, affirming that He is the Master and Ruler-interest. For they are obliged to perform whatever He commands of them. This is because of their servitude to Him. Being His servants they are expected to behave thus. They are at His beck and call. Allah being All-Wise begins the command in the above fashion. Otherwise, secular laws are promulgated without any reference to one's gain or safety against some loss. Although Allah is the absolute Ruler, Creator of the heavens and earth who exercises total control over everyone's life, honour and property,

**S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

He invokes the conviction of believers. Muslim are exhorted to act on the dictates of their faith. They are expected to respond vigorously and positively to His call. Against this backdrop they are told that a month-long fasting is prescribed for them as a religious duty.

Allah is thoroughly conversant with human nature. For He is man's Creator. At the same time, He makes certain allowances for man out of His wisdom and mercy. Whenever He enacts a command, He prepares man mentally for it, enabling him to obey His command willingly. Man is instinctively repulsed by something new and odd. However, on realising that something is a standard practice, followed down the ages by many generations, man is drawn towards it and feels no hesitation in obeying such a command.

Believers are informed that fasting was a duty obligatory upon earlier generations as well. One learns from the history of world religions and nations that fasting has been a religious obligation in some form during all periods of time. Its details may be found in religious and historical works. One learns the exact form and duration of fasting among different religious communities. Finer points about the restrictions and the starting and concluding times of

fasting may also be gleaned. Constraints of space prevent us from exploring this point any further.

The important truth home though is that fasting helps man attain piety. The Qur'an employs the term *taqwa* in this context. Generally speaking, words are invested with different meanings with the passage of time. A pious person is taken to be one who is constantly engaged in worship, and who sleeps little. One who does not fall asleep at all is recognised as a perfectly pious person. He is expected to offer prayers all the time and is very cautious about each and every issue, be it religious or mundane. In the original Arabic, however, *taqwa* does not carry these shades of meaning. It does not imply that one blessed with *taqwa* is given wholly to worship, stays awake throughout the night and fasts round the year. Instead *taqwa* signifies in the original Arabic a state of mind and consciousness. It encompasses one's temperament and way of thinking, Ramadan helps man attain piety. Yet it does not mean that with the passage of Ramadan, piety comes to an end. Piety is not some temporary condition.

Piety represents a constant state of self-control and restraint. It a child is brought up well, he imbibes the value of respecting his elders. He does not indulge in any act in the presence of his elders which may be offensive to them. By the same token, he refrains from mocking or insulting them. Piety signifies such a training of

the mind which guides one to practice moral values all the time. A pious person thinks carefully before taking any action whether his act is permitted by the Shari'ah or not. This reference to the Shari'ah at every step is a pointer to one's piety. Take the illustrious examples of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, holding exalted rank among the Prophet's Companions. They were witness to the revelation of the Qur'an. Furthermore, they possessed mastery over the Arabic language and idiom. They were born and brought up in Makkah and used the local language fluently. As true Companions they never felt shy of seeking clarification from the Prophet (PBUH). Once they asked 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud to define *taqwa*. To this he replied: "O Commander of the Faithful! Have you ever walked on a path with thorns on either side?" When 'Umar replied in the affirmative, he asked as to how he walked on that path. 'Umar replied: "I walk cautiously, ensuring that body and clothes are safe against thorns." 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud exclaimed: "This is the definitions of *taqwa* - to lead life in a way with our doing anything which may displease Allah. One's deeds should not be discordant with the Shari'ah."

Those not familiar with Arabic idiom think that fasting is prescribed for making believers pious. It is not however the point that one who fasts for twenty-nine or thirty days in Ramadan will turn into a pious person



at the end of the month. One who fasts, recites the Qur'an often and prays to Allah at night, including offering Tarawih Prayers, does not turn automatically into a pious person. This is not the end of his test. It signifies, at most, that he did not eat or drink during the daytime in Ramadan even what is lawful and wholesome, and he did so at Allah's command. Even a drop of water was not consumed by him. Needless to add, water is one of the greatest divine bounties. Allah has created every living being out of water. A true believer does not eat food during the daytime of Ramadan, though he was provided with food by Allah. He had food items at home bought out of his lawful earnings. Yet he did not take food or water, though he needed these as a human being. Only in deference to Allah's command did he not touch these otherwise lawful and wholesome things from dawn to dusk. Not a drop of water should pass his lips. Since one does all this in accordance with Allah's command, one should make a point of living by His directives after Ramadan as well. One should discern between the lawful and the unlawful. We are very sensitive to any impurity. Let us bear in mind that disobedience to Allah is the most damaging impurity.

As we forego lawful and wholesome things during Ramadan in deference to Allah's command, we should not draw near any sin after the month of Ramadan is over. We should not do anything which may displease

him. Nor should we ever tell a lie. By the same token, we should not give false testimony or hurt any fellow Muslim's feelings. We should not deny anyone his due or indulge in slandering. We should refrain from stealing, injustice, violence, and hurting others. Piety consists in shunning all that is sinful, impure and immoral. A constant effort to keep away from evil constitutes piety.

There is some difference an act of worship and piety. The latter represents an outlook and temperament. One may perform acts of worship. However, in a state of anger and in mundane transactions one may disregard the spirit of one's worship. This underscores a lack of piety. One's mind should be permeated with piety. Fasting is prescribed for Muslims for instilling piety into their minds and hearts. One should think all along of one's ultimate return and accountability to Allah.

Piety signifies God-consciousness. One should weigh up before doing anything whether this act will please or enrage Allah. One should ascertain first whether such action is in accord with the Shari'ah or not, and whether it is lawful or not. One's action should follow the command of Allah and His Messenger. Becoming habitual about this constant checking infuses piety into one. This is the rationale behind declaring fasting in Ramadan as an obligatory duty. For it may bless one with piety. ●

## The Quran On Fasting

"O you who believe! Observing al-sawm (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you - that you may become pious." [2:183]

"And I (Allah) created not the jinns and human beings except that they should worship Me (Alone)." (51:56)

"And that you fast, it is better for you, if only you knew," [al-Baqarah 2: 184]

That you should magnify Allah for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him." [2:185]

"(Fasting) for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty), (i.e. An old man, etc.), they have a choice either to fast or) to feed a poor person (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast, it is better for you if only you know." (2:183-84)

"Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days), and that you must magnify Allah for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him". (2:185)

"It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of the fasts. They are garments for you and you are the same for them. Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He turned to you and forgave you. So now have sexual relations with them and seek that which Allah has ordained for you, and eat and drink until the thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your fast till the nightfall. And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in Itekar in the mosques. These are the limits (set) by Allah, so approach them not. Thus does Allah make clear His signs to mankind that they may become Al Muttaqun (the pious)." (2:187)

"Verily! We have sent it (this Quran) down in the night of Al-Qadr. And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadr is!" (97;1-2)

"The night of Al-Qdar is better than a thousand months. Therein descend the angels and the Ruh (Gabriel) by Allah's Permission with all Decrees. (The night is peace! Until appearance of dawn." (97:102) ●

# Fasting

**S.Sulaiman Nadwi**

Definition: Fasting is one of the obligatory duties which every Muslim is to required to perform in the month of Ramadan. The Arabic word sawm which has been used in the Holy Qur'an and the Ahadith for fasting means "to abstain", "to keep silence". In the Technical language sawm signifies fasting or abstaining from food and drink and sexual intercourse etc. from the end of the Sahri till sunset. Fasting has been ordained as a religious duty for the Muslims for subduing their lust and keeping their appetites and temptations within reasonable limits so that man may not become their slave and lose control over himself. But Islamic fasting trains a person for cheerful and willing renunciation of eating, drinking and sexual end of the fast. This shows that Islam does not look down upon the appetites of flesh as something profane and ignoble. According to Islam both soul and body are sacred and worthy of respect.

Fasting in Islam not only imposes check upon eating, drinking, sexual intercourse but also exhorts its servants to refrain from other foul acts such as speaking ill of others, backbiting, slandering, telling lies, using foul language, discussion of disreputable matters and wrong behaviour of any sort. Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (PBUH) as saying: If one does not abandon falsehood and other actions like it, God has no need

that one should abandon one's food and drink. Fasting in Islam is thus an excellent institution for spiritual discipline and self-control. The exact date of commencement of fasting is not known. The famous English writer Herbert Spencer in the book Principles of Sociology, writes basing his argument on conjecture that the food they did not become popular as an institution because purification of the soul is common to all Divine religions. The writer of the article on "Fasting" in the Encyclopaedia Britannica states that it would be difficult to name any religious system of any description in which fasting was wholly unrecognized. It was well-established among the Jews and the Christians.

The record of the Ahadith bears testimony to the fact that fasting was a common religious practice among the pre-Islamic Arabs, and they used to observe fast on the tenth of Muharram as on this day Allah saved Moses (peace be upon him) from the clutches of Pharaoh (Fir'awn). The Arabs and other people too were familiar with fast as an act of penitence of propitiation or a preparatory rite before some act of sacrament.

However, whatsoever be the reasons of fasting in the polytheistic religion, the date, the significance and the aims and objects of fasting as explained in the Holy Qur'an are:

O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you even as it was

prescribed for those before you that you may ward off evil..... The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let him fast the month, and whosoever of you is sick or on journey, (let him fast the same) number of other days. Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you; and He (desireth) that ye should complete the period, and that you should magnify Allah for having guided you, and that peradventure ye may be thankful. (2:183-185)

### **Reality behind Fasting**

One of the aspects of individual perfection or moral and spiritual elevation is the subordination of animal nature to reason and spirit. Nothing is as efficacious for this purpose as hunger, the heart (mind) and other organs. If one commits sin, penitence and repentance through fasting, brings solace and purifies his soul, even as it fortifies the will so as not to indulge again in sins and vice. To be a true servant of Allah, it is essential that man should conform his behaviour to the moral and spiritual discipline embodied in the Shari'ah. One cannot achieve this end finds himself helpless before untamed and turbulent desires. The underlying idea behind fasting is to teach moderation and spiritua! so that human temptations may not become so uncontrollable as to flout the commands of Allah. But as we have already said, Islamic fasting does not aim at complete renunciation of the lawful appetites and all those lawful things e.g. eating, drinking, sexual

intercourse etc. become permissible after the fast.

During the month of fasting the whole atmosphere is permeated with religious piety and devotion to Allah. There is one extra prayer, Tarawih, which is performed each night either individually or in congregation in which the Qur'an is recited and the Muslim is reminded that it was in the month of Ramadan that the revelation of the Qur'an commenced. It is, moreover, a sunnah (practice) of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) to complete the recitation of the entire Qur'an during Ramadan. The last ten days and nights are marked by especially intensive devotions including the night during which the first revelation of the Qur'an came, known as Lailat-ul-Qadr. Sadaqat are also given with greater zeal. Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) as saying: When Ramadan begins the gates of Heaven are opened, the gates of Hell are locked, and devils are chained.

The purpose of fasting in the month of Ramadan is two-fold. One has to abstain from food and drink in order to feel in one's body what the poor and the hungry feel and thus social responsibility is hammered into one's consciousness and secondly, the purpose of fasting during Ramadan is self-discipline (as for instance, in the total prohibition of all intoxicants.)

It is be remembered that one should not forget one's obligatory duty of prayer and fasting in the midst of material and mundane occupations. We know what there is a great difference in the rising and setting of the sun between normal (equatorial-

tropical) countries and the regions situated beyond and extending to the two poles. Al-Barony had observed that at the poles the sun remains set for six months continually, and then rises to shine continuously for six months (excepting the two days of equinox). The jurists-theologians of Islam affirm in general that the hours at 45 parallel remain valid up to 90 parallel i.e., One is to follow the movement of the clock and not that of the sun. This applies to prayer as well as fasts etc.

During the period of fasting from dawn to dusk we eat not a grain of food nor drink a drop of water, no matter how delicious the dish or hungry or thirsty we feel. This process of incessant fasting for full month and experiencing hunger, thirst and sexual abstinence etc. Make us conscious that are the true and loyal servants of Allah. It inculcates the spirit of patience and strengthens our faith.

However, the fast must be broken at sunset each day and it is also recommended to have a sahari (pre-dawn meal) before resuming the fast next day. While fasting may sound difficult to those who are not used to it, in practice, it is generally tolerable.

### **The Basic Rules of Fasting and Exceptions**

The rules of fasting are quite simple. First of all, every day of Ramadan is a day of fasting. And fasting is obligatory on all Muslims past puberty, with the following exceptions: Sick persons to whom fasting is likely to be injurious, persons who are travelling and up to forty days following child-birth, pregnant women and nursing mothers, if fasting is likely to harm the mother or infant, the very old and the insane. The

latter two categories are permanently exempt from fasting, while the others are exempt only for the duration of their conditions and must make up the missed fasts at any time before the beginning of the next Ramadan if possible. If one has a permanent condition which make fasting impossible or dangerous to health, he or she is permitted instead to give to a needy person a sum equivalent to one meal for each day he did not fast. If a Muslim is not fasting on any day of Ramadan for any of the above reasons, he is not to eat or drink in front of others who are fasting, out of courtesy.

The period of fasting begins each morning of Ramadan before the first light of dawn becomes visible and lasts until sunset. A declaration of intention to fast a silent statement in any words or language that one intends to fast today for the sake of Allah must be made. It is sunnah to break the fast immediately after the sun has set, and have a meal before (sahari) at which the next day fast begins.

The keynote to all the observances of Ramadan is self-discipline and self-control. Although in some Muslim countries the work schedule is modified during the month, in many places Muslims carry on their work and other activities even though they may be hungry, thirsty and tired. Fasting is in no sense an excuse for neglect of work or obligation, idleness, in irritability or outbursts of temper, but, on the contrary, should be a total inner state leading to patience and self-control.

It should be noted that because Islam uses a lunar month rather than a solar month, any given date falls twelve days earlier each year than in the preceding one consequently Ramadan (and all other dates) rotates throughout the seasons, completing the cycle of twelve months in about thirty three years. Hence Ramadan sometimes falls in summer and sometimes in winter and sometimes in between in the various parts of the world; people living in every clime therefore, experience it during all the seasons. Fasting is naturally quite easy during short days of winter but it can be difficult in the heat of tropical summer. Under such conditions the fasting Muslim learns that food and drinks are indeed precious gifts from his Lord, to be accepted with thankfulness.

### **Reforms Introduced by Islam in Fasting**

The measures taken by Islam to create facilities and reduce the rigour in fasting are given below:

Before the advent of Islam in all the religions of the world, revealed or unrevealed, fasting was obligatory on some special group of the followers of the religions, for instance, among the Hindus, only Brahmans kept the fast. It was not obligatory for the non Brahmans. Among the Zoroastrians, their leaders and guides used to observe fasts. Among the Greeks only women kept fast, but fasting, as a means of spiritual purification, should have been an obligatory duty for all the followers of the religions.

Islam ordains fasting for all the Muslims without making any distinction between the leader and the follower, and

man or woman.

As we have already said Islam uses a lunar month rather than the solar month as a result of which Ramadan rotates throughout the seasons. Sometimes it falls in summer, sometimes in winter, and sometimes in between them, therefore, experience it during all the seasons i.e. the facility of the short days of winter and the hardship of the heat of tropical summer, unlike the fasts under solar system which know no change in the seasons.

Jain's (a religious sect of Hindus) fast extended to weeks. The Christian monks of Arabia kept fast for days together. The Jews fast was for the duration of full twenty-four hours while Islam ordained the fast from the dawn to the evening.

The fast of the Jews that when they had taken something once at the time of breaking the fast, they did not take anything afterward, that is, there next fast began there and then. It was a custom with the Arabs that they ate what they desired before going to sleep; after having a sleep it was forbidden to take anything. In the beginning this practice of fasting was also in vogue in Islam. Once in the month of Ramadan, the wife of a companion was still preparing the supper. Her husband kept waiting for the meal and then went to sleep. When the meal was ready and she brought it he could not take it as he had fallen asleep. He was with fast on the next day too. Therefore, he swooned. Thereupon the following verse of the Holy Qur'an was revealed: And eat and drink till the white streak of the dawn become distinct for you from the blackness of night (2: 187)

The general impression

amongst the Muslims before the revelation of the verse of the Holy Qur'an (2:187) was that during the month of fasting sexual intercourse was to be completely avoided even at night. It was unbearable hardship for the people, especially the young couples, to refrain from sexual intercourse for full one month. They, therefore, at time, under the serious stress of sexual urge copulated but there always remained a ranking in their minds that they had done something sinful. The All-Knowing Allah told them in clear words that they are permitted to copulated during the night in the month of Ramadan and there is nothing sinful in it. Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported: If anyone for gates that the he is fasting and eats and drinks, he would complete his fast for it is only Allah who has fed him and given him drink.

The fast is not broken by the actions not committed deliberately for instance, in vomiting or in the state of Junub because of sexual dream. According to Imam Abu Hanifa in some cases of vomiting fast is broken.

The fasting among the Jews was a sign of distress and sorrow. Therefore, they did not observe it cheerfully and looked sad and dejected. 'Isa (PBUH) said to them: When you are fasting do not put on sad and ugly looks like hypocrites in order to show to the people that you are fasting. In fact, they have been awarded (punished) (for their hypocrisy). So when you are fasting, apply oil to your hair, wash your face, so that you may look as fasting.

In Islam applying oil to hair and surma (collyrium) to the eyelids, use of fragrance, during fasting is permitted and it has been stressed to observe the

rules of purification, to wash the face, to clean the teeth etc., Properly. Besides physical purification, the underlying idea in it is that the man who is fasting should not be involved in the pretension and hypocrisy of wearing sad and dejected looks and the fasting should not be an unpleasant and distressing act for him but an act of cheerful and willing submission to the command of Allah like that of a loyal and obedient servant to his master.

There were some persons who acted with exaggeration in the matter of fasting and other acts of devotion. They observed sawm wisal, the fast which is observed uninterruptedly without meal at the daybreak or at the sunset. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) disapproved the observing of such a fast by the Muslims, since one cannot stand its unbearable rigour and it undermines the strength and vitality of a man beyond measure.

Ibn 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) observed fasts in Ramadan uninterruptedly and the people (in his wake) did this. But he forbade them to do so. It was said to him: You yourself observe fast interrupted (but you forbid us to do so). Upon this he said: I am not like you: I am fed and supplied drink (by Allah).

The commentators are of the view that observance of sawm wisal is the special prerogative of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and other people should not follow him as he was especially favoured by Allah in this devotion.

Anas (Allah be pleased with him) reported: Allah's Messenger (PBUH) as saying; Take meal a little before dawn (sahri), for there is a blessing in taking meal at that time.

Sahri has so many blessings in it. Firstly, It equips the person with enough strength to undergo cheerfully the rigour of the fast. Secondly, it provides him an opportunity to thank his Lord for the food provided to him. Since it is after taking sahari that a Muslim commences the fast, he feels highly obliged to Allah for His immense favours to him. Thirdly, if the practice of eating before the daybreak is observed as a religious duty in a Muslim society, it would provide opportunities to the well-to-do persons to invite their brothers to the dining table. Fourthly, this practice of taking sahari is the distinguishing mark of Islamic society as the followers of Christianity and Judaism do not observe this practice. They unnecessarily put themselves to unbearable hardship.

Abu Huraira reported: Allah's Messenger (PBUH) as saying: Allah, the Majestic and the Exalted, said: Every act of the son of Adam is for him except fasting. It is done for My sake, and I shall give a reward for it.

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (Allah pleased with him) as saying: He who observes fast in the way of Allah, Allah would remove his face from the Hell to the extent of seventy year's distance.

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) observed i'tikaf (confined himself to devotion and prayer) in the first ten (days) of Ramadan; he then observed i'tikaf in the middle ten days in order to seek that night (lailat-ul-Qadr). Then (an angel) was sent to me and I was told that this night (lailat-ul-Qadr) is among the last ten nights of Ramadan, and he (the Holy Prophet) said: That (lailat-ul-Qadr) was shown to me on an odd night but I forgot it.

He was made to forget it or forgot the exact night when he saw lailat-ul-Qadr so that the persons may not become slack in the acts of devotion and confine it to one single night.

When we are fasting we are not only following the example of the Prophet (PBUH) but giving thanks to Allah for His grace and mercy that he had sent to us His true messengers and guides to put us on the right path and bring us from the profound darkness of ignorance into the light of knowledge and onsciousness of Allah, awakening in us the sense of realization of our responsibility we owe to Him and to the humanity at large. He revealed to us, through the Last of His Prophets, the Holy Qur'an a complete and perfect code of life containing all that we require for our guidance in all spheres of our life acting upon which one can reach the highest apex of humanity and can bring about a revolutionary change in the lives of the nations turning bitterness into love and affection, savageness and bitterness into tenderness, callousness into softness, ignorance into knowledge superstitions and erroneous notions into rational and wise thinking and evil thought and fancies into sublime and noble thoughts. Islamic teachings helped to establish peace and security and gave immense satisfaction to the hearts and minds. It taught patience and perseverance in hardships. It is in fact an inevitable blessing and reward of Allah for the whole mankind. The Holy Qur'an alludes to this fact in the following verse:

And that you glorify Allah for his having guided you (aright) so that you may be grateful (to Him). (12: 185) ●



# Islamic Resurgence

## Trends of Tajdid in the Muslim World\*

A.K. Choughley

During the past two centuries, Muslim societies have experienced significant transformation. Central to the phases of transformation has been the rise of Islamic resurgence which has influenced contemporary Islamic thought. The resurgence (nahdah) which is associated with the islah (reform) and tajdid (revival) tradition emerged in the Arab world during the nineteenth century and spawned a number of Islamic movements pursuing their respective goals of Islamic resurgence.

Tajdid is the axis on which Islamic resurgence revolve. The study seeks to examine the dynamics of Islamic resurgence with special reference to Maulana S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi and his contemporaries. As an influential scholar, Maulana Nadwi's influence in the Muslim world has been significant. It is, however, in the contemporary Muslim thought especially in the current history of revivalism that Maulana Nadwi occupies a unique position. This is evident in his interaction with Islamists who represent various strand of Salafiyah and the 'ulama' with distinct ideological perspectives. Of no less importance are the Muslim modernists whose interpretation of tajdid sheds understanding on the variable trends of this concept within the Islamic

resurgence framework.

### Tajdid (Revivalism): A Conceptual Framework

The Arabic terms ihya' (revival) and tajdid (renewal) which are interchangeably used have their roots in an Islamic tradition of a mujaddid (renewer of faith). The appearance of a mujaddid is supported by the following hadith.

Allah will raise at the head of each century such a people for this ummah as will revive its religion for it.

Two interpretations by Maulana Muadudi and Maulana Nadwi to this hadith reveal their respective ideological orientations. In his classical work, A short History of the revivalist Movement in Islam, Maulana Maududi elaborates on the function of the mujaddid. He states the mujaddid may imply a single person, a group of persons or even an organization of people who "will exercise a dominant influence on the various branches of knowledge and trends of thought and life prevalent in their age. As this study will seek to show Maulana Maududi's focus on the concept Jahiliyyah (ignorance over laps in his discussion on tajdid. According to Maulana Maududi, "no century (of the Muslim era) will remain devoid of such persons as will rise in the face of 'Ignorance' and endeavour

\*Extracted from Islamic Resurgence (D.K. Printworld, New Delhi, Price Rs. 700)

to purge Islam of all kinks of impurities and enforce its system in the world in its original form and spirit." Jahiliyyah has clear political overtones for Maulana Maududi (which is critically analysed in Chapter 4).

Muslim scholarly interest in the hadith on tajdid in earlier writings has focused almost exclusively on personalities, i.e. on the identity of the mujaddids, Thus the mujaddid's role has not been objectively discussed. The analysis by Seyyid Vali Reza Nasr on leader-intellectuals in contemporary Islamic thought is instructive. He observes:

It is they who advanced the formative ideas, spoke to the concerns of various social groups, shaped public debates by selecting the ideas that would be included in them and those that would not, and relative individual and social experiences to lasting questions. It is they who initiated the process of interpretive reading of the Islamic faith with the aim of leading the struggle with Western thought, and help give it a role in rapidly changing Muslim social life. In short, they articulated the foundational ideas that are associated with contemporary Islamic thought which uses social impulses to make a new discourse possible.

The rise by Islamic movements in the twentieth century has contributed largely to scholarly studies on mujaddids. A coherent formulation on tajdid in a socio-political context by contemporary works is in marked contrast with hagiographical accounts of traditional scholars.

Maulana Nadwi's discussion on tajdid is expressed in his multi-volume Saviours of Islamic Spirit. The islahi (reformist) tradition which is explored in the lives of mujaddids is a recurrent theme in Maulana Nadwi's other writings dealing with biographies on scholars largely drawn from the Indian subcontinent. According to Maulana Nadwi, the tajdid tradition is infused with the dynamic spirit of Islam. This tradition of struggle against un-Islam, the spirit to preserves and renovate the pristine teachings of the faith and the effort to infuse people with a revolutionary spirit to reassert the divine message are as old as Islam itself.

The continuity of tajdid implies that Islam has not suffered any rupture in terms of its reformatory endeavours during the past 1,400 years. Maulana Nadwi admits the emergence of heretical movements during these centuries which had threatened to stifle Islam. It was however the efforts of the mujaddids that "defended Islam against philosophies and schools thought incompatible with it.

A salient feature of Maulana Nadwi's portrayal of the mujaddids is his reference to those ulama and Sufis whom Habib-ul-Haq Nadwi regard as political positivists. This term is intended to highlight the 'ulama's active role in the field of jihad and ijtihaad and perhaps negate the image built around them as being state functionaries. This view is articulated in Maulana Nadwi's widely-acclaimed Islam and the World. Maulana Nadwi says:

“The whole course of Islamic history is lighted up with the crusading endeavours of conscious, determined, brave hearted men, Who, like the true successors of the prophets, faced the challenges of the time and restored, revived and kept on moving the millat (Muslim community) by resorting to jihad and ijtiḥad. These two principles which embody the dynamism of Islam could never suffer a vacuum in its structure. They remained operative ceaselessly in the body of Islam as living factors, holding aloft the torch of religious endeavour in the midst of the severest tempests”.

It would be worthwhile to refer to Maulana Nadwi's definitions of jihad and ijtiḥad to contextualise this twin concept to the tajdid tradition. According to Maulana Nadwi, jihad in Islamic terminology means to strive to one's utmost to achieve the noblest object on earth. Its overall aim is for the individual “to exert himself for the betterment of his fellow-beings and the establishment of Divine sovereignty over the world around him. The jihad he advocated has a universal message for mankind and negates the militant tone found in the discourse of several Islamists, in particular Sayyid Qutb. In Maulana Nadwi's view ijtiḥad “is the ability to cope with the ever-changing pattern of life's requirements. It calls for a deep insight into the soul of Islam and a thorough knowledge of the basic principles of Islamic jurisprudence. It also includes the ability to harness the treasures of nature to the service of Islam. Maulana Nadwi seeks to illustrate the dynamism of the shari'ah

in formulating responses to the challenges Muslims face in specific situations. Again the concept of ijtiḥad is linked to tajdid and is integral to the evolution of Islamic jurisprudence. Maulana Nadwi's implicit advocacy of ijtiḥad states that it has been a historical phenomenon in Islamic resurgence.

This twin concept is reflected in the tajdidi efforts of Ibn Taymiyyah (b. 1328) who, by all accounts, is considered the precursor of the salafi and modern reformist movements beginning in the nineteenth century. It is clear that Maulana Maududi refers to Ibn Taymiyyah to justify his own interpretation of tajdid which megated rigidity (jumu') on an intellectual level. Maulana Nadwi's detailed account of Ibn Taymiyyah's contributions is a tacit endorsement of the latter's tajdidi role. However, the 'ulama of Deoband leanings were by and large not appreciative of Ibn Taymiyyah. Even so, Maulana Nadwi's position among the 'ulama of the subcontinent did allow for a review and conciliatory approach amongst the 'ulama towards Ibn Taymiyyah's writings. Thus Nadwah as an ardent admirer of Ibn Taymiyyah's intellectual legacy played a significant role in this regard.

#### **Impact of Ibn Taymiyyah on revivalist Trends**

A detailed study of Ibn Taymiyyah's voluminous writings shows that his aim was “to rediscover and intellectually reconstitute the early normative community of Islam which

was based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, as he saw it. This comment by the noted scholar, Fazlur Rahman (b 1988) reiterates the intellectual contribution of Ibn Taymiyyah in the tajdidi tradition. Two distinctive qualities stood him apart from the 'ulama establishment: firstly he was a forceful advocate of a reform of the administration in the spirit of the share'ah. His insistence that shari'ah be implemented in totality for good governance of Muslim states was in direct conflict to the practices of the Mamluk sultans ruling both Egypt and Syria. His political candour was met with spells of imprisonment which led to his death. Secondly, Ibn Taymiyyah claimed the right of ijtiḥad and used his independent judgement in rearticulating the general principles of the Qur'an and the sunnah. According to Maulana Maududi Ibn Taymiyyah was not only vocal in his criticism of taqlid (rigid conformity) but understood ijtiḥad in the manner of the early religious doctors. This approach enabled him "to explain the Islamic beliefs and injunctions in their right perspective and with their true import. In a similar vein, Maulana Nadwi's biography on Ibn Taymiyyah sets out to trace him social milieu and his singular contribution to tajdid. Maulana Nadwi maintains that Ibn Taymiyyah stands out as the "greatest thinker and reformer in Islam whose influence extends to almost every reformative movement started since the eighth century, and particularly to those which gained impetus during the twelfth century of the Islamic era. ●

## **Etiquette For Supporting the Orphans**

Almighty Allah, has reproached misbehaviour towards orphans and emphasized looking after them and their property carefully. So, if there is an orphan under your guardianship, then his claims should be given due honour. The supporter of orphans will be very near to the Prophet in Paradise. The Prophet has said: "I and the supporter of the orphans and others in need, will be in paradise like this: so saying the Prophet pointed to his middle finger and the first finger, keeping a small gap between the two".

"The best house among those of the Muslims is one where there is an orphan and he is well treated; and the worst house is that in which there is an orphan and he is ill treated". (Ibn Majah)

Do not beat your children or orphans on trifles. You can beat them lightly for neglecting education and training or reform some bad habit.

Hazrat Jabir said, he asked the Prophet: "On what grounds can I beat an orphan? (Who is under care) The Prophet said: "On the same grounds on which you can beat your children. And beware, never waste his property to save your own or to make property for yourself out of his money". (Mojam Tabrani) ●

# Arab Spring: Failure of “Manufactured Revolution”

**Nilofar Suhrawardy\***

In essence, the ongoing phase of political transformation, ostensibly in the name of democracy, cannot be described even as a partial success in the few Arab nations that have been affected by it. The process is still taking place. Success remains illusive as well as considerably distorted from what it was projected as initially. Now, this in itself raises two crucial questions. Considering that only a few of the numerous Arab countries have been actually affected by a phases of political transformation, would it be fair to label this as “Arab Spring” and raise false notions about the entire Arab world having been affected by it? Besides, the different ways in which transformation is taking place in a few countries cannot be sidelined. This adds credence to questioning the hype raised about Arab Spring when in essence the transformation is yet to satisfy the people and leaders in a few countries where the movement began. This naturally demands deliberation on whether the hype was deliberately raised to ensure that political transformation begins in a few nations and justify the support for the same in others.

Among the few odd nations where political transformation is

taking place are Yemen, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Libya and Iraq. These are a handful of the countries grouped together as the Arab nations. Equally important is the fact that the role of external powers and internal forces has varied strongly in all these countries which are said to be heading towards greater democracy. It may not be possible to delve in detail on developments in each of these nations, but they shall be referred to briefly. From one angle, the way the Arab Spring has been projected by the Western media and nations suggests that this process was long overdue and democratically the Arabs are moving forward in the “right” direction. At the outset, one is tempted to raise the question as to whether it would be fair to blame Arabs if they have not yet included democratic principles in their political structure. Yemen, for instance, was subject to Western colonialism less than a century ago. It takes decades, even centuries, for the development of democratic institutions and norms. Considering that colonialism had not allowed democracy to actually take roots in Yemen, why should only the Arab leaders of this nation be blamed for their country's political system?

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If the so-called supporters and promoters of Arab Spring are doing so out of their genuine concern for democracy to take roots in this region, there is yet another angle to this phase that cannot be sidelined. Democracy in any part of the world cannot be imposed from outside by external forces. When external pressure or force is used to change regimes in the name of establishing democracy, in essence it is nothing but another form of neocolonialism confirming its grip on that country. What else does forcible ouster of Muammar Gaddafi from Libya and that of Saddam Hussain from Iraq suggest?

Undeniably, the propaganda raised about the need for political transformation in favour of democracy in Syria suggests the same. The "concern for democracy" regarding Syria is motivated towards the ouster of President Bashar al-Assad from power. Well, democratic and diplomatic ethics demand that a decision on this needs to be taken by Syrians and it cannot be imposed as per the dictates of Washington and its supporters.

True, Egypt has witnessed removal from power of Hosni Mubarak. But would it be fair to a democratic form of government, enabling elected representatives of the people to hold the reins of power there? Not yet. The people in Egypt and observers remain dissatisfied with the transformation still remaining a far cry from the democratic form

that they had probably envisaged at the time they began demonstrations demanding dismissal of Mubarak. The Egyptian experience has apparently made the rest of the Arab world much wiser and practical about taking the same path in the name of so-called democracy. This explains as to why the "revolution" painted as "Arab Spring" has not actually spread over the entire Arab world and has not yet succeeded totally in the countries that have been affected by it.

Notwithstanding all the support displayed by the United States and its allies for the opposition forces and rebellion in Syria, the prospects of Assad being unseated easily still remain dim. Attempts made through the United Nations have been defeated by Russia and China. Besides, even if Assad decided to step down, there is a fear that this may lead to greater instability, chaos and conflict in the country. A strong division prevails among the opposition which minimizes the prospects of a stable government taking over from Assad in the immediate future. Conflict and/or war-like means cannot be expected to lead to any democratic form of government. Nor can they guarantee political stability.

India has wisely stated its preference for a dialogue between all national representative within Syria to end the present crisis. In other words, greater importance is now being given to the Gandhian-

style for encouraging political changes within Syria, Tunisia and other Arab nations. The Gandhian-style implies giving importance to dialogue, without any conflict or use of force and allowing the democratic process to gradually develop from within the nation, leaving no room for it to be imposed by external forces.

Undeniably, the communication revolution has made the Arabs highly conscious of their own political preferences, religious identity and national sovereignty. They don't want to compromise on either of these by being taken for a ride by what is being projected as Arab Spring. The Arabs in general have not welcomed the change in Western attitude towards them following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in America. They have also not approved of their religion, Islam (which means peace), being associated with terrorism. Not surprisingly, gradually but definitely they have been prompted to give importance to enhancing their diplomatic ties with the East, which includes India.

India is a secular and democratic nation, which is also home to several religions being followed strongly by different sections of society. Democracy, secularism and adherence to religious practices including Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity and others co-exist in India. An Indian can be secular, a strong democrat as well as a firm

believer in his/her religious values. The appeal of this concept is gaining support among the Arabs. In their perception they can promote both democracy and Islam in their respective states. This also explains their assertion, which is gradually picking up, that they need to define democracy in keeping with their socio-cultural norms and not as decided for them by Western dictates.

Democracy, as per Western dictates, even if it is not opposed by Arabs, can really not be accepted as genuine democracy. Howsoever democratic the United States may claim itself to be, it is well known that the foreign policy of the country is decided by a few strong lobbies operating there, particularly that of the Jews. The Jews do not constitute a significant proportion of the country's electoral population and yet have command over particularly its foreign policy and media. This certainly cannot be viewed as democratic. This certainly cannot be viewed as democratic rule from any angle. Understandably, the United Kingdom is far more democratic and its media has more freedom than that of the United States. But this country is headed by a constitutional monarch. Now, if democracy allows monarchy, even though nominally, this does not justify the noise made about dismissal of Arab monarchs in the name of democracy. Nevertheless, if the West remains insisting that the time has come for

this change to take place, then the first step in this direction should be taken by the royalty residing at Buckingham Palace. The Queen should move out, without her crown symbolizing an end to constitutional monarchy in Britain. It may be decades, perhaps centuries, before this transformation takes place in Britain. This in itself negates the "democratic" importance being attached by supporters of Arab Spring to the stepping down of Kings holding power in the region.

If for a minute one were to put aside all the reservations expressed in this piece regarding the hype raised about the importance of Arab Spring in the interest of democracy in the region, there is yet another crucial issue that cannot be sidelined. If the United States is really serious about promoting Arab Spring, then history and diplomatic ethics demand that first priority should be given to the worst sufferers of democratic and humanitarian abuse in the region. Yes, this refers to ensuring a sovereign state for the Palestinians, where they are fully entitled to their democratic rights. Sadly, the hype raised about Arab Spring in a few nations suggests that perhaps this exercise has been deliberately indulged in to push the concern for the Palestinians' rights to the Back-burner.

Thanks to the communication revolution, the Arabs and other countries have become conscious of

the limited appeal and impact of Arab Spring. Not surprisingly, they have started giving greater importance to opting for the democratic path as it suits their interests and not as decided by the White House. The new importance being accorded to Indian democracy in keeping with Gandhian principles is one indicator of this strong fact. The manner in which political turns have taken place in Libya and a few other countries, in the name of Arab Spring, has little appeal for most of the Arab world, including the countries undergoing the phase of political transformation. Democracy, even for the sake of genuine democracy, cannot be imposed by external pressure nor can it be imported or exported. The increasing pace with which the Arabs are asserting this fact is perhaps just a minor example that the Arab Spring has failed even before it has actually had any significant impact. This "Spring", people can be misled for a while that they are a part of this political movement, but not for too long, thanks to the communication revolution. Propaganda and manufactured news can excite the affected people's frenzy for a while. Yet, because of the communication revolution, it doesn't take them too long to learn about its negative impact and that it doesn't suit their interests, even democratically! ●

(Courtesy: Mainstream)



# Health Care in the light of the Qur'an and Science

Barkat Ullah Nadwi  
Muhammad Saleem

## Islam and Health Care

Islam is not only an organized religion, but it also encompasses each an every aspect of life including the most vital problems regarding health. It will, certainly, be far from the truth to say that it is confined to soul-purification or spiritual enlightenment. Nevertheless, the Qur'an emphasizes physical health together with spiritual requirements for the obvious reason that good health and physical well-being is conducive to spiritual pursuits, and certainly it ensures spiritual health. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) declares:

"A healthy believer is better than a weak and sick one" 1

Clearly he teaches the importance of being in good shape. Thus health care is not only desirable but also an incumbent duty and Islam it the proper place that it warrants. The contemporary researches in the field of medical sciences and scriptural guidelines regarding health care and close parallels between science and scriptural teachings much to our amazement further encourages us to rediscover the meaning that its subtext contains Allah the Exalted admires and bestows His love for those who attain purity. He announces:

"Truly Allah loves those who turn unto him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves" 2

Here purity does mean both the piety of soul and exterior cleanliness

While purity of the inner conscience is the means of soul purification and brings Almighty's bounties physical cleanliness is certainly a preventive measure against numerous diseases such as allergic skin disorders freckles dermatitis bacterial and fungal infections etc.

## The Quran and Medical Science

The Quran as we know is not a book on medical science that it should cater detailed description of various diseases and their treatment. On the contrary its main aim is to show and guide us along the right path (sirata-e-mustaqeem). 3 Man is Allah's Creature on earth 4 and he has to accomplish tasks assigned to him by the Almighty. Since his existence is a union of body and soul he has to took after both so that he may meet his physical and spiritual responsibilities and for this the Quran enlightens him. Man is supposed to consume only what suits his physiological requirements and avoid harmful elements. The Quran commands him only to have pure and sacred food.

"O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on earth" 5.

In the same say drinking of blood and eating of pork are forbidden. From the time immemorial man has been in the habit of drinking intoxicating beverage but as His Omniscience knows better even a little quantity of wine is strictly prohibited

Allah the Exalted commands.

They ask you o (Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say in them is a great sin and {some} benefit for men. But the sin of them greater than their benefit." 7

Likewise, the evil effects that wine has on social conduct are also mentioned.

"O ye who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that abomination) in order that you may be successful." 8

The Qur'an, by prohibiting the consumption of liquor, has warned against social degeneration. Besides, the evil effects that it has on health have been elaborated by medical researches. It badly affects liver and kidney, and causes liver cancer. 9

### **The Qur'an and preventive measures**

The Quran makes it obligatory to perform wudhu i.e. ablution before salah (prayer) 10 and bath after seminal ejaculation. This gives a sense of cleansing. The Qur'an warns against adultery and urges the believers to abstain from it. 12 Thus, it keeps one away from infectious diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhoea, AIDS, etc. together with refining morals and curbing social degeneration. Sodomy, one of the chief causes behind the spread of HIV giving birth to the incurable curse of AIDS, earlier known as GRID (Gay Related immune Deficiency), is condemned in the strongest terms. "And (remember) Lout (Lot), when he said to his people: 'do

you commit the worst sin such as none preceding you has committed in the Alamin (mankind and jinns)? Verily, you practice your lusts on men instead of women. Nay, but you are a people transgressing beyond bounds (by committing great sins)". 13

The Qur'an also prohibits during menstruation. 14 Thus, it can be said that the Qur'anic guidelines save us from various chronic and fatal diseases. This and many other Qur'anic verses testify that the commandments revealed fifteen centuries ago. When man was ignorant of the discoveries that science made only in the 19th and 20th centuries, are not man-designed but words from Allah, the Omniscient and Almighty. The book, revealed unto His last messenger Muhammad (PBUH), includes such guidelines through which man has been enlightened with the fundamentals of health-care. Thus, if the Qur'anic ideas are assimilated into life, it, certainly, provides a protective shield against the attack of diseases. Allama Ibn-e-Qayyam Al-Jauziya has mentioned three basic principles of Tib. First, health care; secondly, abstinence from harmful things, and lastly, safety from detrimental effects. 15 In fact, these three things safeguard and keep up our health and obviate health problems. The Qur'an prescribes this for believers. Regarding fast, it has been said that travelers and those who are ill should compensate their fast later. This flexibility enables a believer to overcome the disease or have freedom from inconvenience. The sick are allowed to give up fast during the

month of Ramadhan. Likewise, regarding the pilgrimage to the holy shrines of Mecca and Medina, those who are sick are at liberty to either fast, give food to the needy or offer sacrifice,<sup>17</sup> instead of going to Haj. Prevention is given due importance. The Qur'an says, if you are sick, or in journey, or have replied to the call of nature, or have slept with your wives, and you don't have any water, you should get clean sand or earth and rub your faces and hands.<sup>18</sup> Cleansing or ablution is permitted with sand and earth so that one should be clean even if water is not available or if it may cause trouble in certain conditions.<sup>19</sup> What matters most is not rigidity but cleanliness, safety and prevention.

The above-mentioned verses and commandments throw abundance of light on how much emphasis Islam lays on health care and preventive measures. Its objective being hidayah (guidance) and islah (reformation), it should not be forgotten that the Qur'an delivers or, for that matter, anything else. But it is itself a miracle that it does not confine itself to the domain of transcendental life or the world hereafter. On the contrary, deals very much with the world we live in and belong to, though only in order to facilitate that greater spiritual voyage. It is true that it does not make this very life its sole objective. In this way, the Qur'an draws our attention towards the basic principles of health care, and dictates complete abstinence from what may cause harm or prolong one's illness.

The following verses illustrate that the Qur'an lays more emphasis on prevention than cure, and presents a

framework. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals-cattle-beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh or swine..."<sup>20</sup>

The prohibition of animal flesh of certain kinds in this verse reveals the providence of the Omniscient behind it. The blood of a dead animal remains congealed within its body because of which bacteria that cause several metabolic disorders soon infect the flesh. Blood is decreed as haram, or unfit to consume, because of its just mentioned property. Moreover, it is not digested in human alimentary canal, and as a result, badly affects the digestive system. Pork contains tapeworm, which is very harmful parasite, and its host is not easily ruled. <sup>21</sup> Tapeworm is of several types. That which lives on swine is tinea solium. Modern researches have further revealed that it badly affects the host's health. <sup>22</sup> It causes several diseases such as epilepsy which, at times, proves fatal. <sup>23</sup> Besides, digestive disorders, weakness and anemia are other diseases that one may suffer from.

The Qur'an also prevents indulging in sexual relationship during menstruation. Women are exempted from duties like Salah and Saum (prayer and fasting). Jews regarded it unlawful to live and eat with their wives during this period. On the other hand, Christians did not abstain even from sexual intercourses. Prophet Muhammad, be peace on him, was asked about it, and the following verse was revealed.

"They ask you concerning

menstruation. Say: that is an Adha (a harmful thing for a husband to have a sexual intercourse with his wife while she is having her menses), therefore keep away from women during menses, go not unto them till they are purified from and have taken a bath)." 25

Shariah declares it undesirable to have sex, but living with them, eating together or anything else is allowed. In this way, the path of golden mean has been prescribed, and any type of rigidity or extremism avoided. The menstrual discharge is a mixture of blood, mucus, desquamated epithelial cells, bacteria and granular debris. 26 It is a precursor of several diseases such as urinary tract infection, burning micturation, proctitis, and dysurea, etc.

Hakim Muhammad Tariq Mahmood Chughtai mentions a clinical case. 'A patient needed a catheter, as he could not pass urine on his own. From his case history, I came to know that he used to have sex during menstruation, and as a result he caught this trouble.' 27

This is how Allah, the Exalted, has told man such guiding principles that by following His commandments, he can be successful in everything he does or has to do. The Qur'an lightens the way to sustain our physical being, take care of our health and get rid of many diseases.

1. Muslim, Kitabu' I qadr, Babu' l iman bin' qadr wal iz'an lahu.

2. 2. Qur'an 2:222, Translation by Dr. Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali & Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Madinah, K.S.A.

3. Ibid., 1:06

4. Ibid., 6:165

5. Ibid., 2:168

6. Ibid., 5:03

7. Ibid., 2:219

8. Ibid., 5:90

9. Ibrahim, Abul Fazl, Jadid

Hayatiyati Masail aur Islam, Markaz al-Darasatu' Ilmiyah, Aligarh, 1995, p.23.

10. Qur'an, 5:06

11. Ibid., 4:43

12. Ibid.,

13. Ibid., 7:81

14. Ibid., 2:222

15. Jauzi, Allama Ibne

Qayyim, Tibbe Nabvi, p.31.

16. Qur'an, 2:185

17. Ibid., 2:196

18. Ibid., 5:06

19. Ibrahim, Abul Fazil,

Jadid Hayatiyati Msail aur Islam, Markaz Al-Darasatu' I Ilmiyah, Aligarh, 1995, p.25.

20. Qur'an, 5:03

21. Al-Qarzewi, Dr. Sheikh

Yousuf, Al-halal wal-haram fil Islam, Beirut, 1960, p.60

22. Hutchinson, Clinical Methods, ed. 18EIBS, 984, pp. 167-8.

23. Golwalla, Medicine for Studnets, ed. 18 1999, p. 595.

24. Banerjee, J.C. and and Bhattacharya, D.B. (ed), A Hand Book of Tropical Disease, Clacutta, 1967, pp. 167-8

25. Qur'an, 2:222

26. Masani, K.M., A Textbook of Gynaecology, Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd., 7th ed., 1973, p. 129.

27. Chughtai, Hakim Mohd. T.M., Sunnat-e-Nabvi aur Jadid Science, pp. 327-8 ●

# Miracles of the Quran in Mathematics

Muhammad Sami  
Muhammad Ali

## Teaching Addition and Subtraction

"...then whosoever contenteth himself with the visit for the pilgrimage (shall give) such gifts as can be had with ease. And whosoever cannot find (such gifts) then a fast of three days while on the pilgrimage, and of seven when ye have returned; that is, ten in all..." (1)

$$3+7=10$$

Concerning the People of the Cave, we find:

"And (it is said) they tarried in their cave three hundred years and add nine." (2)

$$300+9=309$$

Concerning Moses (upon whom be peace):

"And when We did appoint for Moses thirty nights (of solitude), and added to them ten, and he completed the whole time appointed by His Lord of forty nights..." (3)

Concerning Noah (upon whom be peace):

"And verily we sent Noah (as our Messenger) unto his folk, and he continued with them for a thousand years save fifty years; and the flood engulfed them, for they were wrong doers." (4)

$$1000-50=950$$

"...and add nine"

"And (it is said) they tarried in their cave three hundred years and add nine." (5)

The people of the cave stayed in their cave three hundred solar years.

The solar years in 362217 days long; thus their stay...

$$300 \times 365.232217 = 109569.6651 \text{ days}$$

But the Quran was revealed to a people who used a lunar calendar. The pre-Islamic Arabs calculated their seasons with by the lunar year. With Islam, all Muslims used the lunar calendar to calculate the time for the pilgrimage and fast of Ramadan and other religious purposes.

It is well-known that the lunar year is shorter than the solar year, the former's being 354.367068 days long. How many days are there, then, in 300 lunar years:

$$300 \times 354.367068 = 1204$$

Thus, the difference between the number of days they were in the cave and the number of days in a similar number of lunar years used in Islam would be:

$$109569.6651 - 106310.1204 = 3259.5447 \text{ days.}$$

The people of the cave remained therein for 300 solar years based on the calendar in use at their time, "and add nine" to arrive at the number of lunar years used by the Arabs who first heard the Quran recited to them.

There hundred solar years equals exactly three hundred and nine lunar years.

Here the wondrous nature of the verse is apparent. It is a precise

arithmetic miracle. (6)

**Numerical Concordances**

a) Among the amazing things found in the Quran is that the number of times that one finds the word meaning "magic" (al-sihr) and its derivatives equals the number of times there is the word meaning "temptation" (al-fitnah) and its derivatives. Each is mentioned sixty times. (7)

It may be asked what the relationship between "magic" and "temptation" is, and what is the point of making such comparisons.

b) The word meaning "calamity" (al-musibah) and its derivatives is repeated 75 times in the Quran, as is the word meaning "thanks" (al-shukr) and its derivatives. (8) and (9)

c) The word meaning "gold" (al-dhahab) and that meaning "affluence" (al-taraf) are each mentioned eight times (the first, the word itself; the second, its derivatives). (10)

d) "earthquake" (al-Zilzal) and its derivatives: 6 times. (11)

e) "terror" (al-faz') and its derivatives: 6 times. (12)

f) "debris" (al-hotam) and its derivatives: 6 times. (13)

g) "loan" (al-qard) and its derivatives: 13 times. (14)

h) "poverty" (al-faqr) and its derivatives: 13 times (15)

i) "they prefer" (yu'thirun) and its derivatives: 5 times. (16)

j) "stinginess" (al-shohh) and its derivatives: 5 times. (17)

k) "publicness" (al-jahr) and its derivatives: 16 times. (18)

l) "publicness" (al-

'alaniyah) and its derivatives: 16 times. (19)

m) "compassion" "kindness" (al-fa'fah) and its derivatives: 13 times. (20)

n) "roughness" "rudeness" (al-ghilzah) and its derivatives: 13 times. (21)

o) "the material world" (al-dunya) is repeated: 115 times. (22)

p) "the hereafter" (al-akhira) is repeated: 115 times. (23)

q) "hell" (jahannam) is repeated: 77 times. (24)

r) "paradise" (al-jannah) is repeated: 77 times. (25)

s) "they said" (qalu) from creatures: 332 times. (26)

t) "say! (divine command (qul) is repeated: 332 times. (27)

u) "salawat" is repeated 5 times (28) which is the number of times per day a Muslim is required to pray.

v) 'azm "resolve" is mentioned 5 times, (29) which is also the number of ulu al-'azm from among the messengers (Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad) upon whom be peace).

w) "man" (rajul.. i.e. singular male human) is found 24 times (30) as is "woman" (imra'ah... i.e. singular female human) (31)

x) "month" (shahr) is found 12 times (32) as in the year.

y) "day" (yawm) is found 365 times, (33), as in the year.

z) "the angels" (al-mala'ikah) is found 88 times (34) and (35)

There are words which are close to one another in both pronunciation and meaning such as al-

rijs and al-rijz, each of which (in this case) ten times including derivatives (36) and (37).

There are words that have no direct connection in sound or meaning but are repeated a similar number of times such as "tongue" (al-lisan) and "exhortation" (al-maw'izah), each repeated 25 times (38) and (39) though never in the same verse. (40)

Pairs like this are noteworthy because there is some sort of connection by implication between the two words (in this case, the fact that the tongue is the instrument of exhortation).

Similarly sort of connection by implication between the two words (in this case, the fact that the tongue is the instrument of exhortation).

Similarly "mercy" (al-rahmah) is found 79 times, (41) as is the word "guidance" (al-huda) (42), indicating it would seem that guidance is a mercy.

The word for "righteousness" (al-birr) and "reward" (al-thawab) are found with all their derivatives 20 times each, (43), and (44) seeming to indicate that reward is the result of righteousness.

A word for "temptation" (al-ghawayah) and its derivatives, and that for error (al-khata' or al-khati'ah) are found 22 times each, (45) and (46) seeming to indicate error is the result of succumbing to temptation.

One also finds groups of four words related to a topic common between them, such as al-harth (cultivation), al-zira'ah (agriculture), al-fakiha (fruit), and al-ita (gift). They

all related to agriculture and appear (with derivatives) fourteen times each. (50) and (48) and (49) and (51)

There are two such groups dealing with the Quran itself:

Al-Quran, al-nur (light) al-hikmah, (wisdom), and al-tanzeel (the revelation. The Quran is full of these "al-Quran" appears 68 times. (52) "al-nur" appears 33 times. (53) "al-hikmah", appears 20 times; (54) al-tanzeel appears 15 times. (55)

The number of times that the last three are mentioned adds up to the number of times that al-Quran is mentioned:

$$33 + 20 + 15 = 68$$

Similarly, the number of times one finds the words al-bayinat ("clear proofs") 52 times (56), maw'izah (9 times) (57), shifa' (cure) (4 times) (58), and mubayinat (3 times) (59), all adds up to 68. These words are among the descriptions of the Quran and they occur the same number of times as (al-Quran) itself.

As has been pointed out (59) it is beyond imagining that a human mind is capable of establishing such numerical concordances, then distributing the words throughout a text as vast and inter-related as that of the Quran.

Is this chance or divine ordaining?

### Green Wood

Chemists have discovered that the source of all fuels is green spots found in plants, which act as storage areas for fuel from the sun. There, solar energy is converted to a

vegetable substance able to be eaten or-burned.

Scientists have likewise discovered that petroleum originates as a substance converted from plants matter compressed under the ground between soil and rock; or from animals that fed on vegetation.

This fact is stated by the Quran"

"Who appointed for you fire from the green tree, and behold! Ye kindle from it" (60) and (61)

### **Everything Described by Pairs.**

"And the earth have We laid out, how gracious is the spreader (thereof)!

And all things We have created in pairs, that haply ye may reflect." (62)

"Glory be to Him Who created all the sexual pairs, of that which the earth growth, and of themselves, and of that which they know not!" (64)

The distinction of all creatures on earth as either male or female is one of the strongest proofs for the existence of a creator. Humans are male and female, as are animals and plants.

The corn plant carries both male and female parts. The male flowers are in the top of the stalk, and the female ones are in the cob, which consists of strands that catch the pollen falling from the top, which fertilizes the rest of the cob, which eventually becomes kernels.

Each pear blossom is composed of five green cup-shaped petals, and five white, hanging, crown-

shaped petals, and several male parts. The ovaries are in the bottom and consist of five sections, with each section having two eggs. From above the ovaries five needles hang down their entire length.

All fruit-bearing trees and flowering plants behave the same way.

"And all things We have created in pairs, that haply ye may reflect." (65)

By "pairs" (zawjayan) is understood (66) "two categories", such as male and female, summer and winter, light and darkness, etc...

The same principle can be applied to understanding the atom, with its positively charged nucleus being circled by negatively charged particles, whose charge equals and balances the nucleus' charge.

"Have they not seen the earth, how much of every fruitful pair We make to grow therein?

Lo! Therein indeed is a portent, yet most of them are not believers," (67)

And so it is that the Quran declares that all of creation is comprised of pairs of one sort of another. (68)

(1) Quran 11: 196 (Surah A-Baqara (The Cow).

(2) Quran XXVIII: 25 (Surah al-Kahf (The Cave)

(3) Quran VII: 142 (Surah al-A'raf (The Heights)

(4) Quran XXIX: 14 (Surah al-'Ankabut) The Spider).

(5) Quran XXVIII: 25 (Surah al-Kahf (The Cave)



- (6) Al-'Ilm wa al-Imam, no. 43, 1978, p.5.
- (7) Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras Li Alfaz al-Quran al-Kareem, p.346 and 511.
- (8) Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfaz al-Quran al-Kareem, p.415 and 395.
- (9) Al-Insan Baina al-Ilm wa al-Din, op. cit., p8.
- (10) Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfaz al-Quran al-Kareem, p. 153.
- (11) Ibid., p. 332.
- (12) Ibid., p.518.
- (13) Ibid., p.207
- (14) Ibid., p.542.
- (15) Ibid., p. 524
- (16) Ibid., p. 11.
- (17) Ibid., p.375.
- (18) Ibid., p.183.
- (19) Ibid., p.481.
- (20) Ibid., p.280.
- (21) Ibid., p.504.
- (22) Ibid., p.262.
- (23) Ibid., p.21.
- (24) 84, Ibid., P.
- (25) Ibid., p.180.
- (26) Ibid., p.562.
- (27) Ibid., p.579
- (28) Ibid., p.414.
- (29) Ibid., P.461.
- (30) Ibid., p.302.
- (31) Ibid., p.663.
- (32) Ibid., p.390.
- (33) Ibid., p.775.
- (34) 674.
- (35) Ibid., P.674.
- (36) Nahj al-Islam, no. 47, 1992, p.82, Dr.Shawqi Abu Khalil.
- (37) Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfaz al-Quran al-Kareem,. 301.
- (38) Ibid., p.300.
- (39) Ibid., P.647.
- (40) Ibid., p.755.
- (41) Al-'Ilm wa al-Iman, no. 10, 1976,p11 -12.
- (42) Al-Mu'jam jam al-Mufahras li Alaz al-Quran al-Kareem,p. 305.
- (43) Ibid., p.734.
- (44) Ibid., p.117.
- (45) Ibid., p.162.
- (46) Ibid., p.506.
- (47) Ibid., p.234.
- (48) Ibid., p.196.
- (49) Ibid., p.330.
- (50) Ibid., p.125.
- (51) Ibid., p.464.
- (52) Ibid., p.539.
- (53) Ibid., p.725.
- (54) Ibid., p.213.
- (55) Ibid., p.898.
- (56) Ibid., p.142.
- (57) Ibid., p.755.
- (58) Ibid., p.385.
- (59) Ibid., p.143.
- (60) Al-'Ilm wa al-Iman, no. 10, 1976,p12, Dr. Abdul Razzaq Nawfal.
- (61) Quran XXXVI: 80 (Surah ya Sin).
- (62) Al-Tawhid, op. cit., 167.
- (63) Quran LI: 48-49 (Surah al-Dhariyat (The Winnowing Winds).
- (64) Quran XXXVI: 36 (Surah Ya sin)
- (65) Quran LI: 49 (Surah al-Dhariyat (The Winnowing Winds).
- (66) Kalimat al-Quran, Hasanayn Muhammad MakhluF, p.333.
- (67) Quran XXVI: 7-8 (Surah al-Shu'ara' (The Poets)
- (68) Sab'un Burhanan...,op. Cit.,p.200. ●

# The Quran: An Everlasting Miracle of Allah to Mankind

Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

A number of Prophets were sent by Allah for the guidance of human beings. The first one was Adam (AWS). Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was ordained to be the last. After him no prophet will come. He is the seal of the prophets.

Each Prophet had come for salvation and guidance of his nation sans last prophet Muhammad (SAW). He was sent for the whole mankind. The Holy Quran says: "We sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures". (S.21,A,107)

It may be noted that Allah has bestowed upon some Prophets Divine Books. Almighty God says: We verily sent our messengers with clean proofs and revealed to them the scriptures... (57:25). Four are quite prominent. Viz, (1) Zabur revealed on Hazrat Daud; (2) Taurat revealed on Hazrat Musa, (3) Injeel on Hazrat Isah Masih, and (4) The Quran was revealed on the last Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SWA). Unfortunately none of these books now exist in their original form except the Holy Quran. This is because Almighty God Himself is its Protector and Saviour. He says: "Verily We! It is we who have revealed the Admonition and we are its guardians". (S.15A,9)

The recent incident of burning of Holy Qur'an by Pastor Wayne Sapp in Florida church is not new thing. Earlier this desecration of the Quran was done by US Army men in Guantanamo Bay Cuba. Such incidents occurred in the past also. But Almighty Allah kept its values and norms intact. No doubt, despite all sort of desecrations and sacrileges of the

Holy Quran. It holds its own status in the world literary books. It is a clear evidence that the Quran is no ordinary book but it is the book of the Almighty Allah. In addition it is not for one person or one age but it offers guidance to all mankind in varied conditions of life. The scope of its moral teaching is as wide as humanity itself.

It goes without saying that at the time when the Prophet was born, the literary talent and eloquence of the Arabs was at its zenith. Therefore, Allah bestowed upon His Prophet the biggest miracle in the form of the Quran. Accordingly it is said that diamond cuts diamond. The Quran met all challenges of the Arabs and issued a universal proclamation. The Holy Quran says: "Were all mankind to come together and wish to produce the like of this the Quran, they would never succeed however much they aided each other (17:88). In fact, the Arabs failed to present like the Quran. Now the holy Quran modified the challenge and reduces its scope by saying." Do people imagine that is not from us, and that you, O Prophet, are false attributing it to us? Tell them that if they are speaking truly, they should produce ten surahs resembling the Quran, and that they are free to call on the aid of anyone but God is so doing." (11:13) Arabs were not able to produce like the Quran. Now the holy Quran further challenges and reduces its scope saying produce only a single surah resembling the Quran. It says: O People if you doubt the heavenly origin of this book which we have sent down to our servant, the Prophet, produce one surah

like this" (2:23). But Arabs again could not meet the challenge of the Quran. Lastly Arabs accepted that it is nothing but the words of Allah, revealed on the last Prophet through Gibrael Ameen. This is how right from the beginning till now innumerable persons embraced Islam merely by getting impressed by the Quranic contents.

It is true that no other book in the world is so widely read and taught as the Quran. We may also observe there is a good number of institutions in the world wherein nothing is taught but only the Holy Quran. An Egyptian Mufti Shaikh Abduh and an Egyptian commentator Shaikh Tantawi Jauhari illustrated so many points that indicate towards the beauties of the Quran. A few of them as follows: (a) Literary beauty; (b) Magnificence of nature as showing forth God's handi work; (c) the relation of the study of physical science to true spiritual insight; (d) Unity of God's design in the widest diversity of nature; (e) The goodness of God in making nature subserve to man's needs' (f) His wisdom in making the various parts of nature subserve to each other's needs.

In this context it may be apt to make a reference of Shah Waliullah. He writes in his marvelous book. *Alfauz Alkabir* that the Holy Quran is covered by a set of five sciences:

1- The science of injunctions (Akham): This includes the incumbent, the recommended, the approved, the disapproved, and the forbidden, covering worships, social dealings, house hold economy, and state politics, its interpretation is the responsibility of jurists. 2- The science of disputation (Mukhasimah). This deals with the four misguided sects, the Jews, the Christians, the polytheist and the

hypocrites, and its discussion and analysis falls with in the jurisdiction of dialecticians. 3- The science of Divine Favours covers explanations of the creation of the Heavens and the Earth, of the perfect attributes of God and the guidance which the people received about necessities of life. 4- Fourth is the science covering the important events which God caused to take place, favouring the obedient and punishing the disobedient. 5- the fifth is the science which reminds human beings of Death and that which will follow it, the Resurrection, the gathering the Paradise, and the Hell.

In his book Abdullah Yusuf Ali says: "The Beauties of the Holy Qur'an that the Holy Qur'an is not only the supreme Book in the Arabic language but its place is high in world literature. It is deservedly classed among the world's hundred best books. It is one of the greatest books in all literature because it fearlessly tackles the biggest questions of life. It is so simple, so plain that any man can understand the ordinary meaning and yet so profound, so full of wisdom, that though thousands of books have been written about it no one has yet fully explored its depths".

In a nutshell, the Holy Quran is an everlasting miracle of God to all mankind as a whole. Smith writes in his book, "Muhammad and Islam", Thanks to the teaching of the Quran and its emphasis on the cultivation of knowledge, countless scholars made their appearance and wrote innumerable books. Different scientific disciplines were derived from the Quran and spread across the world by Muslim thinkers. The world was illuminated with the light of the Quran and culture of Islam. ●

# Basics of Fasting

## The Obligation

Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is an act of obedience and submission to Allah's commands through the highest degree of commitment, sincerity and faithfulness to seek Allah's mercy, to atone for sins, errors, and mistakes and to condemnation to Hell.

It is done out of deep for God, with a genuine virtue of devotion, honest dedication and Him alone.

The fasting during Ramadan is obligatory on every adult, sane, and able Muslim.

Denial of the obligatory nature of fasting in the month of Ramadan amounts to disbelief.

One who avoids fasting without genuine reasons is a sinner and transgressor according to Islamic Shariah (Law).

## When to fast

Fasting in Islam involves abstinence from three primal physical needs of human beings- food, drink, and sexual intercourse from dawn (approximately) one and a half hours before sunrise) to sunset during the entire month of Ramadan.

## Who is exempted from fasting

1. Children under the age of puberty and discretion;

2. The insane people who are unaccountable for their deeds. People of these two categories are exempted from the duty of fasting and no compensation or any other substitute is enjoined on them:

3. Men and women who are too old and feeble to undertake the obligation of fasting and bear its hardship. Such people are exempted from this duty, but they must

offer at least needy poor Muslim an average full meal or its value per person day.

4. Sick people whose health is likely to be severely affected by fasting. They may postpone the fast, as long as they are sick, to a later date and makeup for it, a day for a day;

5. People expecting hardship. Such people may break the fast temporarily during their travel only and make up for it in later days, a day for a day. But it is better for them, the Quran says, to keep the fast if they can without causing extraordinary hardships;

6. Expectant women and women nursing their children may also break the fast, if its observance is likely to endanger their own health or that of their infants. But they must make up for the fast at a delayed time, a day for a day;

7. Women in periods of menstruation (of a maximum of ten days). They must postpone the fast till recovery and then make up for it a day for a day.

## Basics of Fasting

### Niyah or Intention of Fast

To observe the fast, the intention of fasting is essential (waajib). The intention should be made daily, preferably before dawn of each day of fasting (in Ramadan).

Provision is made if someone has forgotten to express his intention before dawn. In such a case one is allowed to express intention of fasting before noon to avoid the invalidation of the fast.

The wording of Niyah may be as follows:

"I intend to observe fast for today."

### Suhoor

Suhoor is a light, predawn meal. Recommended before actually fasting. It is

a blessing and hence recommended but not essential.

Any consumption of food or drink cease at least five to ten minutes before the onset of dawn.

#### **Iftar**

Iftar is an Arabic term meaning breaking the fast immediately after the sunset. Iftar is a light snack consisting of dates or desserts, along with liquids, such as water, juice or milk.

This is eaten after making the following Duaa (supplication) for breaking the fast:

"Oh Allah! I fasted for your sake and I am breaking my fast from the sustenance You blessed me with, accept it from me."

#### **What breaks the fast**

1. Intentional consumption of food, drink, medicine, or smoking during the fasting.

2. Any injection which has some nutritional value.

3. Beginning of menstruation or post natal birth bleeding (even in the last moment of sunset).

The conditions mentioned above invalidate fasting and require "Qada" (making up only the missed day or days). However, intentional intercourse during the hours of fasting invalidates fasting and not only requires "Qada" but also additional penalty (Kaffara-see the explanation of this below).

#### **What does not break the fast**

1. Eating or drinking by mistake, unmindful of the fast.

2. Unintentional vomiting.

3. Swallowing things which are not possible to avoid, such as one's saliva, street dust, smoke, etc.

4. Brushing the teeth.

5. Bathing: if water is swallowed unintentionally, it does not invalidate the fast. However, while fasting gargling should be avoided.

6. Injection or 1/V (Intravenous) which is solely medicinal and not nutritional.

7. In some special circumstances if the food or drink is just tasted and immediately removed out of the mouth without allowing it to enter into the throat.

#### **Kaffara**

During the fasting period, if one deliberately break his or her fast, he/she must free one slave, or fast for sixty continuous days, or feed sixty needy persons, or spend in charity an amount equal to feeding sixty persons.

If one chooses to fast sixty days and the continuity is interrupted for any reason. Except menstruation, one has to start the sixty day cycle all over again.

#### **Breaking of the fast under exceptional conditions**

Muslims are permitted to break their fast of Ramadan when there is a danger to their health.

In this situation a Muslim should make up his/her fast later. The missed fast (s) can be made up at any other time of the year, either, continuously or intermittently, except on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr and the day of Eid-ul-Adha.

#### **Tarawih**

These are special Sunnah prayers in the month of Ramadan. They follow the Isah prayers. A minimum of eight and a maximum of twenty Rakat are offered in pairs of two.

#### **Lailat al-Qadr**

Amongst the nights of Ramadan, there is one special night of Power (Qadr) which is highlighted in Surah al-Qadr (Surah 97 in the Quran).

It has the significance of being better than a thousand months. (Quran 97:3).

This was the night when Quran was revealed to mankind. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) recommended Muslims search of the last nights in Ramadan.

Muslims spend the night in Ibadah (worship), asking forgiveness of their sins and reciting the Quran. ●

## Aminuddin Shujauddin Passes Away

Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Maulana Aminuddin Shujauddin Passed away on June 7, 2012 in Lucknow in a private Nursing Home. Born in 1955 at Jalgaun, Maharashtra. He did his B.A. from Pune University in 1992 and M.A. from Mumbai University in 1996. He came to Lucknow on the invitation of Maulana Salman Husaini Nadwi, Dean, Faculty of Kulliatut Dawat-e-wal-Illam, Nadwatul-Ulama and president, Jamiat-e-Shabab-e-Islam, Lucknow. He was associated with Jamiat-e-Shabab-e-Islam, Lucknow and was editor of its Urdu organ Bange-Dara now Bange-e-Hira for a decade. In 1997 he was appointed as English teacher in Darul-Uloom Nadwatul-Ulama, Lucknow and served here till his last breath. He had also been editor of Tameer-e-Hayat (An Urdu organ of Darul Uloom Nadwatul-Ulama) for a few years. He had made a dent in the field of Journalism. A good number of articles on different topics were penned by him in various news

papers, Journals and periodicals. He was an active member of Lucknow Journalist Association. A collection of his articles was published in a book form titled "Nuqush-e-Fikr-wa-Amal" and a collection of his write-ups written on obituaries was also published titled "Milne-ke-Nahin Nayab Hayen Ham". A collection of his interviews with prominent personalities titled "Rubaru" is underprint. He was not only a teacher but a good journalist. He was a fearless and straightforward one. No doubt his extraordinary knowledge of journalism brought a good name to him. Maulana Rabey Hasani Nadwi, Rector Nadwatul Ulama and president, All India Muslim Personal Law Board led the funeral prayer. He was buried in the graveyard of Daliganj, Lucknow. May Allah adorn his grave with luminosity and refulgence and grant peace to his soul. Ameen! ●

## Around the World

### US Among Highest Child Poverty Rates in Developed Countries

A new report released by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reveals alarming child poverty rates withing affluent, or 'developed', nations. The US ranks second highest among all measured countries, with 23.1 per cent of children living in poverty, just under Romania's 25.6 per cent.

The report Card 10 shows roughly 13 million children in the European Union (plus Norway and Iceland) lack basic items necessary for their development. 30 million children - across 35 countries with developed economies -live in poverty. "The data reinforces that far too many children continue to go without the basics in countries that have the means to provide," said Gordon Alexander, Director of UNICEF's office of Research.

As debated rage on austerity measures and social spending cuts, a new report reveals the extent of child poverty and child deprivation in the world's advanced economies. Some 13 million children in the European Union (plus Norway and Iceland) lack basic items necessary for their development. Meanwhile 30 million children - across 35 countries with developed economies -live in poverty. Report Card 10 from UNICEF's Office of Research, looks at child poverty and child deprivation across the industrialized world, comparing and ranking countries' performance. This international comparison, says the Report, proves that child poverty in these countries is not in evitable, but policy suceptible - and that some countries are doing much better than others at protecting their most vulnerable children. In doing so UNICEF's Office of Research tries to estimate what percentage of children are falling significantly behind what can be considered normal for their own societies. ●

### Princess Tower enters Guinness Records

The 107-storey-tall Princess Tower in Dubai has been recognised by Guinness World Records as the world's tallest residential building. Measuring 414 metres from base to tip, the tower comprises six basement floors, a ground floor and 100 above-ground residential levels. The tower occupies an area of 37,410 square feet and houses 763 luxury apartments. Dubai already has a Guinness Record in its name for the tallest building in the world-- the 828-metre-high and 160-storey Burj Khalifa. ●

### National Geographic Releases New 1001 Inventions Book

The latest edition of the best-selling 1001 Inventions book has been published by National Geographic, and will introduce the undrawing legacy of Muslim civilization to new audiences in North America and the rest of the world. The previous two editions of the flagship 1001 Inventions publication sold more than 150,000 copies, with Turkish and Arabic versions also proving very popular. Modern society owes a tremendous amount to the Muslim world for the many groundbreaking scientific and technological advances that were pioneered during the Golden Age of Muslim civilizations between the 7th and 17th centuries. The Muslim world's often overlooked achievements are shared in 1001 Inventions: The Enduring Legacy to Muslim Civilization, official companion to the blockbuster 1001 Inventions exhibition, which is currently amazing audiences at the California Science Center in Los Angeles. The exhibition is due to open at the National Geographic Museum in Washington, DC, at the start of August 2012. ●

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