



STAY CONNECTED

WiFi... GPRS... 3G, 4G and 5G... Satellite... ADSL and fibre... In short, we live in a world of ever-increasing connectivity. No matter where they may be, or what time of the day or night it may be, people ensure that they always remain connected and online.

In an age where most business is conducted over the phone, it is easy to understand why some people fear losing their connectivity. For such people, the loss of connectivity could lead to a lucrative deal being lost and precious profit slipping through their fingers. Hence, even if they have the slightest expectation of someone phoning them with a deal, they will ensure that their phone batteries are fully charged and they are in an area with full reception. They know that so long as they are connected, they will continue to benefit from every opportunity that presents itself before them.

Connected to the Mercy of Allah

In a similar manner, we all need to remain 'connected' to the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. If we are 'disconnected', we will remain deprived and will never prosper and find happiness, neither in this world or the next. Furthermore, there are certain occasions when Allah Ta'ala showers His special mercy upon the Ummah. However, even on these 'lucrative' occasions, if one is 'disconnected', he will remain deprived and will not enjoy this special mercy. Hence, it is of paramount importance that we identify those factors that cause us to become 'disconnected' from Allah Ta'ala's mercy and avoid them at all costs.

The Fifteenth of Sha'baan

The auspicious occasion of the fifteenth night of Sha'baan is one such occasion wherein Allah Ta'ala showers His special mercy on one and all. In regard to this occasion, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) mentioned, "On the fifteenth night of Sha'baan, Allah Ta'ala looks at the entire creation with special mercy. He then forgives the sins of the entire creation (who turn to Him in repentance), with

the exception of those who ascribe partners to Him and those who harbour enmity in their hearts." (*Saheeh Ibni Hibbaan #5665*)

The auspiciousness and blessed nature of this night has also been attested to by the eminent Taabi'ee, 'Ataa bin Yasaar (rahimahullah) who mentioned that the night of the fifteenth of Sha'baan is the greatest night after Lailatul Qadr! (*Lataa-iful Ma'aarif pg. 264*)

Nevertheless, from the above hadeeth, it is clear that even on such an auspicious occasion, when Allah Ta'ala is prepared to forgive the entire creation, there will be certain unfortunate souls who will remain disconnected and deprived. These are the people who harbour enmity for others in their hearts. Furthermore, in another hadeeth, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) mentioned that those who sever ties with their family members will also be deprived of Allah's mercy and forgiveness on this night. (*Shu'abul Imaan #3665*)

Family Ties

The importance of maintaining family ties in Islam can be understood from the fact that on the occasion when Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) entered Madeenah Munawwarah and delivered the very first khutbah in Islam, which would serve as an introduction to Deen, he addressed the people saying, "O people! Spread salaam (i.e. peace, by making salaam to one another), feed the people, **maintain family ties** and perform nafl salaah during the night while people are asleep. (If you do hold firmly to these actions together with the other obligations of Islam,) you will enter Jannah with salaam and peace." (*Sunan Ibni Maajah #3251*)

Hence, maintaining family ties is an integral part of Islam and as such, it's importance cannot be overemphasized.

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STAY CONNECTED

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Tit-for-Tat

It often happens that a person is ill-treated or oppressed by a family member. In most cases, it is due to some monetary dispute, either related to inheritance or a partnership dispute, that the relationship is broken. Under such circumstances, while the behaviour of the oppressor is by no means acceptable or condoned, it still does not behove us to adopt a 'tit-for-tat' approach, where we repay ill-behaviour with more ill-behaviour in the vain effort to 'prove a point'.

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has taught us that in order for one to truly join and maintain family ties, he will need to have the heart to overlook the ill behaviour of others. He will need to have the heart to forgive and forget. If he has to retaliate for every ill that he ever suffered, he will inevitably sever ties instead of joining them. Instead of becoming a source of happiness for people, he will simply add to the problems that already prevail. Hence, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) mentioned, "The one who truly joins family ties is not the one who deals with people in the same manner that they deal with him. Rather, the one who truly joins family ties is the one who joins ties when they have been severed." (*Saheeh Bukhaari #5991*)

Clean Heart

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) was blessed with a heart that was absolutely clean and pure. His blessed heart was completely free of all grudges and enmity, and hence he was prepared to forgive even those who raised weapons against him and murdered his beloved family members. Hence, this is the lofty example that we should strive to emulate.

The one who is prepared to bury the hatchet, and forego his right in order to avoid disputing, is indeed most blessed and fortunate. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has promised, "I guarantee a palace on the outskirts of Paradise for the person who abstains from disputes, **even though he may be in the right...**" (*Sunan Abi Dawood #4800*)

A Heart of Happiness

If a person carries the excess, unwanted baggage of grudges, it will perpetually weigh him down. If he 'harbours' malice in his heart, happiness will 'dock' elsewhere. For his heart to find peace and happiness, he will have to unburden his heart from the unwanted baggage. In doing so, he will find inner satisfaction, he will please Allah Ta'ala and he will also acquire the tremendous reward of forgiving others and joining ties. Such a person will remain connected to the mercy of Allah Ta'ala and will continue to progress.

May Allah Ta'ala bless us all to have clean hearts, forgive others and maintain family ties, aameen.

BIRTHDAYS

Ask almost any person, "On what day were you born?" and you will receive a prompt reply. However, ask any person, "On what date are you going to pass away?" and you will be met with deafening silence, since nobody knows when death will come... perhaps even in the next few minutes???

The reality of the matter is that we are all travellers in this temporary abode of the dunya. With every passing day, we draw nearer and nearer to our destination – the Akhirah. Hence, a true believer is one who is so mindful of his ever-approaching end that with every passing day, his concern for accountability before Allah Ta'ala increases. He does not celebrate the years that he has lived, but anticipates the moment when he will meet Malakul Maut (the Angel of Death). In short, he lives to die.

This was the mindset and way of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) and the Taabi'een (rahimahumullah). They neither celebrated birthdays nor saw the occasion of a birthday as any cause for merrymaking.

Conversely, the disbelievers dread the concept of death, as it will bring a permanent end to all their pleasures. They have nothing positive to hope for after death, and hence they not only seek to prolong and delay the inevitable – but seek to celebrate life and make the most of it. Hence, they celebrate birthdays in the effort to ignore the fact that they too will one day disintegrate in the grave.

As Muslims, we have been blessed with the best of religions – the Deen of Islam – and the best of ways – the blessed way of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). Hence, we should never ever abandon the blessed

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BARAKAH IN MARRIAGE

Q My daughter is getting married in a few month's time. My wife and I are at loggerheads over the expenses. The cost for the decor, flower arrangements, etc. is close to almost a million. She insists that our daughter deserves to have a special wedding. Please advise what I can do to make her understand that this is gross extravagance and wastage.

A The *masnoon du'aa* (du'aa established from the sunnah) for the newlywed couple is: *"May Allah Ta'ala grant you barakah, may He shower His blessings (barakah) upon you and unite both of you upon good"*.

This du'aa is a plea for barakah for the couple embarking on their new journey in life. The road of marriage is long (it is meant to continue till the last breath), the challenges are many and the twists and turns are plenty. Hence, they need every bit of barakah that they can acquire. Therefore this special du'aa is made for them on the special occasion of their nikaah.

While du'aa is extremely important and essential, the practical steps to acquire the barakah must also be adopted. For good health, one resorts to du'aa but also eats nourishing food. Only a foolish person will eat something poisonous and hope for good health. Likewise, for the greatest barakah in marriage, together with du'aa, the prescription of Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is that the least amount of expense must be incurred in that marriage. It is now the choice of the couple, and especially their parents, as to what they want. Do they need the barakah or not? Do they wish to acquire the barakah or do they wish to destroy it?

Major Problem

Any sane Muslim will wholeheartedly agree that to acquire the barakah is extremely necessary. If there is barakah, there will be sukoon (tranquillity), happiness and contentment. The major problem, unfortunately, is the ego. Once the ego takes over, in order to make a name for oneself in high society, all the stops will be removed to give one's child a wedding that will be the "talk of the town", but in the process one will destroy the barakah of one's children's marriage. What a great tragedy!

Consider the matter from another perspective: After the function of a few hours is over, the flowers will be

dumped, the decor will be torn down, and after having gorged the food, many will be talking about the extravagance and wastage and hardly anyone will then even think of making du'aa for the couple. Besides destroying the barakah, what else was really "achieved"?

Suffering Humanity

On the contrary, if the money wasted on decor and flowers alone (let alone the many clearly impermissible aspects) was spent instead on the suffering humanity, what a great deed it would be! Imagine how many starving bellies could have been filled with the most basic foods, how many homeless people could have been provided with a basic shelter, how many critically ill people could have been provided with medical care and how much could have been done for the upliftment of the Deen of people in general?

On the day of Judgement, we will be asked about how we spent our wealth. Wastage and money spent for name and fame will become a major problem for us on that day, Allah Ta'ala forbid. The people we tried to impress will not come to our assistance when we are laid in our graves and nor will they help us one iota on the Day of Judgement.

Thus, this is a double destruction – destruction of the barakah of our children's marriage in this world and the destruction of the Hereafter. More than anything else, our children deserve barakah in their lives and marriages. Let us aspire to give them what they deserve most – by making du'aa for them but also adopting the prescription of Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) in their nikaah.

May Allah Ta'ala bless us with the true understanding of Deen and enable us to do that which will please Him at all times.

For a detailed discussion on this subject, download the booklet from the following link:

http://uswatulmuslimah.co.za/books/Avoiding_Divine_Wrath.pdf

BIRTHDAYS

(FROM PAGE 2)

sunnah and begin emulating the ways and customs of the disbelievers. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has warned us mentioning, "The one who emulates a people will be counted from amongst them (in the sight of Allah Ta'ala)" (*Sunan Abi Dawood #4031*)

When celebrating birthdays is undoubtedly the custom of the disbelievers and is a concept that is completely alien to Islam, then a Muslim should not have anything to do with it and should avoid it at all costs.

Over and above the celebration of birthdays being a custom of the disbelievers, there are certain common aspects in birthdays that are extremely dangerous to our imaan as they have connotations of disbelief attached to them.

One such aspect is that of blowing out the candles on the cake. Generally, the number of candles on the cake is equal to the age of the person. After the candles are lit, the person is told to make a wish and blow out the candles. According to some people, if all the candles are blown out in one breath, it is considered to be a sign of good luck.

However, what many of us do not realize is that the tradition of lighting candles is either traced back to the Greeks, who would do so to honour the birth of the goddess Artemis, or is traced back to pagan times when people would light candles to repel evil spirits who sought to harm them on their birthday.

Let us ponder over the following: When making a wish and blowing out the candles, who is one asking to fulfil his wish? We all know that when a Muslim makes du'aa, he turns to Allah Ta'ala and raises his hands. On the conclusion of the du'aa, he says 'Aameen' and passes his hands over his face. When this wish made at the time of blowing out the candles is evidently not a du'aa to Allah Ta'ala,

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FAQEEHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of *Faqeehul Ummah* Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan 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.

ABSTAINING FROM SPEAKING OUT AGAINST THE WRONG

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Mufti Saheb

Assalaamu 'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh

Out of fear that I might cause mischief and trouble, I abstain from speaking out the truth. Also, due to my past weaknesses, I feel ashamed to call towards Deen. Thus, I choose to remain silent. Kindly guide me.

Summary of Reply:

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Brother

Wa 'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh

To abstain from speaking out the truth, out of fear that one may cause mischief and trouble, is a person's natural weakness. This stems from the notion that if I invite others towards Deen, this would imply that I am better than them and that I am steadfast on Deen. Rather, when giving da'wat (inviting towards Deen), make the intention that we are fulfilling the command of Allah Ta'ala and we need to place our reliance on the help of Allah Ta'ala.

We should also keep in mind that, by giving da'wat to others, Deen will firstly become strong in our lives and our weaknesses will be removed. Furthermore, if the person to whom we gave da'wat practices on what we invited him towards, then we will have a share in his reward as well. (*Maktoobaat vol. 5 pg. 56*)

then what is it? To whom is one supplicating?

These are all important aspects over which we should all ponder deeply. It should not be that in the pursuit of a few moments of pleasure, we sacrifice our Deeni values and engage in practices that endanger our imaan. We must remember, at all times, that complete salvation and success lie only in completely adhering to complete Deen. Sayyiduna 'Umar (radhiyallahu 'anhu) mentioned, "We were the most disgraced of people. Allah Ta'ala then gave us honour through Islam. If we ever seek honour in something besides that through which Allah Ta'ala has honoured us (Islam), Allah Ta'ala will disgrace us." (*Mustadrak Haakim #207*)