

BEAUTY OF ISLAM

It is inherent in the nature of a human being that he is attracted by beauty of any sort. The heart then is inclined towards the source of that beauty. Deen, in its totality, is filled with immense beauty. From the purity of belief to the manner of worship, and from business principles to burial rites, every single aspect has the potential to attract a person to Islam.

However, very few non-Muslims get an opportunity to observe aspects such as salaah, haj, umrah, qurbani, etc., since these aspects are fulfilled in specific places where the kuffaar are generally not present. There are innumerable other practices of Deen, the beauty of which will be witnessed by comparatively very few non-Muslims. Thus it may be said that these things are generally hidden from the public eye. On the contrary, the business dealings and social etiquette of the Muslims is in sharp focus at all times. Muslims conduct business with non-Muslims daily. Likewise, we daily come into contact with non-Muslim neighbours, clients, employees, classmates, etc. These people observe our dealings and character. If the immense beauty of the character of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is practically displayed to the non-Muslims, they would be drawn towards Islam in multitudes.

In a *hadith* Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "The Believer with the most perfect Imaan is the one who has the best character." The numerous incidents of the kindness and compassion of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) are well known. These incidents became the means of thousands accepting Islam.

BUSINESS

Likewise, if the honest and clear dealings which are taught by Islam are displayed in our business dealings it will be a practical invitation to the beauty of our Deen. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has encouraged one to be gentle in his dealings. In a *hadith* he is reported to have said: "May Allah Ta'ala have mercy upon a person who is soft and lenient; when he sells, when he buys and when he demands payment" (*Mishkaat*). According to another *hadith*, the honest and trustworthy trader will be raised with the Prophets, martyrs and pious people on the day of *Qiyamah* (*Mishkaat*).

SOCIAL ETIQUETTE

As for social etiquette, one will find several verses of the Qur'an dealing with this vitally important aspect. For instance, in this concise book of Allah Ta'ala, special mention is made of showing kindness to the neighbour (S4:V36). Similarly, in more than eight aayats of the Qur'an the rights of the relatives are mentioned. The rights of the orphans, needy and travellers have also been emphasised several times. The same emphasis on social aspects can be found in the *ahadith* as well. In a

hadith Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have declared such a person as not being a true Believer whose neighbour is not safe from his harm and mischief. There are numerous other *ahadith* pertaining to social etiquette.

The philosophy of Islam with regards to social conduct is unique. The western concept is that every person must demand his right. Contrary to this, the Islamic philosophy teaches each one to be concerned with fulfilling the rights of others. This concern has to be developed within us. The annals of Islamic history are filled with incidents of fulfilling the rights of even arch enemies.

JUSTICE

The Jews of *Khaibar* had come to a settlement with the Muslims that each year they would give half their crops to the Muslims and keep half for themselves. Abdullah bin Rawaha (R.A.) was appointed to see to the distribution. He was extremely strict and ensured that the entire half that the Muslims were entitled to was taken. The Jews tried to bribe him to take less than half. He angrily responded saying: "Do you wish to feed me *haraam*? Verily you are the most detested of people to me, but yet detesting you does not incite me to be unjust to you (i.e. I do not take more than what the Muslims are entitled to)." The Jews were taken aback by this reply and they said: "It is due to this very justice that the system of the world is in order" (*Al-Bidaya*, v.4, pg. 199) This justice has to be established in OUR lives towards one and all — even to the *kuffaar*. The underlying reason for the emphasis on these aspects is that the negative effects of neglecting them are not restricted to oneself. Others are directly affected. Displaying poor character is bound to annoy and inconvenience others. Resorting to deception or dishonesty in business, or adopting harshness will certainly alienate people. Not paying a non-Muslim his money will create hatred in his heart, thus closing his heart towards Muslims and Islam.

Neglecting the Islamic etiquette of social life will also cause harm to others. When a person is harmed, annoyed or inconvenienced in any way, his heart will become totally disinclined towards those who have harmed or annoyed him. Our verbal invitations to Islam will then have no effect upon such people. Thus we have to adorn ourselves with the beauty of the *sunnah*, the way of life that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has practically demonstrated. The *sunnah* encompasses all aspects of our life, including character, business

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BEAUTY OF ISLAM

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FINDING QIBLA WITHOUT A COMPASS

dealings and social conduct.

The month of Rabi-ul-Awwal is fast approaching. The discussions on *seerah* will abound. In actual fact the programmes on the *seerah* of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) should continue all year round. The purpose should be to implement his *seerah* into our lives. Thus in these discourses and discussions let us discuss the noble and splendid character of our beloved Master (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Let us discuss his guidance on business and social aspects. Let us then adopt them and make them a part and parcel of our lives. The true beauty of Islam will then shine from every act and deed that we perform. This will draw the hearts of people towards us; towards Muslims; towards Islam. When we have won the hearts of people, we have to a great

THE SHINING SUN

ON A BRIGHT SUNNY DAY, have we ever looked out at the sun and exclaimed “*Subahan-Allah*” (Allah Ta’ala be glorified). Many among us may not have yet done this. However, any person who considers what a gigantic and fascinating creation the sun is, will certainly glorify the Creator of this magnificent object.

So magnificent is this creation of Allah Ta’ala that He has specifically mentioned it as being from among His “signs.” Allah Ta’ala says: “*And from among the signs of Allah Ta’ala are the night and day, and the sun and moon*” (37:41). In several other *ayats* of the Glorious Qur’an, Allah Ta’ala has drawn our attention towards the creation of the sun.

In order to truly appreciate the magnitude and significance of this “sign” of Allah Ta’ala, let us consider the following scientific facts about the sun:

The sun is a huge, glowing ball of gases at the center of the solar system. The earth and the other eight planets travel around it. The diameter of the sun is about 1,392,000 kilometers, **about 109 times the diameter of the earth**. Because the sun is about **150 million kilometers** from the earth, it does not appear larger than the moon, but the sun’s diameter is 400 times as large as that of the moon. **If the sun were the size of a skyscraper, the earth would be the size of a person**. The visible surface of the sun consists of hot gases that give off light and heat. **Only about one two-billionth of the sun’s light and heat reaches the earth**. (Can we imagine what our position would be if the amount of heat reaching the earth increases by another one two-billionth?) The rest of the heat and light disperses in space (and fulfils whatever function that Allah Ta’ala has decreed for it). Sunlight takes about 8 minutes and 20 seconds to reach the earth, **travelling at 299,792 kilometers per second**. From indirect measurements on sunlight and based on mathematical calculations, astronomers have estimated that the temperature at the centre of the sun reaches about **15,000,000° C**.

This is just a little peek into this grand creation of Allah Ta’ala. What the astronomers have discovered is still perhaps only a tiny bit of the true reality of the sun.

However, while on the one hand Allah Ta’ala has described the sun as His “sign,” He has also made it apparent that, despite its magnificent structure and nature, the sun is after all only a tiny creation of Allah Ta’ala. Thus when the final hour dawns upon this earth, the sun will also be destroyed. Allah Ta’ala says: “*And when the sun will be folded up*.” (At-Takweer, 1)

Nevertheless, as long as the sun continues to shine, every time a *Mu’min* observes it he will surely exclaim: “*Blessed is Allah, the best of Creators*.” (Astronomical data extracted from World Book)

DID YOU KNOW that you could determine the direction of the qibla by means of the shadow from the sun? Every year the sun at midday reaches directly above the centre of the *Ka’ba Sharief*, particularly on 28 May at 11:18 a.m. (S.A. standard time) and on **16 July at 11:27 a.m.** On these specific days and at the respective times, the *qibla* can be determined by means of the shadow wherever the sun is visible in the world.

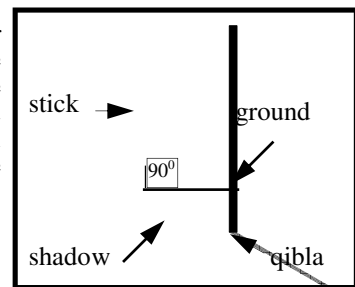
HOW TO FIND THE QIBLA

Fix a pole or stick upright into the ground at the time mentioned. Mark the shadow of the stick. The shadow will be exactly on the angle of the *qibla*. The direction of the *qibla* will be towards the stick (see illustration below). (Extracted from Perpetual Salaah time table compiled by Prof. Abdul Lateef bin Abdul Aziz of Pakistan.) The direction of the *qibla* could be determined very simply inside the home as well. At the above mentioned times place an upright object (such as a medicine box or table leg, etc.) on the floor in front of a window (north facing window) from where the sun comes in directly. The shadow will indicate the angle of the *qibla*.

While the remarkable aspect of the above mentioned two dates is that the sun comes directly above the centre of the *Ka’ba sharief* at midday, the *qibla* can nevertheless still be determined by means of the shadow at specific times on any other day as well. Hereunder are the dates and times for July for the city of Durban and surrounding areas (the dates and times for any

DATES	TIMES
JULY 2 — 5	11: 24
JULY 6 — 9	11: 25
JULY 10 — 14	11: 26
JULY 15 — 19	11: 27
JULY 20 — 24	11: 28
JULY 25 — 31	11: 29

other place in the world can also be



EATING AT THE FUNERAL HOME



When a person passes away, the family of the deceased feed the neighbours, relatives and others. Often an announcement is made after the burial informing the people that meals have been prepared for them. Sometimes this may just be on the day of the funeral. At times it continues for several days. Is this practice permissible?



There are several aspects to be considered here. Firstly, when a person has passed away, his immediate family is plunged into grief. In such a situation every possible manner of lessening this grief must be adopted by the relatives, neighbours, friends, etc. To help lessen the grief of a Believer is an extremely virtuous act. It is for this very reason that such great rewards have been mentioned for consoling a bereaved person. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "The one who consoles a person who has been afflicted with some calamity, receives the same reward as the afflicted person" (Tirmizi). Hence Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would also personally offer his condolences to the family of the deceased. Therefore everything must be done to comfort the family and ease the trauma that they are experiencing.

At this point it is perhaps already clear to most people that by gathering at the funeral home for meals, a burden is placed upon the bereaved family. This does not serve the purpose of lessening their grief in any way. Hence when the news of the martyrdom of Hazrath Ja'far (R.A.) was received, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) instructed the Sahaaba (R.A.) to send food for the family of Hazrath Ja'far (R.A.), since due to their grief, they would now not be able to pay attention to the preparation of food, etc." (Tirmizi; Ibn Majah). The fuqaha have thus mentioned that it is preferable for the friends, relatives, etc. to send food for the bereaved family for one day. (Durrul Mukhtaar, vol.1, pg. 841) From this it can be clearly gauged that how far we have strayed from the teachings of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). We have gone almost in the opposite direction. Thus the relatives, neighbours, friends, etc. should take it upon themselves to send food for the bereaved family.

Another aspect to consider here is the right of the heirs of the deceased. Often when a person passes away, all his heirs are not immediately present. However, without their permission, some of the family members prepare meals for others from the wealth of the deceased. This is totally impermissible, since all that the deceased has left behind is now jointly owned by all the heirs according to their *Shar'i* proportions. The aspect of inheritance will apply even to the groceries in the cupboard. Often these items are used freely without any consideration for the rights of others. The matter becomes extremely serious where there are orphans among the heirs. Their permission also is not valid. Thus at times due to the inconsideration of these aspects, without realizing it people end up consuming the wealth of orphans. The severity of consuming the wealth of orphans has been mentioned in the Qur'an, wherein Allah Ta'ala describes it as eating fire into the belly (Surah An-Nisaa).

In short, this is an incorrect practice. It places a burden upon the bereaved family. It does not help to lighten their grief — rather it could lead to further grief, especially if the family is poor. It is also in contradiction to the teaching of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). However, if due to practical reasons food is prepared for those who have come from far off places for the funeral, such people could partake of the same — if they are certain that the rights of any heir (especially orphans) have not been violated. The basic aspect is that there is no special virtue for feeding people on this occasion. Perhaps in many instances the bereaved family makes such preparations since they expect people to gather at the home for meals. If the people would themselves desist from this practice, the family of the deceased would also not undertake this difficulty. And Allah Ta'ala knows best.

IT IS THE UNANIMOUS VIEW of the Muslims that the most virtuous of this *Ummah* is Sayyidina Abu Bakr (R.A.). His virtues and excellences are numerous. Several verses of the Qur'an refer to Sayyidina Abu bakr (R.A.) in glowing terms. All the Sahaaba (R.A.) were also unanimous with regards to his status.

However, despite this fact being absolutely clear, from time to time certain splinter groups attempted to cast doubts with regards to the superior position and status that Sayyidina Abu Bakr (R.A.) enjoyed in the *Ummah*. One such person once came to none other than Sayyidina Ali (R.A.) and said: "What has become of the *Muhajireen* and the *Ansaar* that they have elevated Abu Bakr (R.A.) above you, whereas you are superior to him in your virtues, status and actions." Sayyidina Ali (R.A.) replied to the person saying: "If it was not for the fact that a Believer is in the protection of Allah Ta'ala, I would have killed you. I am greatly dismayed by your statement. Abu Bakr (R.A.) has surpassed me in four aspects: He accepted *Imaan* before me. He was made the Imam before me. He also surpassed me with regards to the incident of *hijrah* (migration) and accompanying Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in the cave. He was also ahead of me in the spreading of Islam." Allah Ta'ala has reprimanded everyone while He has praised Sayyidina Abu Bakr (R.A.) in the following *aayah*: "If you do not help him (Rasulullah [Sallallahu alaihi wasallam]) then verily Allah has helped him when the disbelievers removed him, the second of the two, when they two were in the cave, when he said to his companion (Sayyidina Abu Bakr R.A.) 'Do not grieve, verily Allah is with us'." (Surah Tauba: 40)

The virtue of Hazrath Abu Bakr (R.A.) and his superior status in the *Ummah* is apparent from the words of Sayyidina Ali (R.A.). Thus when ALL the Sahaaba (R.A.) are unanimous on this matter, no contradicting view should ever be entertained.

FAQIHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of Faqihul Ummah Hazrath Mufti Mahmood Saheb (*Daamat Barakaatuhum*) has helped thousands of people to overcome many problems and difficulties — especially in the line of *Islahun Nafs* (inner-self reformation). Hereunder is a reply to a letter seeking guidance.

DESPONDENT ???

SUMMARY OF LETTER:

Respected Mufti Saheb

... I am in a terrible state. It seems as if some darkness has engulfed my heart. Daily I recite the *kalimah* 100 times in the morning and evening but yet I find no effect upon me. I am punctual with my *salaah*, but it is without life and soul. I think I am the worst of all people. As a result I feel absolutely despondent...Please make dua for me that I should be granted death on Imaan. ...

SUMMARY OF REPLY:

Respected Brother

...Do not ever become despondent due to your present circumstances. ...It is the grace of Allah Ta'ala that he has opened up the reality in front of you. You have not been left in the misconception that afflicts many people that they regard themselves as great and as being people of high status whereas in reality they are nothing. May Allah Ta'ala save us from this malady.

Remember this well that a person will only gain salvation due to the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. No person will gain salvation on the basis of his actions. Sometimes a person does numerous good deeds, but then suddenly pride develops within him. Due to his numerous good deeds he regards himself as worthy of *Jannah*. However, due to the evil of his pride he becomes deprived of all the good actions and eventually becomes worthy of punishment. Allah Ta'ala has saved you from this serious malady. For that you should be grateful to Him. Sometimes a person who has spent 70 years of his life upon kufr, is finally granted Imaan and thus he goes to *Jannah*. It also happens that a person spends 70 years of his life on Imaan but then due to pride he is deprived of this great wealth and ends up in *Jahannam*. Hence no person can ever be proud of his actions and rely upon them while becoming totally unconcerned about the punishment of Allah Ta'ala. To the extent that one regards himself as lowly and worthless, to that extent will one become worthy of the forgiveness and mercy of Allah Ta'ala.

Ponder in solitude over this that Allah Ta'ala has created you as a human being, not as some snake or scorpion, etc. He has saved you from *kufr* and *shirk*. He grants you the ability to take His name daily. He permits you to stand in His presence and perform *salaah*. *Insha-Allah* He will protect you in the Hereafter as well. It is incorrect to despair of His mercy.. May Allah Ta'ala help you. (*Maktoobaat, vol.1: pg.80*)

VACANCY

A conscientious Muslim male teacher who has the enthusiasm to serve Deen and is qualified to teach English and maths (primary and secondary level) is required to teach at Madrasah Taaleemuddeen from January 1997. Applicants must apply in writing (include C.V. in application). Write to: The Principal, Madrasah Taaleemuddeen, P. O. Box 26393, Siding Beach, 4115

RISING COSTS

FROM THE STREET SWEEPER to the industrialist, every person is alarmed by the increasing costs of basic commodities. In the world of cause and effect, many reasons for the rising costs are explained by all and sundry. Political instability, faction fighting, etc. are cited as reasons for the value of the rand falling sharply. This in turn resulted in the price of petrol rocketing. The high petrol price impacts negatively on the price of every commodity...and the story goes on, and on. While these apparent means are not denied, the fact of the matter, however, is that they are only the APPARENT means. In reality, all conditions are created by Allah Ta'ala alone. These conditions are also not brought about haphazardly. Allah Ta'ala and his beloved Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) have informed us as to when favourable conditions will prevail, and also what will invite the wrath of Allah Ta'ala due to which He will send down adverse conditions. In one narration Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: **“When Allah Ta'ala is ANGRY upon a nation, and He does not send down upon them the punishments of the earth swallowing them or the punishment of transfiguration of people into animals, He causes the prices of commodities to rise high, the rains are withheld from them and the worst of the people are caused to rule over them”** (*Faizul Qadeer v.2, pg.308*).

Thus the reality of rising costs is now clear to us. Our sins have angered our Creator. His punishment has taken the form of rising costs. The solution is to make an effort to

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