



TIME IS MONEY?

We live in a world of import and export, a world in which most goods and commodities are available in most countries for most of the year. However, despite the year-round availability, there are many goods that enjoy a 'peak season'. Astute businessmen are those who identify this period and utilize it to their advantage.

Dynamic Effect

The season presents a golden opportunity for one to secure tremendous profits in a minimal period of time. Hence, during the month of December, even if the rest of the world is on vacation, it is practically unimaginable for one to find the serious businessman on holiday. He understands the pivotal role that the season plays in his success; if he remains focused and committed, he will reap the profits, and if he allows himself to become distracted or while away his time, he alone will suffer the consequences.

The dynamic effect of the season is such that if the shop owner, who struggles to make ends meet for the entire year, exerts himself and exhausts his efforts in this crucial period, he will not only recover his losses, but will even manage to turn a handsome profit.

The Season of Taqwa

Just as other things have a special season; taqwa also has a special season – the month of Ramadhan. From fasting during the day to performing Taraaweeh during the night, the entire month has been specially designed to assist a believer in harvesting a bumper crop of fruit, from the tree of taqwa, that he will continue to enjoy long after the blessed month has expired. However, just as with other seasons, this will only be possible if one avails himself for this blessed month and expends all his energies in striving to secure the bargains it has on offer.

Window of Opportunity

During Ramadhan, the reward of every fardh act is multiplied seventy times, and for every nafl act carried out, one receives the reward of a fardh act. The Shayaateen are chained and announcements of mass forgiveness are made. Du'aas are readily answered and on account of sehri, it is easy to perform Tahajjud Salaah. In short, this blessed season provides all the ingredients that will assist us to acquire the commodity that can neither be imported nor exported, nor sold for that matter, as it can only be acquired through each individual manufacturing his own – the priceless commodity of taqwa. However, this month is exactly that – a short period which will soon end. The window of opportunity is thus narrow, making time the greatest capital and asset that one could have.

More Than Money

If the shop owner arrives at work two hours late, he will regret the business that he lost and lament the money that he could have made. For every minute of the two hours, he could have been serving customers and turning the numbers. We often hear the adage '**time is money**'. However, contrary to popular belief, **time is NOT money – it is far more valuable than money**. Whereas money can always be later recovered if lost, time can never be recovered – and it is for this reason that time is our single greatest asset. In the race to secure the rewards of Ramadhan, it is those who are particular regarding their time that profit the most.

Destructive Distractions

In this regard, along with the ready-made

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TIME IS MONEY?

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opportunities to benefit are a host of ready-made distractions. After-Taraaweeh braais, meeting friends for a chat, an 'Eid bargain-hunting' excursion – these are all seemingly innocent activities. However, when thoroughly scrutinized, we realize that the braai 'burnt' two or three hours of our time, whereas a normal supper would have been concluded in a maximum of thirty minutes. The excursion to purchase 'Eid-goods at the best prices may have saved us a few valuable rands but undoubtedly cost us invaluable hours and minutes. When time holds far more value than money, it is well worth spending more rands if it will result in us saving precious time. Even meeting friends can be detrimental as apart from killing our time with idle chit-chat, these gatherings often culminate in backbiting and other similar sins.

Media 'Mania'

In the opinion of many, the uncrowned yet undisputed champion of 'killing time' is social media in all its various guises and forms. The magnetic effect of the smartphone transcends metal and hence it is the human eye that remains fixated to the screen. Whether in the masjid, or while attending a program for spiritual upliftment, or at the time of sehri when du'aas are accepted – instead of maximizing and benefiting from these opportunities, there are many who become Media 'Maniacs' and while away the irrecoverable moments on their smart phones. Indeed, it appears as if the smart phone may have been named as such, since after it enters the hand of its user, it is the only one that seems to be 'smart'. With even the West sounding the alarm over addiction to social media and the innumerable ills that accompany it, it is high time that we 'switch off' our phones and plug into the spiritual current of Ramadhaan instead of our power banks.

For this purpose, just as we fast by shunning food and drink from dawn to sunset, let us make a resolution to 'fast' from all forms of media for all the 24 hours of every day in the Month of Ramadhaan. Be it remaining abreast with the news, keeping up to date with Instagram or following on Facebook – we should initiate a complete 'fast' from all these time-consumers during this blessed period and afterwards as well.

Thus let us make this Ramadhaan very profitable by correctly investing the capital of time that we have been blessed with. Insha-Allah we will reap the rewards in this world and the Hereafter.

SPECIAL OFFER!

Special offers make most people very excited. If the saving on an item will be somewhat significant, people queue up for hours, or even camp overnight outside the store to grab the offer. Whether the saving is a few hundred rands or a few thousand dollars, it is not even dust when compared to the special offers that Allah Ta'ala offers His servants in the last portion of the night – at the time of Tahajjud. Especially in the month of Ramadhaan, these special offers become super special.

Abu Umaamah (radhiyallahu 'anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said, **"Hold fast to salaah during the night (Tahajjud Salaah), for indeed it is the habit of the pious people before you, it is a means of gaining the proximity of your Lord, it expiates sins and prevents one from falling into wrongs."** (Sunan Tirmizi #3549)

In another narration, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) mentioned, **"The closest that Allah Ta'ala is to the servant is during the latter portion of the night. If you are able to be among those who remember Allah Ta'ala at that time (by performing Tahajjud Salaah, engaging in du'aa, reciting the Quraan Majeed, etc.) then do so."** (Sunan Tirmizi #3579)

The virtues and benefits of performing Tahajjud Salaah and engaging in du'aa at the time of Tahajjud are such that every Muslim wishes that he could awake for Tahajjud. However, when the alarm rings, he is either in too deep a sleep or the blanket is simply too heavy to lift. The month of Ramadhaan is the perfect opportunity for each and every Muslim to make Tahajjud a precious part of his life.

We all wake up to partake of sehri. If we wake up a little early, we will have sufficient time to perform Tahajjud Salaah, recite the Quraan Majeed and place all our needs before Allah Ta'ala in du'aa. May Allah Ta'ala make it easy for us all to avail of this unique opportunity – Aameen.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

BODYBUILDING

Q *I have been going to the gym regularly in order to keep fit and healthy. Over time, due to the company, I have started competing in bodybuilding and weightlifting. Currently, the discussion among our group is about taking steroids to enhance the performance. Is it permissible to take steroids for this purpose?*

A Health is a bounty from the side of Allah Ta'ala and it is thus necessary for one to look after his body and health. That said, it is not permissible for us to break the laws of Allah Ta'ala in order to become fit, nor is bodybuilding and exercising the purpose for which we have been created. In essence, there are two problems that need to be addressed.

Haram and Sin

In almost all cases, the environment of the gym is one which is conducive to building the body - but at the price of severely damaging or even destroying one's Islam and imaan. The majority of gyms cater for both males and females. Free intermingling, especially in the gym environment, where gym-goers are typically scantily clad, is a proven recipe for zina. Even if the gym is for males only, there is generally no regard for a person's 'aurah (area from the navel to below the knee) being covered, whereas it is haram to expose this area in public. In fact, according to many who have previously frequented gyms, the shamelessness of the gym environment is such that those using the locker rooms or change rooms do so while their bodies are completely bare of clothing — Astaghfirullah!!! Even if a Muslim does not behave likewise, will any person with shame and imaan allow himself to be present in such a place???

Obsession

Exercising to maintain one's health, provided no law of Allah Ta'ala is broken in the process, is commendable. However, the problems begin when exercising, sport, bodybuilding, weightlifting and other such activities develop into an obsession. According to some studies, the obsession with building bigger muscles, to the extent where one always feels that his muscles are never big enough, is actually a **mental disorder** that is termed '**bigorexia**',

the opposite of anorexia. This disorder often stems from a feeling of insecurity, inadequacy and lack of acceptance. The person feels that if he builds big muscles and becomes attractive, he will gain acceptance and popularity. It is often Hollywood movies and other such forms of media - in which heroes tend to be characters with rippling muscles - that serve to embed this impression in a person's mind. This idea is further reinforced when his fellow gym-goers and friends begin to compliment him on his big muscles. As he suffers from insecurity, he thrives on such compliments, and **it is this addiction to praise that causes these individuals to dress in 'muscle tops' and other tight clothing.** The purpose of these garments is to showcase the wearer's muscles so that all can recognize his "achievement". As the person perceives that he is achieving his goal and becoming successful, his obsession worsens. As a result, his commitment to the gym increases. Naturally, this has a direct effect on his family as well as work life. Recent surveys have proven that many bodybuilders have lost their jobs or suffered a divorce due to showing more importance to their gym routine than their family or work.

Unreasonable irritation

The same obsession also drives a person to use steroids. This substance, apart from causing widely acknowledged health harms such as heart attacks, liver damage, sexual dysfunction, etc., also cause a behavioural change which has been aptly named 'roid rage'. **The user becomes prone to bouts of unreasonable irritation and anger which cause him to become very aggressive and often harm people.** In fact, there are even cases of roid rage leading people to murder their close and loved ones. It is thus evident that this type of obsession with bodybuilding is not merely counterproductive, but actually destroys the body, life and soul of a person.

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BODYBUILDING

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The Qiblah of a Muslim

Allah Ta'ala created man for the sole purpose of recognizing Him and worshipping Him. Everything else in the world, be it one's family, health or wealth are merely there to assist us to continue living and recognizing Him. Hence, the qiblah of a Muslim is pleasing Allah Ta'ala. When the qiblah shifts, then cycling, bodybuilding, fishing and other hobbies and activities become the purpose of a person's life. Going to the masjid for Fajr Salaah will be difficult, but departing at 4am for a fishing trip, cycle or for the gym will become second nature and something to eagerly anticipate. We need to realign our compasses so that our qiblah is correct once more – pleasing Allah Ta'ala. If our goal is to please Allah Ta'ala, we will not be in environments of haraam, hurt our wives and children with inconsiderate behaviour, show aggression to the creation of Allah Ta'ala, dress in clothing that is displeasing to Him and spend all our time, wealth and energy in building something that will be lowered into a grave to rot after our demise.

May Allah Ta'ala inspire us all to please Him – aameen.

From the advices of ...

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FAQEEHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of *Faqeehul Ummah* Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Saheb (*rahmatullahi 'alaih*) has helped thousands of people to overcome many problems and difficulties – especially in the line of *Islaahun Nafs* (inner-self reformation). Hereunder is an answer to a question posed to him.

RECITATION OF QURAAAN MAJEED AND DU'AA

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Mufti Saheb

Assalamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu

...Please advise me with regards to the following. Firstly, I do not have the true enthusiasm for the recitation of the Quraan Majeed. Secondly, I am not much inclined towards du'aa.

Summary of Reply:

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Brother/Sister

Assalamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu

When reciting the Quraan Majeed, meditate upon the fact that you are reciting to Allah Ta'ala. Be like a student who is reciting to his ustaaz while the awe of the ustaaz has engulfed him. Hence recite the Quraan Majeed with the intention that you are reciting to Allah Ta'ala in such a manner AS IF you can see Him (this will create the desired enthusiasm).

Also, remember that du'aa is the essence of 'ibaadah. Whether it is zikr, tilaawah or salaah, the essence of it all is du'aa. Keeping in mind Allah Ta'ala's favours and His kindness, engage in du'aa with much humility. Ponder that only He can accept one's du'aa and solve one's problems. He has commanded us, "Call unto Me, I will accept." Whosoever is granted the gift of du'aa, unlimited mercies are showered upon him. His du'aa passes through the seven heavens. May Allah Ta'ala help you. (*Maktoobaat vol. 1, pg. 71*)

RESPECT FOR RAMADHAAN

There was once a fire worshipper who saw his son eating in the presence of Muslims during the month of Ramadhaan. As soon as he saw his son eating before the Muslims, he hit him and reprimanded him saying, "Why do you not show regard for the sanctity and respect of the Muslims during the month of Ramadhaan?" It so happened that the fire worshipper passed away that very week. Soon after he passed away, the 'Aalim of that locality had a dream in which he saw the fire worshipper in Jannah! In the dream, he asked him, "Were you not a fire worshipper?" The man replied, "I was a fire worshipper. However, shortly before I passed away, Allah Ta'ala honoured me, by inspiring me to accept Islam, due to the respect that I had shown for the month of Ramadhaan." (*Nuzhatul Majaalis*)