



ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

According to scientists, environmental pollution is among the most serious problems facing humanity today. This is especially significant since the adverse effect of environmental pollution affects people directly, yet they often do not even realize it. For example, people breathe air that is heavily polluted with nitrogen dioxide given off by cars, planes and factories which causes severe respiratory problems. Yet while breathing it, they do not realize what harm they have caused to themselves. If the exposure to the pollution was minimal, over time the immune system will clear the body of the harmful effects of the pollution. However, if the exposure is excessive, it may overpower the immune system or even kill it, eventually resulting in one's death.

SPIRITUAL POLLUTION

Just as pollution of the physical environment — air, water, soil, etc. — causes severe harm to one's physical self, pollution of the social or spiritual environment with anti-*Imaan* elements is bound to harm one's *Imaan*. If the exposure to such environments is excessive, it could paralyse one's *Imaan* or even destroy it — Allah I forbid. It is thus vitally important that one remains in an environment that is not polluted by anti-*Imaan* elements. The environment in terms of this discussion is made up by *what* is in one's surroundings and *who* is there. For instance, if one is in a *Musjid* and among pious people, the environment is clean. On the contrary if one is in a casino, rave club or immoral party, etc., and among people who are devoid of *Deen*, the environment is totally polluted.

The importance of being in the correct environment is clearly highlighted in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. In *surah Bani Israa'el* Allah I declares: "**Say (O Nabi r) everyone acts according to his own way.**" The commentators have explained this to mean that a person acts according to what has become his second nature due to the circumstances and due to the habits and customs of those he lives with (which is not always the correct way). From this verse *Imaam* Abu Bakr Al-Jassas (*R.A*) has highlighted the importance of refraining from evil surroundings and bad company since one's surroundings and company will dictate what one does.

SWEET SCENT

In a beautiful parable *Rasulullah* r has emphasised the

effects of one's surroundings and company. Allah's messenger r declares: "*The example of a good companion and an evil companion is similar to that of a musk-seller and a blacksmith. The musk-seller will either give you some musk, or you may buy some from him or (if he does not give you nor do you buy) you will at least get the sweet scent of musk (by being in his presence). As for the blacksmith, he will either burn your clothes (if a spark flies out of his fire when he blows into it to kindle it) or at the least you will smell the bad odours*" (*Mishkaat*). The lesson is that one cannot escape the effects of one's company and surroundings, whether positive or negative.

SABR AND SACRIFICE

Taking pains to remain in a pollution free environment can result in one's forgiveness. In a well-known narration it is reported that a person of the previous nations committed one hundred murders. He decided to repent and went to some learned people for advice. They informed him that there was nothing that can deprive him from forgiveness if he repents sincerely. However, he was told to leave the place where he lived since it was a place of evil people and migrate to another town where the people were pious. He immediately left for the other town but passed away en-route. Since he was found to be closer to the intended place of pious people, he was forgiven (*Mishkaat*). It was surely a major sacrifice for this person to leave his place and migrate elsewhere. Yet the *sabr* (patience) he undertook in distancing himself from the environment polluted by vice earned him the forgiveness of *Allah Ta'ala*. Thus at times sacrifices of convenience, pleasure and even wealth may become necessary to stay away from sinful surroundings.

TSUNAMI

The danger and harm of being in evil surroundings, despite not having any intention of engaging in evil or sin, is clearly understood from another narration. *Rasulullah* r is reported to have said: "*An army (prior to Qiyamah) will march towards the Ka'bah to destroy it. When they reach an open field, every one of them will be swallowed into the ground.*" "*Why will everyone be swallowed in to the earth whereas some among them were merely traders or were there*"

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for some other purpose (i.e. Their intention for being among them was not to march against the Ka`bah)?” enquired the *Sahabah* t.*Rasulullah* r replied: “**They will all be swallowed in to the earth. Thereafter on the day of judgment they will be resurrected according to their intentions.**” The message is clear. When a calamity befalls the evildoers, those in the surroundings will also be washed away by the tsunami of the wrath of *Allah* I. It is therefore obvious that one must totally refrain from places where vices are openly perpetrated.

HOLIDAY RESORTS

Among the common surroundings which are heavily polluted with vice are the main beachfront areas, holiday resorts and other such places, especially during the holiday seasons. People dressed in a few scraps of cloth, who can only be described as naked, pack such places. Drunken hoards will be roam about all over the place. Illicit and immoral activities are the norm. “Beach events” which are gatherings of pure *fitna* add to the severe pollution. It would be a miracle if one can leave from such places with one’s *Imaan* unaffected.

WORST PLACE

Another generally very polluted environment is the market place. While this applies to any business area, the intensity of the pollution in modern-day shopping malls is far greater. The pollution of these places is evident from the *Hadith* of *Rasulullah* r wherein he declared: “**The most beloved of all places on the earth to Allah I are the Masaajid and the most detested of all places on the earth to Allah I are the bazaars**” (*Mishkaat*).

The thought will naturally come to mind that one has to go to the shopping centres for one’s necessities. How can this be reconciled with the *Hadith* above? The answer can be easily understood from the following example. Supposing there are some toxic fumes in the atmosphere or thick smog all around town. However, one needs to urgently buy bread for one’s family. What will one do? Any sane person will take every precaution before venturing out. Depending on the severity of the situation, he will perhaps even wear a mask or at least hold a handkerchief over his nose and mouth. The route taken will be the shortest. The necessities will be bought as quickly as possible. Even if it is at a higher price around the corner compared to the shopping mall, one will most likely opt to pay little more rather than remain exposed to the thick smog for a longer time. Upon returning he will wash his eyes and face to rid himself from the effects of the smog. A sane person will certainly not go “bargain hunting” while breathing toxic fumes. He will also not walk about casually “just

to look around.”

DISINFECT

Nowadays the bazaars are choking with the toxic fumes of nudity, immoral and illicit activity and a host of other vices. One who has to venture into the bazaars either to conduct his business or buy his necessities will take every possible precaution. He will perhaps even perform two *rakaats* of *nafil* *Salaah* and beg *Allah* I to protect him from the toxic fumes. The bare minimum will be that he will earnestly make *dua* in his heart and seek refuge with *Allah* I. While going about completing the task as quickly as possible, his tongue and heart will be engaged in the *zikr* of *Allah* I. His eyes will be fixed to the ground lest any toxic particles affect his sight and heart. As soon as the work is done, he will rush out, earnestly engaged in *istighfaar* (seeking *Allah* I forgiveness) and thereby disinfect himself from the effects of the exposure. Thus one will obviously not venture into bazaars, fairs, fetes and the like to be “entertained” or “hunt for bargains”. The pollution of the intermingling of men and women and other vices will surely harm one’s *Imaan*.

EATING OUT

Another polluted environment is often found at many popular eating-out venues. For one little ice-cream or meal, one is exposed to the harmful radiation of an environment that can cause cancer to one’s *Imaan*. Will one expose one’s physical self to cancer causing radiation from a nuclear fallout? The radiation of a sinful environment is far worse.

The above are just some examples that can be extended to many other situations. Of vital importance is to become very health conscious — mainly of one’s *Imaani* health. The door of repentance in the court of *Allah* I is open. It is time to repent and remain in pollution free environments all the time. May *Allah* I enable us to do so. *Aameen*.

DUAS ACCEPTED

Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has mentioned the following occasions when one’s *duas* are readily accepted:

- ◆ The one who performs *Fardh Salaah* and then sincerely makes *dua* (*Tabrani*)
- ◆ *Dua* upon the completion of the *Qur’an* (*Tabrani*)
- ◆ *Dua* between the *Azaan* and *Iqamah* (*Tirmizi*)
- ◆ *Dua* for one’s *Muslim* brother in his absence (*Baihaqi*)
- ◆ *Dua* at the last portion of the night, at the time of *Tahajjud* (*Muslim*)
- ◆ When it begins to rain (*Tabrani*)
- ◆ When setting eyes on the *Ka’bah Shareef*

[*Ma’ariful Hadith* — Vol. 3, Pg. 126]

QUESTIONS

SALAAH IN TIGHT-FITTING CLOTHES

Q When performing *salaah*, I wear a waist-length *burkha* over my top. My sister says that my *salaah* is not valid because I wear somewhat narrow-cut pants, which cling to the thighs and back when I go into *sajdah*. Is this correct?

A Performing *salaah* in tight-fitting garments is a crucial issue which pertains to both men and women. It is therefore appropriate that it be answered in some detail.

Firstly, it should be understood well that the covering of the *satr* is compulsory whether in *salaah* or out of *salaah*. The *satr* of a male is from the navel upto and including the knees. The *satr* of the female for *salaah* is her entire body except the face, palms and feet. While this is the *satr* for *salaah*, in the presence *non-mahrams* (males whom one can marry) the face should also be covered.

TWO REQUIREMENTS

Having understood that it is obligatory to cover the *satr*, the very important aspect to consider is what is meant by “cover”? “Covering” has two requirements: One is that the fabric must not be so thin that any part of the *satr* is visible underneath it. The second requirement is that the garment must be so loose that the shape of any part of the *satr* is not discernible. This applies for all times — in *salaah* or out of it. Thus for instance if a scarf is of such transparent material that the hair beneath it is visible, wearing such a scarf will not fulfil the obligation of “covering.” Similarly if the pants is not loose enough and the shape of the thigh or back is discernible, the above obligation is not fulfilled.

CLOTHED YET NAKED

Wearing such garments that do not cover the *satr* in the abovementioned manner is shameless and sinful. *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* is reported to have said: “Among the people of the fire will be women who will be “clothed yet naked” ... they will not enter *Jannah* nor will they smell its fragrance” (*Sahih Muslim*). Wearing such garments which include one in the category of “clothed yet naked” must not be worn at any time, even in the privacy of one’s home. *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* is reported to have said: “Beware of nakedness for verily with you are angels who do not separate from you except when one relieves himself or engages in conjugal relations. Therefore be modest with them (the angels) and honour them” (*Tirmizi*).

Furthermore, *Salaah* performed in such garments is not valid. If the shape of the *satr* cannot be distinguished while one is in the standing position but becomes discernible when in *ruku* or *sajdah* for the duration of three *tasbeehs*, the *salaah* will be null and void.

MALE’S PANTS

Males should also take special note of this point. While some wear tight-fitting pants, many others wear pants which though not tight-fitting, become snug when in *sajdah* and reveal the shape of the *satr*. Thus the *salaah* is nullified.

UNIMAGINABLE

It should have been unimaginable that a *Muslim* woman would also need to be told to take note of this aspect. Yet the tragic reality is that even many of those who are regarded as *purdah* conscious need to be told that wearing such garments is devoid of *hayaa* (shame) and also nullifies the *salaah*.

The simple yardstick for a true *Muslim* woman in choosing clothes is to seriously ask herself the following question: If I had to appear dressed in these garments in front of *Hazrat Fathima (R.A.)*, *Hazrat Aisha (R.A.)* or any of the *Sahaabiyaat*, would they be proud of me or will they be ashamed of me??? However, before asking oneself this question, one should first acquaint oneself with the level of *hayaa* that they possessed!

SALAAH

Hi ... then ... Bye!!! This is the meaningless greeting of the West. One wonders what really does it mean? Is he asking you whether you are *on a high*? Whatever it may mean, no greeting is as comprehensive and perfect as the greeting which is derived from one of the attributes of *Allah Ta’ala*, which is the greeting of the angels and will be the greeting of the Believers in *Jannah* — the beautiful greeting of *As-Salaamu Alaikum*.

SECURITY

As-Salaamu Alaikum means “Peace be upon you.” It is a prayer of peace, which encompasses every good for the one being greeted. It is also a declaration of safety and security towards the person being greeted, as if to say that the one being greeted is being told that his life, family and property are all safe from yourself. Thus you will not harm him, his family or property in any way.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

The perfect greeting of *Muslims*, besides being a wonderful *dua* for the person being greeted, also generates love between them. *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* is reported to have said: “You will not enter *Jannah* until you Believe, and you cannot be (true) Believers until you love one another (i.e. you harbour no enmity and malice for others). Should I not show you something which, if you adopt, you will love one another? Make *salaam* common among you” (*Sahih Muslim*). It is obvious that this benefit will be realized if the *salaam* is made with sincerity and not just uttered as a custom and formality.

SALAAH TO ALL

(continued overleaf)

Salaam should be made to every Muslim. Once *Rasulullah* (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) was asked as to which was a more superior act among the practices of *Islam*. *Rasulullah* (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) replied: “**Feed people and make salaam to those who you know as well as those who you do not know**” (*Sahih Bukhari*).

One should also endeavour to be the first to make *salaam* as it earns a greater reward and is also a means of eliminating pride.

ETIQUETTE

Among the etiquettes of *salaam* is that “**the younger person should greet the elder person, the one passing should greet the one who is sitting and the smaller group should greet the larger group**” (*Sahih Bukhari*). Special note should be taken of the importance of children greeting elders. Previously parents would embed this etiquette in children. This is sadly diminishing. Hence nowadays many youngsters would pass their parents, family elders, their teachers or other seniors without greeting them. Repeated reminders and admonition is necessary until making *salaam* to others becomes the first nature of the child.

WHEN ENTERING HOME

One should also make *salaam* aloud and cheerfully upon entering the home. This is a means of attaining *barakah* and is also a means of protection from *shaytaan*.

Salaam is simple, costs nothing and takes a second or two. Yet the rewards great and the blessings are gigantic. It would be a great tragedy if we deprive ourselves of such tremendous blessings. Let us therefore make *salaam* common among ourselves.

FAQIHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of Faqihul Ummah Hazrat 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 PRIDE AND VANITY

SUMMARY OF LETTER: *Bismih* Ta'ala

Respected Mufti Saheb

As Salaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh

I am afflicted with the deadly maladies of pride, vanity and anger, etc. Please advise me with the remedy for these ailments.

SUMMARY OF REPLY: *Bismih* Ta'ala

Respected Brother

As Salaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh

Always keep in mind your origin and what will be your end. Consider that fact that you were born from an impure droplet. Impure blood nourished you and became part of your body while you were in the womb of your mother. When you were born, what was your condition? You could not distinguish anything. You could not even express your needs. In every aspect you were dependent on others.

Gradually you grew up while going through various conditions. Even at this moment you are carrying much impurities and filth within you. How much impurities and filth do you not expel daily? Moreover, what great bounties *Allah Ta'ala* has blessed you with for which you cannot ever thank him.

Your ending in this world is with death. When you reach the grave, you will become food for the ants. Your body will burst in the grave. Terrible difficulties could affect one (an evildoer) in the grave. If one is afflicted by punishment, there is nobody in the grave to plead to. *Allah* forbid, if the angels of punishment are appointed over one in the grave, what will become one's condition?

Sit in solitude and ponder deeply over these realities. *Insha-Allah* the maladies of pride, vanity, wrongful anger, etc. will be eliminated. (*Maktoobaat*)

ZHUL HIJJAH

Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is reported to have said: “**On no other day is the worship of Allah Ta'ala more beloved than the first ten days of Zhul Hijjah. The fast of each of these days is equal to the fast of a whole year, and the ibaadat (worship) of each of these nights is equal to the ibaadat of Laylatul Qadr**” (*Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah*).

It is related from Ibn Abbaas (*R.A.*) that *Rasulullah* (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: “**No days are as weighty with Allah Ta'ala and so liked by Him for good deeds than the first ten days of Zhul Hijjah. So in these days increasingly read: TASBEEH (Subhaanallah), TAHLEEL (Laa-Ilaaha-Illallaah), TAHMEED (Alhamdulillah), TAKBEER (Allahu Akbar) (Tabraani)**”