



SOCIAL ETIQUETTE

ISLAM IS A COMPLETE WAY OF LIFE." We often hear this fact and frequently say it ourselves. The point to reflect upon is to what extent do we practice on the "complete way of life." This complete way of life includes our "aqaid" - having the correct beliefs. It encompasses our *ibadah*, all the forms of physical and monetary worship ordained by Allah Ta'ala. For many people, *Deen* and the complete way of life stops here. That however is very incomplete. Rather *Deen* also includes our monetary dealings with one another, our inner-self purification (*islah-e-baatin*) and social etiquette. The last aspect is perhaps least considered as a part of *Deen* and perhaps the greatest amount of negligence is found in this regard. Many a person who is conscious of his *salaah* and other *ibadah* will be found to be lax about social etiquette.

WRONG IMPRESSION

While this is the general attitude towards social etiquette, the *Qur'an-e-Kareem* contains numerous injunctions pertaining to this aspect. From the injunction of greeting with *salaam* to the rights of the traveling companion and from the etiquette of seeking permission to enter another person's home to the prohibition of harboring evil thoughts for another person, the *Qur'an* contains complete guidance on every aspect. The *Ahadith* of Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) further elucidate these points and contain many more details. It is largely due to the abandonment of much of these etiquettes that many relationships and friendships break down and one time bosom friends become strangers to one another. Worse than this, ignoring the social etiquette taught by Islam when dealing with non-Muslims drives them away from Islam and creates the wrong impression about *Deen* in their minds. It is therefore necessary to acquaint ourselves with the aspect of social etiquette and practice upon them. A slight peek into this aspect in the light of the *Qur'an* and *Ahadith* will indicate the importance of social etiquette in *Deen*.

NEIGHBOURS

Once the condition of two women was mentioned to Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*). One of them was described as being a woman who engaged in much optional *salaah* and fasting, etc. However, she also caused difficulty and inconvenience to her neighbours. With regards to her Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) said: "She is in the fire." The other woman was described as one who did not do anything much beyond the basic compulsory actions, but she caused no difficulty to her neighbours and others. "She is in *Jannah*" declared Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*). One's neighbour may be a Muslim or even a disbeliever. However by virtue of him being a neighbour, he has a right over one. Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) is reported to have said:

"Jibraeel (*alaihis salaam*) stressed the rights of the neighbour to such an extent that I thought that he would soon make him an heir." Once Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) declared: "By Allah he is not a (perfect) Believer." After he repeated this for the third time, he was asked: "Who is he O Prophet of Allah?" "The one whose neighbour does not feel safe from his mischief," replied Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*).

ODOUR

Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) was extremely concerned that no person should cause any inconvenience to another in any way, even by some odour. Hence Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) declared that the one who has eaten raw onions or garlic should "remain away from us" (until the odour has been completely removed).

SOUND

It is reported that when Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) sneezed, he covered his nose and mouth with his hand or a cloth so that the sound will not cause any disturbance to others. Similarly, Miqdaad bin Aswad (*radhiallahu anhu*) narrates that once together with a group of people he was a guest at the house of Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*). After *Esha* they would retire early to bed while Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) would only come much later. Upon entering the room he would make *salaam*, but only so loudly that the one who is awake would hear it while the one who is asleep would not be disturbed. The extreme care of Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) in this regard is evident. However, do we give it the same amount of importance?

The social etiquette in *Deen* encompass many aspects. It includes the etiquette of sitting in a gathering; of visiting the sick and consoling the bereaved; of rendering service to others; the manner of eating, drinking and sleeping; the etiquette of making a request and of writing a letter, and many more. It is extremely important to learn these etiquette and practice upon them.

PAUSE FOR A MOMENT

The bottom line of all social etiquette is to avoid causing any inconvenience or difficulty to the next person, whether by word or deed. This means that we have to learn to pause for a moment before any action and reflect: "Will anybody be inconvenienced in any way?" If indeed someone will be inconvenienced, in the light of the practical example of Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) such an action must be totally avoided. It is only when social etiquette (CONT. ON PG. 2)

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CHATTERING IN THE MUSJID

There was a time when a Muslim was constantly in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. The environment in the home and even in the bazaars and market-places was such that at every turn one would be reminded of Allah Ta'ala. That situation has dramatically changed in the homes and bazaars. In most instances it is only worldly discussions that dominate these places. However, one would expect the mundane talk to end in the homes and bazaars. At the most it should come to a screeching halt at the steps of the Musjid. But alas, even that short while in the House of Allah Ta'ala is not spent exclusively in His remembrance. Many people spend much of this time in the Musjid in worldly discussions. Thus a person comes to earn tremendous rewards, but instead he returns with the curse of the angels.

CALAMITIES

It is reported in a *Hadith* that when a person engages in worldly talk in the Musjid an angel says to him: "Keep quiet O friend of Allah." If he continues in his worldly chatter, the angel says for the second time: "Keep quiet O enemy of Allah." If he still persists, the angel finally says to him: "Keep quiet, may the curse of Allah be upon you" (*Aadabul Masaajid* pg.6). It is also narrated that worldly talk in the Musjid destroys the good deeds just as fire consumes wood (*ibid*). In another *Hadith* a severe warning has been sounded, that when the *Ummah* will engage in fifteen actions, calamities will pour down upon them. One of the fifteen points mentioned is: "...and when voices will be raised in the Musjid." (*Mishkaat*)

Often the worldly conversations in the Musjid greatly disturbs other *Musallies*. The severity of this can be understood from the following incident. Once Hazrath Umar (*radhiallahu anhu*) was performing the *salaah* when a person came into the Musjid, placed down some things that he was carrying in front of the *saff* (row) and joined the *salaah*. When Hazrath Umar (*radhiallahu anhu*) completed the *salaah* he called for the person and punished him for having caused a disturbance in the *salaah* of the *Musallies* (*Aadabul Masaajid* pg.35).

From the above it is clearly understood that to disturb a person performing *salaah* in any manner whatsoever, whether it be by placing something down in front of him or talking aloud (*whispering aloud also has the same distracting effect*), or by doing anything that will distract his attention from his *salaah* must be totally avoided. Indeed, if any collective act is to take place in the Musjid such as a *nikah*, talk, lesson, etc., then at such a time those wishing to perform *salaah* should themselves move over to another part of the Musjid where they will not be disturbed.

NIKAH

Often the respect of the House of Allah Ta'ala is severely compromised immediately after a *nikah*. While people queue up to meet the groom, the entire Musjid suddenly erupts with raised voices. However, it is not even a *sunnah* to greet the groom after the *nikah*, whereas the prohibition of raising one's voice or engaging in worldly talk in the Musjid is stressed in the *Ahadith*. Thus after a *nikah* special note should be taken of this aspect.

The Musjid is the House of Allah Ta'ala. It should be treated with the utmost respect.

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(FROM PG. 1)

will be given its due importance and be practiced upon that true, sincere love and affection will develop among the *Ummah*. Besides, it is this very social etiquette as expounded in the Qur'an and *Hadith* that will draw others to Islam.

THE NAME OF ALLAH !!! ON SHOES

(NATAL WITNESS - FRIDAY 11 APRIL 1997)

The Council on American-Islamic Relations demanded on Wednesday that Nike Incorporated apologise for using a logo on athletic shoes that resembles the word "ALLAH" in the Arabic script. Nike said the logo is meant to look like flames for a line of shoes to be sold this year . . . The Islamic Councils executive director, Nihad Awad, insisted at a Washington news conference that the shoes have been seen at stores across the U.S., one pair in New Jersey as recently as Tuesday.

In 1995, Nike removed a billboard near the University of Southern California that depicted a basketball player with the headline "They Called Him Allah." The Council on American-Islamic Relations told Nike officials the billboard offended Muslims. Sapa-AP.

AL-HAADI COMMENT

Why is a basketball player headlined "ALLAH"? Why the name of Allah on shoes? Is it a deliberate attempt to sacrilege and desecrate the name of Allah Ta'ala? The name of Allah Ta'ala on a shoe will surely be trampled, kicked, become soiled with mud or even filth . . . Allah Forbid! The Qur'an has long ago declared: "...The enmity has become apparent from their mouths, and what their hearts conceal is worse" (3 : 118).

Often the hatred of the *Kuffaar* for the Believers becomes manifest from their words and actions. However, we should consider to what extent we support the very people who openly desecrate the name of Allah Ta'ala. If our parents were greatly insulted by any person, will we still support him and add to his coffers? Then what about the name of Allah Ta'ala ??? Would we give publicity to those who desecrate our name? Then what about the name of Allah Ta'ala ???

SHIA BELIEF OF QUR'AN



I have often heard that the Shias believe that the Qur'an we have is not the original Qur'an that was revealed. However, I have always found the Shia reciting the same Qur'an that we have. Their *Qaris* also melodiously recite the same Qur'an. Therefore, the stories about the Shia believing in some other Qur'an seems to be just malicious propaganda. Please comment.



Any allegation made against a person or group must be scrutinised in the light of its authenticity. If the allegation is established by hard facts, any sincere and honest Muslim will accept it. If the allegation is baseless, it will naturally be rejected.

As for the Shia belief on the Qur'an, let us examine it in the light of their own books. Among the Shia, *Usoolul Kaafi* enjoys the same status that *Sahih Bukhaari* has among *Sunni* Muslims. The following is found in *Usoolul Kaafi* with regards to the Qur'an:

QUR'AN BROUGHT OUT

A person came to Imaam Ja'far and recited the Qur'an, but his recitation was not in accordance to the recitation of the people. Imaam Jafar said to him: "Do not recite in this manner. Read according to the way that the people are reciting until Imaam Mahdi appears. When he comes, the Qur'an will be recited according to the original way and that Qur'an will be brought out which was written by Hazrath Ali" (V.2,p.632).

The following points are clear from this narration:

1. The Shia are instructed to presently continue reading the same Qur'an that others are reciting.
2. The present Qur'an is not the original Qur'an. The original Qur'an will be recited when Imaam Mahdi appears.
3. The original Qur'an is that which was written by Hazrath Ali. Presently nobody has it. It will be brought out when Imaam Mahdi appears.

Another narration in the same book states the following: Imaam Ja'far said: "Nobody can claim that he has compiled the entire Qur'an as it was revealed except a liar. Nobody has compiled it and preserved it as it was revealed except Ali bin Abi Taalib and the Imaams after him" (*Usoolul Kaafi - Kitaabul Hujjah*; Vol.1, Pg.228).

The above would have clarified many of your doubts. Indeed they recite the same Qur'an that we do — only because the "original" is not presently available. Thus their practice for the moment is that they recite the Qur'an that everybody else recites. Their BELIEF is that this Qur'an is, Allah forbid, changed and distorted.

DISTORTION

Another narration in *Usoolul Kaafi* throws more light on this BELIEF of distortion that the Shia subscribe to. With regards to the verse of the Qur'an: "**And we had given Aadam the command from before, but he forgot and we did not find him to be persistent**" (*Surah Taha*; 115), the Shia belief is that it was revealed differently. It is related from Imaam Ja'far Saadiq that it was revealed in the following manner: "And indeed we had given Aadam the command from before with regards to Muhammad, Ali, Fathima, Hasan, Hussein and the

Imaams from their progeny but he forgot" (*Usoolul Kaafi* - Vol 1, Pg. 416).

TAQIYYA

There are several other examples, but in the interest of brevity, we will suffice with the words of Abu Mansoor Ahmad Tabrasi who, among the Shia, is a very highly placed scholar of the sixth century. He writes: "If I make apparent everything that has been REMOVED from the Qur'an, or CHANGED and DISTORTED, it will be a very lengthy matter, which TAQIYYA (deception, concealing) is preventing its exposition" (*Al-Ihtijaaj lit Tabrasi*, Vol.1, Pg. 254).

The matter is therefore crystal clear. Despite their heretical BELIEF that the Qur'an is distorted, TAQIYYA prevents them from openly declaring this belief. Taqiyya - which is to hide ones' true beliefs and express something else - is the veil of holy hypocrisy that the Shia hide behind. Hence they will vigorously reject the allegation that they believe in some other Qur'an - but the rejection is really only lip-service.

KHOMEINI

Lastly an interesting point about Imaam Khomeini. The respect that is accorded to him by the Shia worldwide is well known. In his book *Al-Hukumatul Islamia*, Imaam Khomeini has spoken in glowing terms about Allama Noori Tabrasi, a Shia *Mujtahid* of his time. Khomeini has also drawn from Tabrasi's book *Mustadrakul Wasaail* on the subject of *Wilaayatul Faqih*. It is this very same Tabrasi who also wrote and published a book titled "*Faslul Khitaab fi Tahrifi Kitaabi Rabbil Arbaab*." In this book he has recorded more than one thousand "authentic Shia narrations" with regards to the Qur'an being distorted. Yes, Imaam Khomeini talks of him in high words and draws from his works, but not a word against him or against his book about the distortion of the Qur'an!!! If Khomeini did not support Tabrasi's view of the Qur'an, why the deafening silence on this issue???

If the present day Shia are sincere about their claim that they truly believe that the Qur'an we have is the original Qur'an they must do the following:

They must publish a clear rejection of the fallacious belief of the distortion of the Qur'an on the front page of *Teheran Times*. The rejection must include a *fatwa* denouncing Noori Tabrasi, Mullah Kashani and Ali bin Ibrahim Qimmi, scholars greatly revered by the Shia, who have stated their belief of the distortion of the Qur'an in their books. This *fatwa* must also be published in all major newspapers of the world. Then we will believe them - otherwise not.

The sterling advice of Faqihul Ummah Hazrath Mufti Mahmood Saheb (*Rahmatullahi Alaihi*) 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.

CRITICISM AND PRAISE

SUMMARY OF LETTER:

Respected Mufti Saheb

I am afflicted with various spiritual maladies. Among them is that if anyone praises me I become elated and my ego is boosted. On the other hand if somebody criticizes me or I learn that somebody has spoken ill of me, I become enraged. Kindly guide me in this matter.

SUMMARY OF REPLY:

Respected Brother

. . . Generally there are numerous spiritual ailments that affect the heart. If an effort is not made to “treat” and rectify them, they could become much worse.

If the praises of people causes your ego to be boosted, immediately reflect upon your shortcomings and think thus:

*“This person is not aware of my sins, hence he is praising me. If he becomes aware of my sins, instead of showering praises he will begin to hate and despise me. How greatly has Allah Ta’ala favoured me that He has concealed my faults. If Allah Ta’ala totally forgives my sins and saves me in future from all transgression, **this** will indeed be my tremendous good fortune (and something to be elated and thrilled about).”*

If someone criticizes you or speaks ill of you, you should ponder that such a person whose inception is from a drop of dirty fluid is indeed most impure. Why then should he become enraged upon being criticized? Furthermore, if somebody has spoken ill of you whereas in reality Allah Ta’ala has saved you from that aspect (that was spoken about), then the person who has spoken ill of you has erred. However this is much better (that people speak ill of you in error) than being praised for something which one is not worthy of!

(Maktoobaat, vol.1: pg.80)

The signs of Qiyamah that have been described in the Ahadith are becoming apparent as clear as daylight. It is important to know these signs and understand that the Final Hour is fast approaching us. Hereunder follow some of these Ahadith:

DEATH OF PIOUS

Hazrath Mirdas Aslami (R.A.) reports: “The pious will be taken away (from this world) one after another until finally the lowest of people will be left (who will be totally insignificant) like the left over dirt of the wheat or dates. Allah Ta’ala will not care in the least about them.” (*Sahih Bukhari*)

NO IMAAM

Hazrath Salamah (R.A.) reports that he heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) saying: “From the signs of Qiyamah is that people will urge one another to go ahead and lead the salaah, but they will not find an Imaam to lead the salaah for them. (*Abu Dawood*)

MORE WOMEN

Anas (R.A.) reports that he heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) saying: “Verily from among the signs of Qiyamah is that knowledge (of Deen) will be uplifted and ignorance will be widespread. Adultery will become common. The consumption of alcohol will increase. **Men will decrease and women will increase until there will be only one man to care for fifty women** (wives, sisters, daughters, aunts, etc.) (*Sahih Bukhari*).

? HAPPY OR SAD

Hazrath Abu Umamah (R.A.) narrates that a person asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam): “What is Imaan?” He replied: “If you feel happy upon doing a good act while any sin that you have committed saddens you (and you feel remorseful), then you are a true Believer.” (*Musnad Ahmad*)

This Hadith provides an excellent yardstick for us to judge the level of our Imaan. If we manage to perform some good act, do we really feel happy over it? Also, do we sincerely feel remorseful upon our misdeeds, or do we

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