



UNITY

The blessed months of hajj have once again dawned upon us as millions of people from around the globe mobilize and travel to Makkah Mukarramah and Madeenah Munawwarah to fulfill their 'journey of a lifetime.' These Hujjaaj who hail from an array of countries, from diverse backgrounds, identify with different ethnicities and speak different languages – all traverse to the Holy lands with a singular purpose to fulfill the obligation of Allah Ta'ala upon them.

Whether rich or poor, black or white, educated or uneducated, Arabic speaking or otherwise, all these differences will not matter and will not even be noticed once the Haajis don their ihraam and now stand on the plains of Mina, 'Arafah and Muzdalifah. At this point, every single individual is dressed identically, in two simple pieces of white cloth, and is fulfilling the exact same rites of hajj. Here there is no 'First Class', 'Business Class' and 'Economy Class'. Instead, everybody stands side by side and cries to Allah Ta'ala to forgive him and fulfil his needs. Among the greatest lessons depicted at this point of the Haaji's journey is undoubtedly the lesson of unity, the lesson that under the veneer, polish and exterior, we are all Muslim brothers and together form one Ummah.

INJUNCTION

This lesson of unity, however, should not be such that it merely makes an annual appearance. Rather, the importance of unity needs to be realized by all around the globe and become an objective and goal which we all strive to achieve. Creating unity between Muslims is not just an effort which will result in an improved, more prosperous society. Rather, it is an injunction of deen which will earn one very great reward. In this regard, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) once asked the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum), "Should I tell you of an action that will earn you a rank greater than that of fasting, salaah and sadaqah?" When the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) replied in the affirmative, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said, "Reconciling between people." (Sunan Abi Dawood #4919)

In another hadeeth, Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) told the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) that the key to cultivating harmony and love for one another is making salaam (Saheeh Muslim #194). Hence one of the causes of our unity being lost, as an Ummah at large and even as communities on a smaller scale, is due to our greeting only those people whom we know and whom we are familiar with. Sadly, this behaviour indirectly sends out the message that 'only these people are my brothers, nobody else.'

BONDING BY TEXT!?

From unity on a community level, let us enter the home and examine the scene prevalent in the domestic environment. In today's corporate, fast paced, secular world, it is not unlikely that the family rarely get a chance to sit together – as a family – and bond with one another. Each enters the home at his own time, adheres to his own hectic schedule, and remains glued to his cell phone. Sometimes, the dependence on the cell phone for companionship reaches such shocking proportions that often family members feel more comfortable 'texting' each other than even speaking to each other! In a home which is completely bereft of even basic bonding and communication, is it any wonder that many children have no love for their parents, and parents have no inkling as to what their children are going through and what challenges they face? When even meals are eaten separately, will there be any chance of this family sitting together and creating a deeni atmosphere by reciting the Quraan Majeed, making zikr and du'aa and carrying out ta'leem? Sometimes this lack of unity and bonding when children are much younger results in almost total isolation and estrangement when they have grown up and living their own lives.

GIVE MORE — TAKE LESS

Enter the marriage arena and the complaint is the same – the lack of unity and harmony between

(Cont. overleaf)

INSIDE...	Greatest Action.....	Page 2
	Question: Expansion Project.....	Page 3
	Parent's Dispute.....	Page 4

UNITY

(FROM PAGE ONE)

spouses, resulting in years of discord and unhappiness and ultimately divorce or abuse. Among the vital ingredients in the recipe for unity are humility, selflessness and sacrifice. Essentially, the relationship of a married couple will have to entail some give and take on either side. Each spouse, however, should focus more on the 'give' and less on the 'take'. In this way, their spirit of generosity and sacrifice will sow the seeds of happiness and joy. After all, marriage is a relationship of love. In the journey of love, one does not charge his beloved for the petrol he burns, but rather takes pride over the mileage he covers for the sake of his beloved.

WEALTH

Wealth is undoubtedly a test and if the test of wealth is failed, it can drive an unbridgeable divide between people. The test of wealth is failed when a person values the wealth of the world more than he values his deen. One of the solutions to creating unity between parties who have a common interest in some wealth is to ensure that, among other aspects, there is always complete transparency and a clear record of all affairs. If this is not done, the number of unsolved estates will simply increase and heirs who were once closer than brothers will be at each other's throats, fighting for money.

GIFTS

Whether with our relatives, neighbours or even people in general, Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has taught us that exchanging gifts is a practice which encourages love for one another. As with other practices in deen, the practice of exchanging gifts also has certain conditions and one of these conditions is that of sincerity. In order for the gift to be given with sincerity and happiness, it is essential that the person giving the gift does not do so on account of feeling pressurized, and also that he gives a gift that is within his means. A small gift, given solely to enhance muhabbat only for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, will

insha-Allah become a means of bonding hearts, whereas an expensive gift given for show or just to "save face" — so that one may not be regarded as miserly or uncaring — will not bring any positive outcome to the relationship.

The sad reality is that the Muslim Ummah, despite numbering more than a billion and wielding formidable financial power, stand disunited and is thus powerless to progress. If we strive to bring about this unity, in every sphere of our lives, Allah Ta'ala will shower his mercy upon us and grant us divine assistance. The issue is that how do we bring about the unity of the entire Ummah? That appears to be something which is way beyond our reach and capacity. It may be so. However, making efforts to create unity on the level that we can — between spouses as well as between parents and children, among family members, between colleagues and business partners, among members of the community, etc. This will be a major contribution towards the unity of the Ummah.

LIMITS OF UNITY

One last point to bear in mind is that the effort to create unity also has its boundaries. Unity can only be on a common basis — the basis of the Quraan and sunnah. Thus if someone insists on doing something against the Quraan and sunnah, such as rejecting the Quraan or hadeeth for instance, or denigrating the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum), or hosting a function that tramples upon the laws of deen (e.g. intermingling of males and females, music, dancing, photography, etc.), then in such a case one should remain united with the Quraan and sunnah and refrain from joining with those who are opposing it. Our greatest priority is to remain united with our Creator, Allah Ta'ala, by remaining united with His deen.

May Allah Ta'ala unite the hearts of the Ummah for His pleasure and bless all with serenity and peace.

GREATEST ACTION ON DAY OF QURBAANI

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: *"There is no action performed on the day of qurbaani which is more beloved to Allah Ta'ala than the slaughtering of the (qurbaani) animals* (Sunan Tirmizi #1493)." While this special 'ibaadah is not possible at any other time of the year, yet in another hadeeth one exception has been mentioned, that one act is even greater than qurbaani. Hazrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbaas (radhiyallahu 'anhuma) reported that once, **on the day of 'Eidul Adha**, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said: *"There is no action more virtuous than slaughtering animals (of qurbaani) on this day — except the joining of family ties (that had been severed)"* (Tabraani – Majma'uz Zawaaid #5939).

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

EXPANSION PROJECT

Q *We have an expansion project for our manufacturing plant but do not have the cash to fund the project. We have been approached by a company who will purchase our future turnover at a profit. The company will look at the at the historical sales and, based on the average turnover, they will purchase the turnover of the next six months for cash – at a profit. For example, if the average monthly turnover is R500 000, they will purchase the turnover of the next six months for R3 million. We will pay back R3.5 million over 4 months, R500 000 being the profit. Is this permissible? Many Muslim businesses are adopting this as it is claimed to be free from interest.*

A The so-called “profit” in the transaction described in the question is 100% interest. This is purely a loan on interest — with the empty words of “purchase”, “sale” and “profit” inserted to appease the parties. By changing the names, something which is haraam will not be transformed into halaal. It will always remain as haraam as ever. It is the onus of the businessmen to enquire FIRST from ‘Ulama experienced in the field, so that they do not taint their wealth with haraam and jeopardise their Hereafter.

Involvement in interest – whether taking, giving, witnessing or recording – is totally haraam. It invites the curse of Allah Ta’ala, destroys all the barakah and peace and makes the wealth earned in such a manner a source of misery. Therefore totally refrain from such transactions.

INVESTMENT

As for your expansion project, if you do not have the cash to invest, what is the need to expand? If a person has surplus funds, it is indeed permissible for him to invest it in some halaal enterprise or investment. If he does not have surplus funds, what then is the reason to expand on borrowed finance (or credit)? Is it due to lack of contentment (which has generally become a lost and forgotten concept)? Is it simply greed? Is it a status symbol, or the desire to be ahead of the pack in the race for ever more? Is it due to being sucked into the western capitalist mindset and system — that despite owning substantial assets, generally a person is always enslaved by massive debt!!! He thus has to continue working from eight till late, and continue slave driving others at the same time, in order to reach his ever rising targets. The capitalistic cycle consumes one and overshadows everything – it severely affects one’s ‘ibaadah, family life and also engulfs one’s heart and mind. One then

eats, sleeps and even prays business — all the time thinking about deals, suppliers, customers, banks, investments and... money, money and more money... and between all of this constantly worrying about — among numerous other aspects — overheads, payments, pilferage and the taxman. This cycle continues at the expense of one’s deen. Often salaah is either totally omitted, missed in its time or not performed with jamaat, the laws of sharee’ah are often compromised in one’s transactions and many people are oppressed or exploited in the process. This continues until when suddenly all the ambitious plans of never ending “growth” are halted and one is buried in the dust. By then the time to build one’s abode of the Hereafter has passed.

BASIC NECESSITY

It is noteworthy that while there are many instances of taking loans or buying on credit mentioned in the aheaddeeth, all these instances were for basic necessities. Loans and credit were never resorted to in order to build empires.

Debts are a serious issue. The ahaadeeth sound a severe caution against debts. It is reported that every act of a shaheed (martyr) is forgiven except debt (Musnad Ahmad #7051). The deceased’s entry into Jannah is suspended until his debts are paid. Hence as far as possible taking loans should be avoided. One should consult an experienced ‘Aalim and ascertain whether one’s circumstances warrant the taking of loans.

CONTENTMENT

Therefore, if you do not have surplus funds, do not expand. Be content with what Allah Ta’ala has blessed you with and aspire for barakah through obedience to Him. In particular, strive to “expand” in contentment

CRITERIA OF SUCCESS

In this world, people are judged by a variety of criteria. The success of a businessman is judged by his bank balance and the success of a professional is judged by the number of degrees he has. Similarly, it is the student who passes his exams attaining a distinction who is generally viewed as a successful student.

In the court of Allah Ta'ala, however, there is only one criteria for success – TAQWA. Allah Ta'ala states in the Quraan Majeed, "O mankind! Indeed we have created you from a single man and woman, and we have made you into races and tribes so that you may identify one another. Indeed the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is he who has the most taqwa. Indeed Allah is all Knowing and all Aware."

FAREWELL HAJJ

On the occasion of the final hajj, Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) explained the very same point in his final sermon saying, "O people! Indeed your Rabb is One and your father is one (i.e. Nabi Aadam ['alaihi salaam]). Behold! No Arab has virtue over a non-Arab and no non-Arab has virtue over an Arab. No black person has virtue over a white person and no white person has virtue over a black person. There is no virtue except by means of taqwa." (Majma'uz Zawaaid #5622)

It is thus very clear that it is not our wealth, race, language, affluence or popularity that will gain us acceptance in the court of

From the advices of ...

71

FAQEEHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of *Faqeehul Ummah* Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Saheb (*rahmatullahi 'alaih*) 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 posed to him.

PARENT'S DISUNITY

Summary of Letter:

[The writer apparently complained of differences between his parents and requested advice in this regard, as well as with regard to giving up sin.]

Summary of Reply:

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Brother/Sister:

Assalamu 'Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaatuh

I was greatly perturbed to hear about the disunity of your parents. May Allah Ta'ala grant love and affection in their hearts for one another. It is nevertheless compulsory for you to respect both your parents. Never allow such a situation to occur that in supporting one of your parents you disrespect the other.

To be affected by their disputes is natural. However, bear this with patience. Otherwise, disregarding one's parents or ill-treating them brings down various calamities upon one.

As for refraining from sin, the only way is to fight the nafs (evil desires). Without fighting the nafs, the nafs will not become subservient (and one will continue to fall into sin). (Maktoobaat vol. 5, pg. 60)

Allah Ta'ala. Rather, acceptance in His court is based only on taqwa. Taqwa includes fulfillment of one's daily salaah, discharging zakaah and other 'ibaadah, being scrupulous and upright in one's business affairs and monetary transactions, fulfilling the rights of one's parents, spouse, children, family and others and inculcating the noble akhlaaq (character) taught by Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). When one has combined all these qualities together with imaan, only then has one acquired taqwa, thus becoming noble in the court of Allah Ta'ala. Otherwise, despite some good actions in one's life, if taqwa is not acquired, there can be no true success in this world, and one will face many major obstacles in the Hereafter — Allah Ta'ala forbid!