



LESSONS OF HAJ

As the *Hujjaj* fulfil their Haj, those not physically with them should nevertheless still focus their attention towards this momentous occasion. This must be done in order to refresh the various lessons that were taught to mankind by Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) during his last Haj. Among the numerous lessons that were imparted by Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) are those jewels of advice which he bestowed upon the *Ummah* in the various *khutbas* (sermons) that he delivered. Hereunder some of these precious advices are death with briefly.

“INSIGNIFICANT” ACTIONS

During one of the sermons on the occasion of *Hajjatul Wida’* Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) addressed the Sahaaba (*radhi-Allahu anhum*) thus: “Verily Shaitaan has lost hope with regards to being worshipped in your land but, aside from that, **he is content that he be obeyed in those actions which you deem to be minor and insignificant.** Beware O people! Verily I have left with you that which if you hold on firmly to it you will never go astray — the Book of Allah and the *sunnah* of His *Nabi* (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*)” (*Haakim*).

A great lesson is to be learnt here. There are various aspects that many people consider to be trivial. Often a person does something contrary to the *sunnah* while considering it to be insignificant. One may even have heard people say: “**But it is only sunnah!**” This may pertain to the manner of eating and drinking, or to one’s clothing and appearance, or to matters of social conduct. Often these aspects are regarded as being insignificant. As a result the *sunnah* in these aspects is abandoned. However, something else is bound to take the place of the *Sunnah*. In most cases it will be the manner of the Jews and Christians. Thus shaitaan has succeeded in making one obey him in these matters. Therefore Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has warned the *Ummah* not to regard any act as trivial or insignificant. Hence he is reported to have said: “Do not regard any good action as trivial, even if it be smiling at your Muslim brother” (*Muslim*).

CONCERN FOR HEREAFTER

At Musjidul Khaif in Mina Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) addressed the gathering of *Hujjaj* and said to them: “He whose concern is the Hereafter, Allah Ta’ala will take care of his matters and organise his affairs. Allah Ta’ala will make him see wealthy conditions and the world will come to him in a condition that it is lowly and disgraced. The one who makes the world his concern, Allah Ta’ala will scatter his affairs (due to which he will have to run to and fro), poverty will loom

before his eyes and, after all the running around, only that amount of the world will come to him which has been decreed for him” (*Tabrani*).

On this occasion let us reflect as to what extent has the concerns of this world consumed us? What amount of time has this worldly concern left us with to remember Allah Ta’ala and to prepare for the Hereafter? In fact it often happens that the little time when we do remember Him outwardly, such as in *salaah*, etc., we are mentally engaged in the world. This lesson on the occasion of Haj exhorts us to shift our focus to the *Aakhirah* and Allah Ta’ala will ease the worldly matters for us.

FORSAKING INTEREST

It was also on the occasion of *Hajjatul Wida’* that Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) cancelled the interest transactions of times of *jahiliyyah* (ignorance). The interest which was owed to Hazrath Ibn Abbaas (*radhi-Allahu anhu*) was the first to be cancelled. Haj then reminds one to totally abstain from all interest. It should bring to mind that Allah Ta’ala has declared war in the Qur’an against those who refuse to forsake interest. It should also remind one of the Hadith wherein Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has said: “Allah Ta’ala has cursed the one who takes interest, the one who gives it, those who record the transaction and those who witness it” (*Mishkaat*).

NO RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

In another *khutba* at Mina Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) proclaimed this profound message: “O people! Verily your *Rabb* (Allah) is One and verily your father is one (*Aadam alaihis salaam*). Remember! There is no virtue of an Arab upon a Non-Arab and vice versa, nor is there any virtue of a White above a Black or for a Black person over a White except in *taqwa* (piety). Verily the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most pious” (*Baihaqi*).

Racial and colour barriers were totally destroyed by Islam. Superiority is not determined on such aspects. The criteria for superiority is the fear of Allah and obedience to Him. Whoever fulfils these criteria the best, whether it be a man or woman, Arab or non-Arab, Black or White, will be the most superior. However, it is most unfortunate that the legacy of apartheid lingers to some extent in many Muslims. Often the non-discriminatory policy of Islam is

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violated in various ways. There is an urgent need to cleanse ourselves from this malady. This message of Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) must also be deeply ingrained into our families and children.

CONVEYING DEEN

After having bestowed the Sahaaba (*radhi-Allahu Anhum*) with the precious jewels of advice, Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) proclaimed the profound words: "Those who are present, convey it to those who are absent" (*Ahmad*). The Sahaaba (*radhi-Allahu Anhum*) fulfilled this task par excellence. In order to convey the message of Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) they reached China as well as the jungles of Africa. They undertook the hazardous journeys and the accompanying difficulties most willingly in order to pass *Deen* on to the generations to come. With their untiring efforts, and the efforts of those who followed in their footsteps, *Deen* has come down to us in its pristine purity. In order to preserve *Deen* within our own lives and that of our families, as well as to further spread the *Deen*, we too will have to adopt the way of the Sahaaba (*radhi-Allahu Anhum*) and follow in their footsteps.

HUQUQUL IBAAD

Attention was also drawn towards

the importance of fulfilling *huququl ibaad* (the rights of fellow humans). Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) declared on this occasion: "Verily your lives, wealth and honour are sacred upon one another like the sanctity of this day, place and month (*this is a reference to the day of Arafah, the place of the Haram and the month of Zhul Hijjah*)" (*Sahih Bukhari*). Thus to cause any harm to the life, wealth or honour of any person is to violate this sanctity which was declared on the auspicious day of *Arafah*.

The aspects of *huququl ibaad* have been greatly stressed in various *ahadith*. Failing to fulfil one's duties in this regard could result in one's good deeds being given away, in the Hereafter, to those whose rights were violated in this world. Hence, one must safeguard one's good deeds by fulfilling the rights of others.

Thus one should focus one's attention during the days of Haj to these extremely important lessons and resolve to practice upon the injunctions therein. If anyone does so, he is extremely close to the message of Haj, though he may be far away from the *Hujjaj*.

ALLAH TA'ALA'S CREATION

Allah Ta'ala has exhorted us to ponder over the creation of our bodies. If one truly ponders over this, he will learn to recognise the power of Allah Ta'ala. Among the astounding organs of the body are the lungs. Occasionally, when one takes a breath of fresh air, one should ponder over the creation of this magnificent organ.

The lungs bring the blood into contact with clean fresh air. The oxygen in the air then purifies the blood. At each breath, air is drawn into more than 1,5 million little air-sacs in the lungs, which if spread out would cover an area of some 170 square metres. These little balloon-like sacs are made of a thin elastic tissue which allows air to pass through but prevents blood from oozing in.

The blood is carried to the lungs through 50 billion tiny hair-thin tubes which form a close network all along the outside the little balloons of the lungs. Each day they bring in some 10 000 litres of blood. Oxygen is sucked in by the red blood cells. Oxygen is sucked in by the red blood cells, while waste products of the body like carbon dioxide and water are given up by the blood, pass into the air-sacs, and are breathed out. (Adapted from *God Arises*)

TEN GREAT NIGHTS

WHEN ALLAH TA'ALA takes an oath upon some aspect, it is to illustrate the great significance of that aspect in the sight of Allah Ta'ala. Among the various things upon which Allah Ta'ala has taken an oath upon in the Qur'an is "ten nights" (*Al-Fajr*). Many *mufasssireen* (commentators) are of the view that this refers to the first ten nights of *Zhul-Hijjah*. The *ahadith* also mention the virtue of the first ten days of *Zhul Hijjah*. It is reported in one *hadith* that no action is more beloved to Allah Ta'ala than the action performed in these ten days, whether it be *nafl salaah, zikr, charity, etc.* (*Sahih Bukhari*).

ONE YEARS REWARD

In another *hadith* it is reported that one fast in these ten days is equivalent to the reward of fasting for one year (the tenth of *Zhul-Hijjah* is excluded since it is not permissible to fast on the day of *Eidul-Adha*). Likewise, performing *ibadah* in any of these nights earns the reward of *ibadah* in *Lailatul Qadr* (*Tirmizi*).

Furthermore, among these ten days is the day of *Arafah* (9 *Zhul-Hijjah*). Regarding this day Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is reported to have said: "I have hope in Allah Ta'ala, that the fast of the day of *Arafah* will be an atonement for the (minor) sins of the past and forthcoming year" (*Tirmizi*).

DEPRIVATION

Thus the first ten days and nights of *Zhul-Hijjah* are extremely virtuous. One should therefore engage oneself in even more *ibadah* during this time. One should fast on as many of these days as possible. To ignore these virtues and be indifferent to the significance of these days and nights is indeed a great deprivation. It is also a sign of ingratitude to Allah Ta'ala for the great opportunity He has given us, to earn tremendously multiplied rewards for little acts of devotion. Hence let us not ignore the gift of Allah Ta'ala. Instead let us take the maximum advantage of this gift.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

PHOTOGRAPHY



Q *Is photography permissible in Islam? I have been told that the picture-making that was forbidden really pertained to making idols. What is the correct belief in this regard?*



A Numerous *ahadith* make it abundantly clear that to draw pictures of any animate object is totally forbidden. As far as photography is concerned, it is a much more advanced, precise and accurate method of picture-making with the aid of of an electronic device — the camera. There is ample factual and technical evidence from western sources to prove that a photograph is in reality a *picture*. (These details are beyond the scope of this little pamphlet. If you wish you may furnish your address and request for the details.) Hence let us examine some of the narrations which emphatically prohibit picture-making.

Hazrath Abdullah bin Mas'ood (R.A.) narrates that he heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) saying: "The *musawwiroon* (picture-makers) will be punished most severely by Allah Ta'ala" (*Sahih Bukhari*). In another narration of Hazrath Ibn Abbaas (*radhi-Allahu anhu*) it is mentioned that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Whoever makes a picture will be punished and he will be forced to give life to the picture, but he will be unable to do so" (*Sahih Bukhari*). It is also reported in a hadith of *Sahih Bukhari* that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) refused to enter the house of Fathima (*radhi-Allahu anha*) because the latter had hung a curtain with pictures on it. He only entered after the curtain was removed. It is obvious that there were no idols in the house of Fathima (*radhi-Allahu anha*), yet Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) refused to enter her home.

ANGELS DO NOT ENTER

Once a person came to Hazrath Ibn Abbaas (*radhi-Allahu anhu*) and said: "Verily I earn my living from the labour of my hands, and I make these pictures (of animate objects)." Hazrath Ibn Abbaas (*radhi-Allahu anhu*) said to him: "Come closer." Ibn Abbaas (*radhi-Allahu anhu*) placed his hand on the man's head and said to him: "I will narrate to you only that which I have heard from the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Verily I have heard the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) say: 'Whoever makes a picture will be punished by Allah. He (the picture-maker) will be ordered to breathe life into the picture, but he will be unable to do so.' (Hence) if you have to make pictures, then make pictures of this tree and of lifeless things" (*Sahih Muslim*). In another *hadith*, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "Verily the angels do not enter a home wherein there are pictures (of animate objects)." These narrations also make it very clear that the prohibition is general and for all times. It is not restricted to only such situations where there is a fear of people worshipping the pictures. Just as wine is *haram* even if one is sure that it will not intoxicate him, likewise picture-making is *haram* at all times, even if no fear of idol-worship exists.

PROPHESED

The narrations above are sufficient to elaborate the prohibition of pictures or photographs. Photography is simply another name for the modern method of capturing and making pictures. In fact, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has foretold that a time will come when people will change the names of forbidden things and then (due to its different name) regard it as lawful. Photography is one such example. Thus the practice of photographing animate objects is a sin. One who indulges in this will be punished in the Hereafter and he will be forced to give life to it, which he will not be able to do, hence increasing his agony. A home wherein pictures of animate objects (people, animals, etc.) is displayed is deprived of the blessings of the angels, who do not enter such homes. Therefore, one should totally refrain from this sin.

QURBANI SKINS



Q *Can the skins of Qurbani animals be sold? If they are sold, what could the proceeds from the sale be used for? Besides selling it, what else could be done with the skin?*



A The skin of the Qurbani animal could be kept for personal use, such as using it as a mat, etc. It could be given away to anyone as an outright gift as well. However, if the skin is sold, the proceeds must be given to those who are

Grievous Mistakes...

IT IS A GRIEVOUS MISTAKE ...

☞ To divulge your secret to someone and then request him to keep it to himself.

☞ To sin with the intention that one will give it up after committing that sin a few times.

☞ To judge a person by his apparent condition.

☞ To leave work unfinished and hope to complete it another time.

☞ To spend more than one's income and then hope for some heavenly gift.

☞ Not to serve one's parents but, despite this, to expect service from one's own children.

☞ To regard that task which one cannot do to be impossible for everyone

A Time will come...

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "A time will come when people will conduct their wordly conversations in the Musjid. DO NOT SIT WITH THEM for Allah Ta'ala has no need for such people." (*Shu'bul Imaan*)

Recite Excessively...

Ibn Abbaas (R.A.) relates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "No days are as weighty with Allah and liked by Him for good deeds as the first ten days of *Zhul Hijjah*. Therefore in these days excessively recite *tasbeeh* (*subhanallah*), *tahleel* (*lailaha-illal-lah*), *tahmeed* (*alhamdu-lillah*), and *takbeer* (*Allahu Akbar*)" (*Tabrani*).

