



CHRISTMAS?

The word "Christmas" comes from *Cristes Maesse* which means *Mass of Christ*. According to the World Book Encyclopaedia "*Christmas is a Christian holiday that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. No one knows the exact date of Christ's birth, but most Christians observe Christmas on December 25 (Vol.3, Pg.528).*" Among the various customs described as part of the religious observances of Christmas is that Christians "exchange gifts" and "decorate their homes".

RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL

This little excerpt merely highlights what almost all Muslims are well aware of that Christmas is a Christian religious festival. To adopt any of the customary Christmas practices during December is tantamount to joining the Christians in their religious custom. No Muslim will light clay lamps outside his house and hang marigolds on his door during Diwali, nor does any Muslim hang a cross around his neck, since these aspects are distinctly associated with other religions. Likewise are the Christmas practices of "gift-giving" and banging decorations.

GIFTS

Muslims should hence refrain from giving customers or clients "Christmas gifts" and from decorating their shops. Nor should they have "Christmas specials" or a "Christmas Sale." Merely advertise what is on sale. Do not make it a "Christmas Sale."

Simply one should not have any association whatsoever with Christmas celebrations - not even by wishing anybody "merry Christmas."

OBJECT OF RAMADHAAN

On a sweltering hot day your throat has become parched. You are in the privacy of your home and the refreshingly cool water is within hand's reach. You desire to drink it, but you do not. Why? Simply because you are fasting and while fasting you cannot eat and drink. If somebody prompts you to nevertheless drink it and says: "Nobody is watching," you will immediately rebuke him with the words: "But Allah is watching!"

ALLAH TA'ALA IS WATCHING!

Subhanallah! Allah Ta'ala is watching. Allahu Akbar! Allah Ta'ala is All Hearing, All Knowing, He is Omnipresent. He sees and knows when we cheat while fasting, thus we resist all temptations of food, drink and lawful conjugal relations from dawn to dusk. We have learnt the lesson of Taqwa. We have learnt that lesson which the fasting was meant to teach us. Allah Ta'ala is watching! Yes, Allah Ta'ala is Watching! Every time there is an urge to eat or drink while fasting, the voice from within cries out: "Allah Ta'ala is watching!" Dozens of times daily for an entire month this reality is reaffirmed. Allah Ta'ala is watching. So deeply is it embedded in the heart that by the time Ramadhan is over, a person becomes conscious of Allah Ta'ala to such an extent that he is now guided by an inner force that propels him in the direction of righteousness and turns him away from sin.

TAQWA

The fasts of Ramadhan were prescribed for the purpose and object of attaining Taqwa. This is clearly declared in the Qur'an-al-Kareem. Taqwa simply is to obey the commands of Allah Ta'ala and refrain from all sin, The increased rewards for Ibaadah (worship) in Ramadhan and all the blessings of this great month should be considered as the bonus. The object is Taqwa. If one performs an abundance of Salaah, completes the recitation of the Qur'an thirty times and engages in many other acts of Ibaadah, but fails to give up sins - one has failed to achieve the object and purpose of Ramadhan. One has failed to firmly embed the reality of Taqwa in the heart, the Taqwa that cries out "Allah Is watching" whenever one contemplates committing any transgression.

TEMPTATION

The dictates of Taqwa are not restricted to abstaining from drinking, gambling, adultery, transacting in interest and other such vices. Indeed Taqwa demands that while abstaining from all the above vices one also observes Taqwa in one's business. When the temptation to cheat the customer beckons, or when one is tempted to buy stolen goods, or to indulge in fraud, at that time also the heart should cry out "Allah is watching" and it should restrain one from the sin.

RIGHTS

Similarly, Taqwa demands the fulfillment of the rights of the husband/wife, It also demands the joining of family ties. It demands respect for the elders and kindness for the young. Taqwa entails, among other aspects, being honest and clear in all monetary dealings and social interactions. Hence when there is a wedding or funeral, or at the time of distributing the inheritance of the

(Continued overleaf)

INSIDE...

Television free life.....	Page 2
Questions: sending daughter to university.....	Page 3
Evil Thoughts.....	Page 4

RAMADHAAN

CONT. FROM PG. 1

deceased, the same level of Allah consciousness must be displayed as was apparent when refraining from drinking the cold water while fasting.

PURDAH

Likewise, when the laws of purdah are violated, does the heart cry out "Allah is watching"? Or when one intends to watch something on TV., which will most definitely involve one in zina of the eyes and ears, does one hear the voice from within: "Allah is watching," as a result of which one refrains from that sin? The same pertains to the Shari' aspects of appearance and clothing. How often have we done things to appease and please even the enemies of Allah Ta'ala and Rasulallah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam)? How often have we abandoned the dictates of Taqwa in order to earn a few coppers? Now is the time to sincerely repent. It is the time to say "Allah is watching" and to do everything to please Him. It is a time to acquire Taqwa.

ABSTAIN FROM SIN

This then is the object of Ramadhaan. This will only be achieved if we conduct ourselves in this great month with Taqwa. Or else the object of Ramadhaan will be defeated. Hence Rasulallah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: "He who does not forsake lying and other futile actions, Allah Ta'ala has no need for him to give up his food and drink." Thus together with fasting, performing Salaah, reading the Qur'an, serving the cause of Deen, etc., one must totally abstain from every sin in the month of Ramadhaan and adorn oneself with Taqwa. Insha-Allah this will then carry one along for the rest of the eleven months to abstain from all sins.

May Allah Ta'ala enable us to make this Ramadhaan a month where we will truly attain Taqwa. Aameen,

TELEVISION FREE LIFE !!!

In Karachi the murder and mayhem have been going on for years. "The only social activities left in the city are those related to death," wrote a Karachi newsmagazine editorial some years ago. "Funerals, burial, mourning." When you leave the home in the morning, you don't know whether you'll return safely that evening. Wherever you look, you can see fear, uncertainty, depression. Yet, among all the fearing and grieving that accompanies the tragedy, the dish antennas on the rooftops have been flourishing. In the past at times of catastrophes people would turn to Allah, would stop going to the cinema houses, and would repent from sins, even though temporarily. Today, there is an ever-increasing appetite for the television fun. On days when a strike is called to protest Indian atrocities in Kashmir, the video stores in Karachi run out of videos of Indian movies.

In Saudi Arabia, one can find the imprints of Hollywood only a few yards away from the Haram, the most sacred of all sanctuaries of Islam. Video cassettes are easily available at stores. A hotel attendant, at a walking distance from the Haram al-Sharif in Makkah can be found busy watching English movies on the television in his office. At the Jeddah airport, the Umrah pilgrims can watch a European beauty contest courtesy of an Egyptian TV channel being broadcast to the airport television sets.

Throughout the world religious, moral and social values have been drastically undermined by this great "technological gift" of the century. And entire nations seem to be helplessly "enjoying" the invasion. When people are doing nothing, they watch television. When they are doing something else, they still have television in the background- The device has contributed to the addition of a new space in the architecture of the private home: the TV lounge. It is a space where perfect strangers come to pedal nudity, immorality, and hedonism. This is the space, which increasingly controls the entire house.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

Is there anything that us mortals can do about television? The answer is yes. Things can be done at individual, as well as collective levels. At the individual level, try using the ON/OFF switch. It takes some effort and will power, but the device can be turned off. The key is to involve the entire family. Those nervous about the idea may rest assured that there is no known disease linked to lack of exposure to TV! Also those who have tried it know that it becomes easier with time. Community Organizations can help by educating the people about the perils of watching TV, countering the social pressures, and providing healthy alternatives.

The best chance of kicking the television habit comes in Ramadan every year. It is the time of year when every Muslim who has any trace of Imaan in his or her heart, is naturally inclined toward doing good and staying away from evil. And it should be like that. Did not Rasulallah Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam curse the Muslim who finds Ramadan but does not use it to seek forgiveness for his previous sins.? If we cannot leave sins or vain activities during Ramadan, when can we? We not only have the strongest moral and religious reasons to do so, it is also easy because the regular activities of Ramadan leave little time to be wasted in front of the television.

Muslim organizations and communities will do a great service by launching a campaign to declare Ramadan as the TV free month (as a step towards making our life a T. V. free life). Urge all the Muslims in your community to turn it off for at least one month, And who knows, after one month many may decide to stay away from it because of the personal insights they got through the experience.

Of course, if you are convinced, do not wait until Ramadan. Start today. (Courtesy: "Balaghzine" - Karachi)

THE FENCE

There was a little boy with a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, to hammer a nail in the back fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Then it gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

SCAR

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say 'I'm sorry', the wound is still there. A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one."

(Author unknown)

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q My daughter is in matric. Next year she intends joining the medical school and hopes to finally qualify as a doctor. Some of my friends are strongly advising me not to allow her to go university. Others are encouraging me to send her. They claim that it is important that we have Muslim women doctors as well to serve the community. Also they claim that a girl needs to have a career so that if Allah forbid, she is divorced or widowed, she would be able to support herself I require some urgent advice in this regard. What should I do?

A This is an important question which should be understood in its correct perspective. Therefore the following important points should first be firmly embedded in the heart and mind.

Our existence in this world is for a sublime purpose. It is to recognise our Creator and serve Him. In this short journey through this world we have to establish the Deen of Allah Ta'ala in our lives and on the entire earth. This is clearly explained in various aayats of the Qur'an and in the Ahadith (traditions) of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). Thus our foremost duty is towards our Creator and Sustainer. We have to tread every step in obedience to His commands.

Another aspect to re-affirm in our hearts and minds is that our sustenance is provided by Allah Ta'ala alone. While we have been ordered to adopt some permissible means of livelihood, it is most certainly not our efforts or intelligence that earns our daily bread. Sustenance comes only from Allah Ta'ala. For those who are obedient to Him, Allah Ta'ala provides sustenance to them with ease. Allah Ta'ala declares in the Qur'an-alKareem: "And whosoever fears Allah, He will make a way out (from problems and difficulties) for him and will grant him sustenance from sources that he cannot conceive. "

Having understood the above, now consider the question of sending your daughter to university. There are many aspects to this question, all of which cannot be dealt with here. We will only deal with this question from one angle which should be sufficient for a person who values the spark of Imaan, and who considers the protection of the Imaan, modesty and chastity of his daughter as vitally important and necessary.

HUNGRY?

Any person who has the least idea of what goes on at university campuses will agree that to a great extent they have become dens of vice. Many have lost their Imaan at these places. A few Ramadhan's ago several Muslim boys and girls were openly eating at a local campus during the day. When reprimanded that it was Ramadhan, their answer was: "What will Allah get if we stay hungry!" Which true Muslim can ever utter such a statement which could even cast one out of the pale of Islam. Yet this attitude was unheard of prior to their going to university.

CONTRACEPTIVES

You should also talk to those who are on campus and are aware of what goes on. Ask them about the number of unmarried Muslim girls who talk openly about what contraceptives they are using. Ask them about how many Muslim boys and girls on campus are NOT involved in illicit love affairs and they will give you a dismal percentage, Ask them about drug abuse on campus and they will paint a dreadful picture. This is just the tip of the iceberg. This is the kind of environment that you want to send your daughter into

PARALYSED

Supposing you were told to send your daughter to study because there is a need for Muslim women doctors. However, by the time she qualifies she will be either physically paralysed or totally blind or crippled, or you may receive her corpse, will you still be prepared to send her? No sane person will be prepared to do so, despite the fact that the physical disability will last at the most until death (which is in any case inevitable). What then about the reality that your daughter could qualify as a spiritually dead person, or one whose Imaan and modesty is paralysed or badly disfigured.

As stated earlier, this is just one aspect which should be sufficient for a person who values the spark of Imaan and who cares for the chastity and modesty of his daughter.

HAJEE BHAI (R.A.)

On the 14 Jumadus Thaani 1419 / 5 October 1998 Hajee Bhai Padia Saheb (R.A.) left this temporary abode and passed on to meet his Creator. *Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raji'oon.* May Allah Ta'ala fill his qabr with noor and elevate his stages in the Hereafter. Aameen.

"Hajee Bhai," as he was commonly known, was a personality whose untiring efforts for the upliftment of Deen endeared him to thousands of people worldwide. He dedicated his entire life for the effort of Da'wat and Tableegh.

The wonderful fruits of his sacrifices are glaring for one and all to witness in this world. Insha Allah, the thawaabe jaariya (perpetual rewards) will continuously accrue to him by means of all those who rectified their lives as a result of his efforts.

FOUNDER

Hajee Bhai was the initial founder of Madrasah Taaleemuddeen. He was also instrumental in the establishing of many other Maktabas and Madrasahs in this country and abroad. His life shines forth as an example to be emulated in the selfless sacrifice for the sake of Deen.

May Allah Ta'ala elevate his stages in the Hereafter and grant sabr to his family and all those who were associated to him Aameen

From the pen of ...



FAQIHUL UMMAH

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.

EVIL THOUGHTS

Respected Mufti Saheb

As Salaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh

From the time I have taken bay'at on your hands until the present time, I do not yet find any significant change in my condition. I make all attempts to refrain from the forbidden things but due to my human weakness I still commit such actions. For instance my gaze sometimes falls on a strange woman as a result of which evil thoughts continue to pester me, though I do not act upon the dictates of those thoughts. I also try to create the fear of Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) in my heart and attempt to perform my salaah with khushoo' and khudoo' (humility and devotion) but I have not been successful in this either. Kindly advise me with regard to the above. One more malady which plagues me is anger. I simply cannot tolerate the faults of others Please guide me in this matter.

SUMMARY OF REPLY:

Respected Brother

As Salaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh

The one who treads the path of righteousness and strives to attain the same, Allah Ta'ala does not allow the efforts of such a person to go in vain even though he may not see the fruits of his efforts immediately. Allah Ta'ala declares: "Verily Allah does not allow the efforts of those who do good to go in vain" (Surah Tawba)- Evil thoughts creeping into the mind is something beyond one's control. Do not pay any attention to them (i.e. ignore such thoughts and then turn your attention to something else). This is similar to the case of a person who is going to the Musjid. While on his way he hears the braying of a donkey. This is something beyond his control. However an intelligent person will pay no attention to the braying of the donkey. He will continue on his way- Thus there is no accountability for such thoughts that come into the heart involuntarily (and they are ignored), Nevertheless may Allah Ta'ala grant you salvation from this as well.

When anger overcomes you, immediately drink cold water. If you are standing, sit down, If you are sitting, recline. Busy yourself with some other work. This is the immediate treatment. The long term treatment is to sit in solitude and ponder over the following: The one whom I become angered with, I did not create him nor did I grant him his eyes nose, hands, legs and all his other limbs. I did not grant him his health or his sustenance. Yet upon a trivial worldly matter I become angry with him.. If Allah Ta'ala, the Being who created me and granted me everything had to become angry with me, what would be my condition?

Was Salaam

(Maktoobaat)