



INFORMATION EXPLOSION

Never before has it been possible to access so much of information with such ease. Daily, new books grace the shelves of libraries and living rooms. More magazines, periodicals and pamphlets are being published than ever before. Furthermore, literally at the press of a button, thousands of books on *tafseer*, *hadith*, *fiqh*, Islamic history and almost every other topic can be accessed. On-line courses and innumerable websites, all in the name of Islam, are at one's fingertips. Indeed there is a huge explosion of information which is bombarding us from every direction. The major challenge is how to handle this "information explosion"?

The most critical issue in this regard is WHO is giving out the information? This itself will also determine another critical aspect: How authentic is the information? Though we generally take these issues very lightly, especially in this age of the "information explosion," yet it could very well be a matter of life and death – the death of one's Imaan. Hence Ibn Sireen (R.A.), who was among the greatest Taabieen (companions of the Sahaaba R.A.), firmly stated: ***"This knowledge is Deen. Therefore beware of who you take your Deen from?"*** (Shamail-e-Tirmizi).

HEART ATTACK

The above statement has two fundamental lessons. The first lesson is that one must have a teacher who one learns Deen from. It is therefore extremely tragic that, due to the advancement in technology, many people's teacher has become the internet or computer programs. Imagine a person with a severe heart condition referring to the internet for treatment. He stumbles upon an advert marketing a product which promises a miraculous cure for his ailment. If the ailing person decides to take this unknown product from an unknown person for his heart condition, what will any sane person think of him? More crucial than treating the physical heart is the health of the spiritual heart. Therefore, can just any website, on-line course, blog, or just any book or person be OK

to learn Deen from??? Is the fancy label in the form of catchy slogans, glossy titles and a captivating style of writing a good enough basis to rely on the "product"? Such a careless attitude carries an extremely severe risk of a spiritual heart attack!!!

Furthermore, nobody's knowledge is reliable in any field if it is not acquired from an expert teacher in that field. Any person who claims to be a doctor, lawyer or engineer due to having studied all the material on the subject from books and on the internet, will surely be shunned by every intelligent person. He will also be legally prevented from practicing in that field. This is simply due to him not having learnt his field from a recognised teacher, who himself learnt similarly from an expert, all the way to the top. Having a teacher is therefore essential.

ORATORY

The second lesson in the statement of Ibn Sireen (R.A.) was to choose a teacher carefully, ensuring that he is reliable in Deen. Taking just anyone as a teacher is very dangerous. Often the basis for taking Deen from someone is merely the person's oratory skills, or his apparent expertise in Islamic sciences or his proficiency in the Arabic language. This alone is not sufficient, especially when Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has warned of such scholars who will have "knowledgeable tongues but hearts of wolves". In another narration he cautioned against scholars who are "people with tongues sweeter than honey but hearts more bitter than aloe (which is very bitter)." Oratory skills alone is therefore no basis for such a critical choice. History bears testimony that over the centuries many "scholars" with completely corrupt beliefs have swayed thousands of people with their oratory or flowery writings and their apparent expertise in Islamic sciences. While many

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simple people followed such deviated “scholars” and organisations, a great number of those who were carried away by the outward sophistication of an organisation or the apparent “intellect” of a so-called scholar were the wealthy and educated class. Consider one example. The deviation and corruption in the beliefs of the false prophet and the founder of the Qadiani movement, Ghulam Ahmed Qadiani, are easily understood by even ordinary lay men when it is explained to them in the light of the Qur’an and Sunnah. Yet, many of his followers up to this day are highly educated. They were caught up by what appeared to be excellent “scholarship” but in reality they were entrapped into rejecting some of the most fundamental beliefs of a Muslim. Similarly, many people were led astray after having read some Shia literature. Yet others fell into complete confusion after being misled into believing that if one follows one of the four Imaams of fiqh (Imaam Abu Hanifa, Imaam Shafi, etc.) one will be following something other than the true Deen. Hence they abandoned following the true Imaams and mujtahids (jurists) who were masters and experts in the knowledge of the Qur’an and Sunnah. In place of the Imaams of fiqh, they then began following the interpretations of modern day “scholars” whose knowledge of Deen is but a mere fraction of the knowledge of the great Imaams.

DISCERN

Thus it has always been fundamentally important to first check WHO or WHERE one learns Deen from. The information explosion has increased this importance by a million times. If one listens to or reads just anything and everything without having thorough knowledge of the Qur’an and Sunnah, one will not be able to discern what is correct or what is not. Therefore the best route is to refrain from referring to any unknown sources. Once Sayyiduna Umar (R.A.) requested permission from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to read the Torah and benefit from its wisdoms. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) strongly forbade him from doing so, despite the fact that the Qur’an has itself declared the Torah as guidance. The reason for the prohibition was that the Torah was greatly interpolated and distorted by the Jews. Furthermore the Qur’an

was still not entirely revealed and Deen was not yet completed. Hence due to this situation even somebody of the calibre of Sayyiduna Umar (R.A.) may not have been able to immediately discern what was authentic and unchanged and what was the distortion of the Jews. This incident clearly highlights the key aspect which is the ability to DISCERN what conforms to the word and spirit of Deen and what does not. This is not possible without thorough knowledge. Therefore, the only resort is to turn to someone WHO is reliable.

GUIDELINES

This begs the crucial question: How does one determine WHO is reliable? A few guidelines gleaned from the Qur’an and Sunnah are:

- The person must be knowledgeable
- He must be a pious person. This refers to one who fulfils all the obligations of Deen, adheres to the sunnah and who is not a flagrant sinner.
- The people who associate with him generally progress in Deen and become more conscious of adopting the Sunnah in their lives.
- He should be a person who is blessed with *sharhus sadr* (an enlightened heart). The signs of *sharhus sadr* that have been explained in the Hadith are: He is disinclined from the world, his heart is focussed towards the Hereafter and he prepares for death.
- The great Muhaddith Ibrahim Nakha’ee states: “When people would come to learn Deen from someone, they would look at his character, his salaah and his general condition.”

COMMON SENSE

A common sense approach is to determine what the learned and pious think of the person. This will be a good indication of whether one is making a sound choice. The situation is similar to that of a person seeking a good doctor to treat a complicated illness. He will generally check two things: What is the success rate of that doctor and what do other doctors have to say about him. The same approach must be adopted to a much greater extent to find the right guide in Deen.

With each passing day, more and more information will continue to explode from every source and media. Let us firmly stick to someone WHO is reliable so that the wrong information does not explode our Deen!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

THE ARRIVALS

Q I have seen a documentary titled *The Arrivals*. It relates to the arrival of Dajjal, the Mahdi and the return of Hadhrat Isa (alayhis salaam). Many texts of the Qur'aan and hadeeth as well as verses from the Bible are quoted to substantiate the claims made. I was quite impressed but also confused about the reality of what was presented in the documentary. Please advise.

A It is necessary to believe in whatever has been established from the Qur'aan and Hadeeth. Among these aspects are the appearance of the Mahdi, the emergence of Dajjal and the return of Hazrath Isa (alayhis salaam). When Hazrath Isa (alayhis salaam) returns he will slay Dajjal. All these aspects are authentically established and are among the beliefs of every Muslim. However, while some signs have been mentioned in the Ahaadeeth, the exact time for the occurrence of these signs has not been revealed. It is therefore not necessary for us to try to determine when they will occur.

DAY OF JUDGEMENT

The above is similar to the issue of the occurrence of the day of Qiyaamah (Day of Judgement). While the Day of Qiyaamah is a certainty, its date is known to Allah Ta'ala alone. Once a person asked Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam): "When will Qiyaamah occur?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) replied: "**Have you prepared for that day?**" This reply contained a very important lesson — do not concern yourself with *when* it will happen. Instead, engage yourself in rectifying your deeds and acting upon the commandments of Allah Ta'ala in preparation for that day. Therefore the principle to adhere to is that what Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) have kept hidden, do not delve into it.

As for the documentary, detailed refutations have been written by Ulama and others highlighting the factual inaccuracies, misinterpretations and distortions therein.

Apart from some glaring historical distortions, among the deviations and corruptions in *The Arrivals* are the following:

- ◆ Quoting small sections of Ahaadeeth out of context and leaving out some sections of the same hadith, thereby distorting the meaning.
- ◆ The Mahdi is depicted as a magician, Allah forbid. Any Muslim with even basic Islamic knowledge knows that magic is totally Haraam.
- ◆ An extremely dangerous aspect in the series is the vilification of the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu anhum). A true believer can never speak ill of any Sahaabi (radhiyallahu anhum). Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) is reported to have said: "***The one who loves them (the Sahaabah) does so due to love for me and the one who hates them does so out of hate for me!***"
- ◆ Several Shiah beliefs are propagated therein which are totally in conflict with Islamic beliefs.
- ◆ Some writers have described the documentary as "filled with music and nudity." If the purpose is to denounce what the Jews are doing, is it necessary to repeat and replay the music and shamelessness? This is similar to a person who, in order to explain the harms of drugs to people, makes them take a puff of the haraam substance. Any thinking person knows how insane such an act is since the one puff may turn the people into addicts. It is however another story if the purpose of the documentary is a sly attempt to get people addicted to the filth of music and nudity???

One should therefore not simply fall headlong for every new thing that makes its appearance. Remain firmly on the clear path that has been handed down to us from the pious predecessors. Therein lies our safety in this world and salvation in the Hereafter.

For a detailed refutation go to:

<http://alhaadi.org.za/articles/general/1456-the-arrivals.html>

STEMMING THE TIDE

The high tide of fashion and the tsunami of western culture has been sweeping through our homes, businesses, functions, dressing and almost every aspect of our lives. Like the tsunamis that crush buildings, uproot trees and generally cause widespread destruction, following western culture and fashion has also caused immense harm to the Ummah. It has uprooted hayaa (shame and modesty) and has crushed many basic values such as contentment and simplicity.

One of the most severe consequences of following western fashion and culture is that one is deprived of the *barakah* and *noor* (spiritual light) of the sunnah, while the heart is further engulfed in darkness upon darkness of western fashion and culture. Such a heart drifts far away from Allah Ta'ala and His beloved Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

STEM GLASS

Among the current trends at our functions and homes is of eating and drinking in the style and manner of the West. One of the more severe practices in this regard is the use of stem glasses. These glasses are used by the disbelievers for drinking alcohol. To resemble them in the use of such utensils is greatly sinful. It also becomes a means to decrease the abhorrence of alcohol in the heart of Mu'min, which in itself is a major crime. Therefore the use of stem glasses must be totally abandoned. May Allah Ta'ala guide us to remain steadfast on the Sunnah and to distance ourselves from western fashion and culture. Aameen.

From the advices of ...



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 an answer to a question to

DOUBTS ABOUT TAHARAH

Summary of Letter:

Bismihi Ta'ala

Respected Mufti Sahib

Assalamu Alaikum

1. I am overwhelmed by doubts and suspicion regarding *tahaarah* (purity). As a result it takes a very long while to perform *wudhu* and much water is also wasted in the process. Often merely as a precaution I repeatedly wash a limb. If I do not do so, doubts will continuously bother me as to whether my *salaah* was valid (or was it not valid due to my *wudhu* being incomplete?).
2. In order to refrain from sins, I intend to impose a penalty upon myself for each transgression. Please advise.

Summary of reply:

Respected Brother

Assalamu Alaikum

1. When you have performed your *salaah* after having performed *wudhu* in the correct manner (by washing each limb thrice), then do not entertain any doubt about the validity of your *salaah*. *Shaitaan* first involves a person in such doubts and "encourages" him to be even more cautious about *taharah*. Gradually the doubts then become so strong that a person finally gives up performing *salaah* on the basis that if my *wudhu* is not correct then my *salaah* is not valid, hence what is the use of performing *salaah*!!!
2. If you personally impose a penalty upon yourself (to perform *nafl salaah* or give charity) you will not be able to sustain it. As a result, you will neither pay the penalty nor will you stop committing sins. Therefore, resort instead to earnest *dua* to Allah Ta'ala to protect you from sins. The more *muraqabah* (meditation) that you will make of the verse: *أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَى* does he not know that Allah is watching), to that extent you will *insha-Allah* be protected from sins. (Maktoobaat, vol. 5, p. 31)