

LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY

You have been given an opportunity of a lifetime. A business operates twenty four hours a day. The owner wishes to take a holiday and has requested you to run the business for one month. The arrangement is that for every second that you will personally man the business, you will get paid twenty rands. If you have to leave the business for any necessity, the person who relieves you will get the money for the duration of time that you are out! You have obviously grabbed the opportunity with open arms.

OVER-TIME

First let the above scenario settle in the mind. Now imagine that the month of running the business has just commenced. A close friend phones to invite you to a lavish function. "You must come," he urges. Your almost spontaneous reply would perhaps be: "I am sorry but I am very busy and will not be able to attend." The first weekend comes. Your children want to "go out for a drive." "Not today. I am very busy," says their father. The children's mother also wholeheartedly agrees. After all she is also dreaming every night about what she will do with the twenty rands per second that her husband is earning. Hence she does not ask to be taken anywhere. How can she even think of it. Twenty rands per second — and just for one month only! And you ... well obviously you are working beyond the limits of overtime. No time to eat in peace. Only the minimal amount of sleep. No shopping. No "drives." No time to sit around with friends over coffee. And entertainment? Whatever is that? The very word sounds unfamiliar. All this due to the once in a lifetime opportunity of earning twenty rands per second for one month.

ANSWER ON DAY OF JUDGEMENT

Yet, if the person who slogged for the entire month to earn twenty rands per second ... passes away on the thirtieth day, the wealth he earned will be of no use to him. He cannot take it along to his grave. If he does live to use it, the tax-man will be there to first take his share. He will have to worry about how to protect his wealth. Besides this, he will have to answer on the Day of Judgement about how he earned it and where he spent it. Generally, despite the abovementioned problems we will grab the opportunity of running the business for one month.

PETTY CASH

Allah Ta'ala is also granting us a lifetime's opportunity. The month of *Ramadhaan* with its unlimited blessings is here. One month in earnings at the rate of twenty rands per second cannot even be called petty cash in comparison to the rewards that Allah Ta'ala grants and the blessings and mercy that He showers in the month of *Ramadhaan*. Every

Ramadhaan must be treated as a once in a lifetime opportunity since we have no idea whether we will live till the next *Ramadhaan*.

What are the rewards of good deeds in the month of *Ramadhaan*? The reward of every *Fardh* (compulsory) act is multiplied seventy times while every *Nafl* (optional) act earns the reward of one *Fardh* out of *Ramadhaan*. It is important to understand the latter aspect in its proper perspective. *Tahajjud* (*Nafl* *Salaah* in the last third of the night) is an extremely great *ibaadah*. Great virtues have been narrated for this *Salaah*. However, a lifetime of *tahajjud* cannot equal one *Fardh* of *Fajr Salaah*! Yet in the month of *Ramadhaan* Allah Ta'ala grants us the reward of a *Fardh* action for every *Nafl* performed.

ENTERTAINMENT?

Thus, can we afford to waste this time? Can we still have time for "drives?" Is it possible for a person who values *Ramadhaan* in a similar manner that he values twenty rands a second, to spend hours "eating out" at after *taraweeh* feasts, or have time for other idle pursuits? Can we afford to spend valuable time glued to the airwaves listening to the "opinions" and "views" of all and sundry in *Deeni* matters whereas that time could have been used to at least recite *Durood Shareef*? And entertainment? Have we heard that word before??? Thus the last thing that any Muslim who values *Ramadhaan* will bother about is who somewhere in the world is whacking a little red ball all over a field or who is kicking a ball between two posts!!!

SHORTEST TARAWEEH

Thus it also does not behove of people who value *Ramadhaan* to try to "save time" from the performance of *ibaadah*. Many people "work out" the shortest *taraweeh* — where they will be able to leave in the shortest possible time and head for the food outlets where ample time will be whiled away. Think of the twenty rands per second. We would break the records for over-time work. Thus in *Ramadhaan* we should break the record for the amount of time spent in *Salaah, tilaawat* (recitation of the *Qur'an Shareef, zikr, dua, etc.* *Ramadhaan* is not a month to "save" time from the performance of these acts. Rather it is a month to engage every moment possible in these acts. Apart from *Salaah, tilaawat, etc.*, Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has himself stressed

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LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY

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upon us to excessively engage in some practices. Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is reported to have said: **“And in this month you should endeavour to perform four things in great number, two of which shall be to please your Rabb, while the other two shall be those without which you cannot make do. Those which shall be to please your Rabb are that you should in great abundance recite the “Kalima Tayyiba” (Laa ilaaha il’allah) and make much istighfaar (beg Allah’s forgiveness with Astaghfirullah). And as for those two without which you cannot make do, you should beg Allah for entry into paradise and seek refuge with him from the fire of Jahannam.”**

ONE MONTH

While one should engage to the maximum in the above good deeds, the purpose of *Ramadhaan* must be kept foremost in mind, which is to acquire *Taqwa* (Allah-awareness and piety). Thus together with the maximum amount of righteous actions one must totally refrain from all sins. One month of strictly conducting oneself in this manner will *Insha-Allah* have the effect of enabling one to live the next eleven months in a similar manner — in the complete obedience of Allah Ta’ala.

May Allah Ta’ala enable us to appreciate and value the month of *Ramadhaan* — more than what we value twenty rands per second.

RECITATION OF QUR’AN

In the month of *Ramadhaan*, the recitation of the Qur’an Shareef has a very special position. Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) would also revise the entire Qur’an with *Jibra’eel (A.S.)* in the month of *Ramadhaan*. Thus one should try to recite the entire Qur’an as many times as possible during this *mubaarak* month.

Tilaawat (recitation) of the Qur’an Shareef is a great *Ibaadah* in itself. Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has greatly exhorted us to recite the Qur’an Shareef. Numerous virtues have been promised for this *ibaadah*. Hazrat Aishah (R.A.) says that Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: **“Recitation of the Qur’an in Salaah is more rewarding than the recitation outside Salaah. Recitation outside Salaah is preferable to tasbeeh and takbir (repeating the words of praise for Allah). Tasbeeh is superior to sadaqah, sadaqah to fasting and fasting is protection against the fire”** (*Bayhaqi*).

In another narration it is reported that Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: **“Reciting the Qur’an from memory carries one thousand degrees of thawaab while reading Qur’an from the book increases it upto two thousand degrees.”**

THE REVEALED WORD

It must nevertheless be clearly understood that the reward for recitation will only be received for reciting the *Qur’an Shareef* — the original revealed word in the Arabic language. These rewards cannot be attained by reading a translation. Reciting the *Qur’an Shareef* and understanding its meaning from authentic commentaries are two distinct aspects. The rewards of *tilaawat* will be attained only by reciting the actual words that were revealed — even if one does not understand Arabic. To believe that there is no benefit in reciting the Qur’an Shareef if one does not understand Arabic is indeed a severe deprivation.

PERPETUAL INVESTMENT

An investment that only grows — till eternity! Every person who has a rand to spare would want to invest in such an investment. Indeed, anyone who has even half a cent to spare has the opportunity to invest in the *Aakhirah* (Hereafter). No loss. Only profit and growth. The only condition is sincerity.

Every cent given in charity is invested in the *Aakhirah*. Such money is in reality saved. What is not invested in the *Aakhirah* is either spent or left behind for others.

While the immense rewards for spending in the path of Allah is attained for even optional charity, the greatest rewards are for fulfilling the *Fardh* (compulsory) duties. Thus the greatest rewards would be for discharging one’s *zakaat* correctly together with the true spirit of fulfilling this great *ibaadah*. In this regard the following aspects should be borne in mind:

* *Zakaat* must be given wholeheartedly. It should not be regarded as a burden.

* If giving *zakaat* in kind (stock, etc.) at least something of average quality should be given. It is against the spirit of discharging *zakaat* to give something which cannot sell or is of inferior quality.

* *Zakaat* must be discharged on the basis of proper calculation. Enquire from the *Ulama* to ensure you have not underpaid.

* *Zakaat* should be given to those who are eligible to receive it, otherwise the obligation will not be fulfilled.

* *Zakaat* is payable upon the expiry of one lunar year from the time one became the owner of *nisaab* (the minimum amount of wealth upon which *zakaat* is compulsory).

By discharging one’s *zakaat* with care and with the true spirit of *zakaat*, one will receive the immense rewards in the Hereafter and one’s wealth will be protected in this world.

IS MUSIC HARAAM

Q *Is music Haraam? Some people are propagating the view that it is not Haraam. Many Islamic songs are sung with the playing of the duff. Is it permissible to listen to them? Also, some Islamic songs are recorded with the zikr of "Allah" played in the background. It sounds very much like drums are being played. However, it is a group of people who are saying "Allah" in unison. Is there any problem in listening to this?*

A Hazrath Anas (R.A.) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: **"There will certainly be people from my Ummah who will attempt to legalize fornication, the wearing of silk (for males), the consuming of wine and the use of musical instruments"** (Al-Jaamius Sagheer - Pg. 139). Indeed this prophesy of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is glaring before us. Despite the clear prohibition of the use of musical instruments, great efforts are being made to "legalize" their use. While some people wish to declare all music permissible, others are opening the door slowly by declaring that only the use of the "duff" is permissible. Thus it is necessary to examine the reality of these claims in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In Surah Luqman Allah Ta'ala declares:

"And among the people are those who purchase idle talk in order to mislead others from the path of Allah in ignorance."

Hazrath Abdullah bin Masood (R.A.) states emphatically that this verse was revealed regarding singing and musical instruments. The same has been reported from Hazrath Abdullah bin Abbas (R.A.) and Hazrath Jaabir (R.A.) (Tafseer Qurtubi). Thus when these illustrious students of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), who witnessed the revelation of the aayaat (verses) of the Qur'an are clear that this verse prohibits music and musical instruments, the "view" of any twentieth century "scholar" to the contrary holds no weight.

BLOCK OUT SOUND

Various Ahadith also clearly prohibit music and the use of musical instruments. Hazrath Abdullah bin Umar (R.A.) reports that once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) heard the sound of the flute of a shepherd. He immediately placed his fingers into his ears (to block out the sound) (Musnad Ahmad). How tragic it is that our beloved Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) blocks his ears to the sound of music but his Ummah opens their ears wide to the same sounds. In another narration Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: **"Verily Allah Ta'ala has sent me as a guidance and as a mercy to the Believers and He has commanded me to destroy musical instruments"** (Musnad Ahmad).

DUFF

As for the duff, it is also a musical instrument and therefore it will primarily be included in the above prohibition. However, some concession was given for the use of the duff on the occasion of a Nikah. The Sahaaba (R.A.), who were the direct students of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) understood the commands of the Qur'an and Hadith far better than we can ever hope to understand. It is reported regarding Hazrath Umar (R.A.) that if he heard the sound of a duff he would immediately send somebody to investigate. If it was found to be the occasion of a Walima, he would not do anything. Otherwise he

would go for his whip (i.e. he would forcefully stop the playing of the duff) (Fathul Qadeer - Vol. 6, Pg. 389).

EXTRACTING LAWS

Nevertheless, to extract the laws of Shariah directly from the Qur'an and Sunnah is possible only for one who is a mujtahid [in the calibre of the four great Imaams viz. Imaam Abu Hanifa (R.A.), Imaam Malik (R.A.), Imaam Shaafi (R.A.) and Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal (R.A.)]. Together with an expert in-depth knowledge of the Qur'an and hundreds of thousands of Ahadith, they had also mastered all the numerous sciences pertaining to the Qur'an and Sunnah.

According to the Zaahirur Riwayah (the most authentic narrations) of the Hanafi school of thought, the use of the duff is completely disallowed. Latter day scholars who have attributed a restricted permissibility to the Hanafi school have erred. This complete disallowal is based on the Juristic principle of "saddan lil baab" i.e. to restrict an act that would invariably lead to impermissible actions.

The Shafi'ee Ulama have permitted the use of the duff only on the occasion of a walima subject to several conditions. Allamah Ibn Hajar Makki, Shafi'ee has detailed the various conditions, among which is that the duff should not be beaten in a manner that produces a musical sound, but rather just a simple beating which does not produce any tune or melody. Only the palms may be used to beat the duff and not the fingers. It should also be beaten only for a short while. Having stated this he says that **"in our era it is makrooh to beat the duff"** (since people cannot fulfil the stringent conditions).

Therefore in the light of the above one should not listen to such nazams which are accompanied by the playing of the duff.

BACKGROUND ZIKR

As for the "background zikr," this should be considered very carefully. What is the purpose of having people say "Allah" in unison in the background? Is it for the purpose of zikr itself? If yes, then why in the background? If the purpose is to create a background effect to make the nazam more entertaining, in the manner that background music is used, this is an extremely dangerous thing. It is abuse of the name of Allah Ta'ala. The name of Allah Ta'ala is not for the purpose of entertainment. If it has been deliberately made to resemble the beating of drums, it will be even more serious and even dangerous for one's Imaan. One should totally refrain from listening to such nazams.

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From the pen of ...

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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.

REMEDY FOR MALICE

SUMMARY OF LETTER:

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Mufti Saheb

As Salaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh

Whenever I have any problem with any person, malice for that person comes into the heart. Please give me some remedy to cleanse my heart of this disease.

SUMMARY OF REPLY:

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Brother

As Salaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said to Hazrath Anas (R.A.): **"O my son, if you can keep your heart free from malice then certainly do so."** Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) then said: **"O my son, verily that (keeping the heart free from malice) is from my Sunnah. Whoever loves my Sunnah has loved me and whoever loves me will be with me in Jannah."**

Whoever we will act upon the above instruction of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) will become worthy of the glad-tiding of Jannah. Hence ponder repeatedly upon this glad-tiding. *Insha-Allah* the malice will be washed away from your heart. May Allah Ta'ala grant you and I the ability to do so. *Aameen*

SEHRI

Partaking of *sehri* is a sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and a means of attaining great *barakah* and rewards. Hazrath Anas (R.A.) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: **"Partake of sehri for verily in sehri is much barakah (blessings)"** (Sahih Bukhari). In another narration Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stressed the partaking of sehri by proclaiming: **"Sehri is entirely barakah. Hence do not omit it even if you just take a sip of water, for verily Allah Ta'ala and His angels send blessings upon those who partake of sehri"** (Targheeb).

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