



ISLAMIC IDENTITY

From China in the east to Chile in the west, and Bulgaria in the north to Botswana in the south, throughout history, each and every nation, tribe and people had their own distinct culture and way of life. In some cultures, the cuisine was different, while in others, the clothing was different. In most cultures, the language was different and in many cases, the ideals, values and approach to life was different as well.

THE GLOBAL CULTURE

Enter the twenty-first century, and a strange, unprecedented phenomenon, never before witnessed, began to occur around the globe – deculturation. As time passed, whether one travelled to Hong Kong or Hungary, or even whether one braved the wilderness to venture into the heart of rural Africa, one found a global culture replacing every native and indigenous culture. The hallmark and trademark of this new culture was the shirt and pants, suit and tie or jeans and t-shirt. With this culture clearly having its roots in the west, one began to ponder over how this culture spread across the globe so rapidly, and how it replaced centuries-old cultures in a matter of a few decades. One began to wonder, “What was the link between these far flung foreign lands and the ways of the west?”

HOLLYWOOD CULTURE

The answer was not far off. Even in a rural township, assumed to be ‘cut off’ from the rest of civilization, adorning trees were not leaves. Instead, there were satellite dishes. As technology progressed and the internet entered the scene, people no longer required satellite dishes as they were able to stream all the content they required. Via these technologies and devices, people were being subjected to a subtle yet strong psychological and cultural attack. With Hollywood as its headquarters, the western lifestyle was portrayed as the ideal lifestyle – nay the only ‘civilized’ and ‘acceptable’ lifestyle. Via movies, people were brainwashed into revering anything even remotely associated with the west. This was not merely an effort to deculture – it was a concerted effort to enculture the world with the ways of the west. People now regarded their traditional ways as backward and sought to become ‘progressive’. When

a soccer star styled his hair in a certain (comical) way, thousands of fans followed suit, and when a movie star spoke in defense of the terribly sick “gay rights”, people sagely nodded their heads in agreement. In essence, people became disillusioned with their values and cultures and chose to buy into this new culture which was promoted by every protagonist portrayed on the big screen.

THE ISLAMIC CULTURE

The Deen of Islam is not merely a set of beliefs. Similarly, Islam is not confined to certain acts of worship. Rather, Islam is a complete code of life, guiding a Muslim through every situation, whether domestic, financial, spiritual or otherwise. Hence, the Deen of Islam has its own ‘culture’ which defines the identity of each and every Muslim. This identity and culture is defined by the mubaarak lifestyle of Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam), as he is the sole role model for the Ummah at large. It is only through following him and emulating his blessed example that one will gain acceptance in the court of Allah Ta’ala. Hence, a Muslim’s values are the values of Islam and his way of life, whether in dress, behaviour, interaction, business or any other sphere of his existence revolves around the blessed lifestyle of Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam). When a Muslim understands that the key to eternal success lies in the adhering to Islam and the sunnah, he will not sacrifice his Islamic identity for anything. He will regard his Islam to be invaluable and will be prepared to die rather than abandon the way of Islam.

WHEN IN ROME..?

On the occasion of Hudaibiyah, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) sent Hazrat ‘Uthmaan (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) to Makkah Mukarramah as his representative to explain to the Quraish that the Muslims had only come to perform ‘umrah. Hazrat ‘Uthmaan (radhiyallahu ‘anhu), entered Makkah Mukarramah dressed in his usual manner with his pants raised between his ankles and knees, whereas the disbelievers regarded wearing the pants below

(Cont. overleaf)

INSIDE...	Relationship.....	Page 2
	Question: Islamic Garb.....	Page 3
	Greed.....	Page 4

ISLAMIC IDENTITY

(FROM PAGE ONE)

the ankles to be a mark of dignity and respect. Hence his cousin Abaan bin Sa'eed asked, "What is the matter? Why are you dressed in this inappropriate and undignified manner?" Hazrat 'Uthmaan (radhiyallahu 'anhu) replied, "This is how Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) wears his lower garment." (Musannaf Ibnu Abi Shaibah #38007)

Today, we are told to 'go with the flow' and not 'against the grain'. We are taught 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do'. However, in this incident, Hazrat 'Uthmaan (radhiyallahu 'anhu) taught us that no matter where we may be, we should do as Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) did. Whether we are on holiday or at home, in the workplace or at a social gathering, we remain the same Muslims and follow the same Deen. Hence, at all times, we should reflect the identity of a Muslim.

REMAINING STEADFAST

The Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) truly understood the value of Islam and the sunnah and thus rigidly adhered to the way of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) at all times. Regardless of where they went in the world or which people they encountered, they did not change in the least. Rather, they continued to be shining examples of Islam. In fact, the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) were such that instead of them being changed by others - their lifestyle, which was radiant with the beauty of Islam, inspired others to accept Islam and become like them.

ABANDON THE SUNNAH???

On one occasion, Hazrat Ma'qil bin Yasaar (radhiyallahu 'anhu) picked up a morsel of food that had fallen to the ground, cleaned it and ate it,

adhering to the teaching of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). However, some 'nobles' of the disbelievers were present and took offense to his behaviour, as they deemed it inappropriate for a person of dignity to 'eat from the floor'. In response to their taking offence Hazrat Ma'qil (radhiyallahu 'anhu) declared, "**I will not sacrifice the sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) on account of these disbelievers.**" (Sunan Ibnu Maajah #3278) This is the spirit that we need to adopt with regard to the sunnah.

NEED OF THE HOUR

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has mentioned, "The best servants of Allah Ta'ala are those whom when they are seen, Allah is remembered." (Musnad Ahmad #17998). This hadeeth teaches us that the best Muslims are those who on merely being seen, inspire people with the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. Obviously, for a person to remind one of Allah Ta'ala, he will have to have the appearance of a Muslim. However, with the present loss of Islamic identity globally, it has even become difficult to distinguish Muslim from non-Muslim. Some are such that on looking at them, a soccer star comes to mind on account of his name being printed on the shirt.

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has given us glad tidings saying, "The one who holds firmly to my sunnah at the time of the degeneration of the condition my Ummah will receive the reward of one hundred martyrs." Hence, the need of the hour is for each and every Muslim to hold firmly to the blessed way of Islam and lifestyle of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). (At-Targheeb wat Tarheeb vol. 1. pg. 80)

RELATION-SHIP

The captain of a ship has a very delicate task of steering his ship safely to the destination. While at times he will sail through the calmest waters under sunny skies, he may also encounter very stormy weather and surging waves. He has to also carefully navigate past icebergs and sandbars or else the ship could be in serious danger. Likewise, if the engine malfunctions or he experiences navigation equipment failure, his ship could sink in the deep seas. He thus has to be alert, keep his focus on the destination, be very careful in stormy weather, avoid the icebergs and continue checking his navigation equipment and engine. If he does this, insha-Allah he will safely reach his destination.

The same applies to every relationship, whether between parents and children, spouses, siblings, extended family, in-laws, etc. There are bright sunny days in the relationship... and there could be some stormy nights as well. Various day to day issues — whether due to some misunderstanding, a sheer mistake or wanton carelessness and neglect — become icebergs and sandbars that can bog down or even sink a relationship. Very often, it is a case of navigation equipment and engine failure. The compass which should be set towards gaining the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala in all situations, and the engine of the heart which should be driven and motivated by His love, has malfunctioned. The compass is jammed by anger and set towards taking revenge, or towards emotions of "I will show him", "I will fix him up", etc., or towards greed and jealousy. Instead of the engine of

(Cont. On page 4)

ISLAMIC GARB

Q I recently heard a scholar saying that just as the food of our Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) was part of Arab culture at the time, likewise he adopted the dressing which the Arabs of that time were accustomed to wearing. Therefore, just as there is no issue if someone does not eat dates which was a part of the staple diet at that time, similarly there is no issue if one does not dress in Islamic garb (referring to the kurta or what is generally understood as "Islamic" dressing). This has left me confused, since from childhood I have been taught by my parents and teachers that dressing Islamically is very important. Please advise.

A There is certainly an extremely big "issue" with what the "scholar" has stated. Allah Ta'ala forbid, the statement actually portrays the sunnah manner of dressing as insignificant! *Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji'oon*. Such statements are often made by people who suffer from an inferiority complex. Hence they try to subtly justify the adoption of western style garments instead of the sunnah garb. The "justification" is done by means of eloquent distortion. Many unwary people are swayed by the eloquence... and hence gulp down the distortion as well. Such eloquent discourse is simply sweet poison.

From the very onset, it should be understood that the sunnah (blessed way) of Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is not only an integral part of Islam but is also the means of us gaining guidance and reaching Jannah. Allah Ta'ala states: "...and bring imaan in Allah and His Rasul, ... and follow him so that you may be guided." (Surah Aa'raaf v158) In another verse Allah Ta'ala says: "And whatever the Rasul gives you (through his instruction or noble practice), hold onto it, and whatever he forbids you from, refrain" (Surah Hashr v7). These aayaat highlight the importance of following the sunnah in every facet of life.

STRIVE TO EMULATE

It is our firm belief that Allah Ta'ala had chosen only the very best for Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). His dressing also was the very best way of dressing. Thus the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) strove to emulate him in his mubaarak dressing as well. From the time of the Noble Sahaabah this manner of dressing was passed on in succession from generation to generation to this day. It was only after the west colonized the many countries as well as the hearts and minds of many people due to which they abandoned the sunnah attire and adopted western styles. Tragically, the abandonment of the sunnah attire has even spilled over into salaah. Instead of standing before Allah Ta'ala in the respectable, dignified clothing of Islam, people perform salaah in t-shirts bearing names of kaafir soccer players and other clothing of the kuffaar.

The sunnah garb was not adopted merely due to being customary attire. In fact Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi

wasallam) forbade "customary" clothing, which did not conform to Deen, such as for men to allow any garment to flow below the ankles, etc. He once forbade a person wearing saffron colour garments in the words "**these are from among the garments of the disbelievers, hence do NOT wear them**" (Saheeh Muslim # 1647). This clearly highlights that a Muslim should **NOT** wear the clothing of the disbelievers

Even emulation of the disbelievers in their dressing etc., is condemned. Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has clearly warned, "*The one who resembles a people will be counted among them (in the sight of Allah Ta'ala)*" (Abu Dawood #4033). Once Hazrat Anas (radhiyallahu 'anhu) entered a masjid in Basrah where he observed people wearing a type of clothing which was the hallmark of the Jews of Khaibar. He immediately condemned their dress saying, "*It is as if they, at this moment, are the Jews of Khaibar!*" (Saheeh Bukhaari #4208)

IDENTIFICATION

Clothing is also a means of identification. There have been instances, such as when entire villages, where both Muslims and others lived, were wiped out due to earthquakes and floods. There was nobody available to identify the bodies of the victims. Apart from those who could be identified as Muslims from their appearance, all others, which included some Muslims, were buried as non Muslims!!

Hazrat Sufyaan bin 'Uyaynah (rahimahullah) would say, "Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is the true gauge of success. Every aspect of a person's life should be compared to the mubaarak life of Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), whether relating to his noble character, lifestyle, mannerisms and external appearance. Whichever aspects of one's life conforms to the mubaarak way of Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), it will gain acceptance in the court of Allah Ta'ala, and whichever aspect opposes his mubaarak way, it will be rejected by Allah Ta'ala. (Al-Jaami li-Akhlaaqir Raawi wa Aadaabis Saami; pg. 8)

May Allah Ta'ala bless us all to uphold the mubaarak sunnah, aameen.

RELATION-SHIP

(FROM PAGE 2)

the heart being fueled by the pure love of Allah Ta'ala, it is instead filled with the love of the ego, pride, arrogance and malice. If the compass is pointing in the wrong direction or if the engine fails, any relationship is in extreme danger of sinking.

The person whose compass is pointing to the right direction will be very accommodating and forgiving and he will make big issues very small. He will ignore the dozen negatives, latch onto the one positive and will always try to keep the relationship sailing smoothly even in the most stormy seas.

On the contrary, if the compass is pointing in the wrong direction, all the positives will be ignored and the smallest negative will be latched upon. Very small issues will deliberately be made big — often just in order to “show him a point”. In the process the relationship has sunk — and has embroiled and dragged down the “ships” of many other close family members as well.

PRESCRIPTION FOR BARAKAH

Keeping the relationships sailing smoothly, especially close family relationships, is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT and very greatly emphasized in our most beautiful Deen. It is the prescription for barakah in one's life and sustenance, and for one to receive the du'aas of the “kinship” that is suspended from the 'Arsh (the Throne of Allah Ta'ala), as well as numerous other blessings that have been reported in various ahaadeeth. On the contrary, those who do not care to uphold kinship and do not maintain family ties are seriously deprived. For instance, on the 15th night of Sha'baan Allah Ta'ala forgives numerous souls from the fire of Jahannum. However, among those who are deprived of this extremely great blessing are those who are disobedient to their parents,

From the advices of ...

75

FAQEEHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of *Faqeehul 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 posed to him.

GREED AND ITS CURE

Respected Mufti Saheb

Assalamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu

How can greed be eliminated?

Summary of Reply:

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Brother

Assalamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu

Every person must have the conviction that whatever Allah Ta'ala has destined for him, he will certainly receive it. Nobody can prevent it. However, he will never get what is not destined for him. Sustenance pursues a person just as his death pursues him. If a person hides in a very strong fortress, then there too his death will find him. In the very same way, a person's sustenance will reach him wherever he may be. As long as a person has not received all of his sustenance, death will not come to him. Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has said, “**Behold, indeed a soul will never die until it has received all its sustenance.**”

Only Allah Ta'ala knows the reality of the wealth in the people's possession, that is whether it is from interest, bribery, through usurping someone's right, charity (received wrongfully) or if it was earned through an unlawful transaction. Allah Ta'ala alone knows what punishment is destined for such wealth. Thus, when such wealth comes, it comes with its punishment as well. This is just like a person who sees a snake or a scorpion and desires to have it, whereas this is not something to have. The snake will come with its poison and the scorpion will come with its sting. Will any intelligent person desire such a thing? May Allah Ta'ala shower us with lawful sustenance which is full of blessing, and may Allah Ta'ala bless us with the quality of contentment. Otherwise, a person's greed will never end. (Maktoobaat vol. 1, pg. 26)

who sever family ties and those who harbour malice — (obedience to parents applies only in permissible matters. Any impermissible instruction will be **respectfully** declined.)

Life is short. It is not worth clinging onto petty issues. This is a time to earn the great blessings of Allah Ta'ala by mending broken ties and keeping

relationships sailing smoothly. The icebergs and sandbars will still be there. However, if we pay attention to our engines and ensure our compass is set in the right direction, we will insha-Allah safely navigate past these obstacles without sinking any RELATIONSHIP. Insha-Allah this will help us to a very great extent to sail safely in this world and the Hereafter, aameen.