



HOME SWEET HOME

Home Sweet Home — the very statement sounds so sweet. One can well imagine what is the actual sweetness of a real *home*. Indeed, even if a little hut is truly a *home*, its “sweetness” surpasses the “sweetness” of all the wealth in the world. On the contrary, if it is only a house — merely a physical structure — then the most palatial and exquisite dwelling with state-of-the-art amenities will also be devoid of any sweetness. It will be a bitter place and, despite every comfort and luxury therein, it could become among the most agonising places to be in.

A home is a place of peace and tranquillity, of warmth and affection, a place where despite day-to-day challenges the hearts are bonded, where people care for each other, consider others before themselves and live with mutual respect. Such a place becomes a very sweet home even if it is bare of any luxuries.

WHAT MAKES IT A HOME?

The most important and fundamental aspect that transforms a house into a home is to bring alive the beautiful teachings of the Quraan and sunnah. Without this, even a palace will also be just a house — a place devoid of tranquillity and peace and which will never give one any satisfaction. Some very basic teachings of the sunnah are discussed hereunder. Let us sincerely and wholeheartedly practice upon these simple actions and experience the positive transformation it will bring into our homes insha-Allah.

ENTERING THE HOME

“First impressions are lasting impressions”. Hence, when entering the home, enter cheerfully with a smile. If a person’s shoes are dirty, he will either wipe them on the mat before entering or leave them at the door. Therefore, if a person experienced a most difficult and frustrating day, he should either ‘wipe’ the frustration off his face or leave it at the door before entering. Entering with a frown and scowl and dumping the day’s frustration on the innocent household is not at all fair or considerate. Likewise, the wife should receive the husband cheerfully. She too should not be waiting for the moment that he

enters to offload her frustrations. If any issue has to be addressed, it should be left for much later.

Then, when entering, make salaam to the household in a loving manner. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) mentioned to Hazrat Anas (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) that entering with salaam is a means of barakah (blessings) for not only the one entering but for the entire household (*Sunan Tirmizi #2698*). Likewise, when entering, take the name of Allah Ta’ala and recite the sunnah du’aa for entering the home. Doing so prevents Shaitaan from spending the night in the home, thus safeguarding the household from his mischief and the fights and quarrels that he instigates (*Saheeh Muslim #5262*).

MEALS

For many families, the only opportunity to sit together, as a family, is meal time. Hence, this is an important occasion and should be greatly valued. In this regard, the first point is that the family should sit together and eat their meals together. It should not be that each person eats in isolation, at his own convenience and leisure. In one hadeeth, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) mentioned to the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) that eating together is a means of securing barakah in the food (*Sunan Abi Dawood #3764*).

Before commencing the meal, the sunnah du’aa should be recited, as this prevents Shaitaan from destroying the barakah in the food, thus granting us safety from his evil influence (*Saheeh Muslim #5262*).

FAMILY TIME

One of the most important ingredients required for a house to be a happy home is that of a loving family environment. For this to exist, the household will have to take out the time to bond with one another so that this love and connection as a family can develop. This is indeed the sunnah of Rasulullah

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HOME SWEET HOME

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(sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), who despite having the greatest responsibility to shoulder from the entire mankind, ensured that he took out time to spend with his family. It can be something as simple as spending some time playing with the children, or taking out the time to assist one's wife with her domestic chores, as it is these simple gestures that engender love in the hearts.

Another vital component of family time is that of daily home ta'leem. The family should sit together, read from the Fazaa-il kitaabs and make du'aa together. Some time should also be set aside for reciting the Quraan Majeed and making some zikr. When the Quraan Majeed and the blessed ahaadeeth are recited in one's home, the name of Allah Ta'ala is taken in zikr and the household engage in du'aa together, then how can the home not be one of barakah and happiness?

Of utmost importance, however, is that the head of the household conducts himself in a most loving and caring manner. In this way, the children are raised in an environment where they feel loved and wanted, giving them emotional security.

THE THIEF OF TIME

In the past, people used to say that procrastination is the thief of time. However, even procrastination cannot compare to the new thief on the block – the smartphone. In the name of enhanced connectivity, it has caused families to completely disconnect from one another, where they can be seated next to one another, in the same room, yet be very far from one another — each immersed in their own world of social networking.

For the family to bond and connect with one another, the cell phone usage must be carefully curbed and controlled. For example, the phone should not be used by any person during meal times or at ta'leem time. Likewise, after retiring to bed, the husband and wife should not look at their phones. When entering and exiting the home, the husband should do so while making salaam — not while glued to his phone.

HAPPINESS @ HOME

When these blessed sunnats of Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) are revived in our homes, our homes will be illuminated with noor. The mercy of Allah Ta'ala will rain on our homes and the angels will flock to our homes. Our homes will be true sanctuaries of happiness and contentment. Conversely, if our homes are bereft of these sunnats, then as fancy as our furniture may be, as advanced as our appliances may be and as perfect as the paint may be, we will still feel miserable and constrained at home.

The result of this is that despite filling our homes with every item designed to bring comfort, we will feel the need to flee our homes in the holidays, resorting to holiday 'resorts' and other vacation destinations in a futile attempt to find comfort.

May Allah Ta'ala make our houses into true homes of Deen and fill them with happiness — which is the real "sweetness", aameen.

STAY AWAY

Imagine... that a deadly plague or epidemic has broken out in a certain area. Every person infected by this epidemic dies a painful death within hours. However, the area of the epidemic is one of extreme natural beauty, causing it to be a popular tourism destination.

If any sane, sensible person hears of the epidemic in this region, will he take a chance and visit the area anyway, risking his life for a few moments of fun and entertainment? Obviously not!

EPIDEMIC

In a similar manner, places which abound in sin are 'epidemic areas'. In such areas, one should be very concerned that the punishment of Allah Ta'ala could 'break out', causing each and every person in the vicinity, and even those guilty by mere association, to be 'infected and afflicted'. This is not mere imagination. It is a reality that is highlighted by the following incident:

When Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) were proceeding for the expedition of Tabook, they passed by Hijr, the ruins of Thamood. As they came to this area, Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) instructed the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) to pass by swiftly and said to them, "Do not enter the dwellings of those who have oppressed themselves (through sinning), except in the condition that you are crying, out of the fear of the same punishment afflicting you."

Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) also instructed them to

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"PLEASE LEAVE ME AT HOME!"

Q Every year, my parents take us overseas for the holidays. I know they wish well and want us to have a nice time. The problem is that the resorts and places that we visit are full of sin. Whether it's the beach, malls or any other place, it becomes extremely difficult for me to avoid the music, control my gaze, etc. My uncle's family also comes with us. His daughters don't observe purdah and expect me to speak to them. During these holidays, my Imaan becomes very weak and I become prone to many major sins. My parents are insisting that I have to go along. What should I do?

A Alhamdulillah, it is a very great favour of Allah Ta'ala that He inspired your heart with the concern of protecting your greatest and most valuable asset of imaan. All the wealth of the world is not even equal to a speck of dust compared to the treasure of imaan. Unfortunately, many Muslims take this priceless treasure for granted and, either due to ignorance or due to being in a state of denial, do not bother about what harm they are subjecting their imaan and the imaan of their children to. May Allah Ta'ala grant us all the correct understanding and grant us the ability to refrain from anything that will negatively affect our imaan.

As for your dilemma with your parents, firstly bear in mind that you should always be kind, caring and very respectful towards them. Never talk to them abruptly or rudely. Always serve them as best as you can. Nevertheless, the first and greatest priority is to respect Allah Ta'ala by respecting His laws and respecting the most noble way of His Rasul (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). Therefore, in a nice respectful way, do your utmost to convince them that you cannot accompany them to such venues where your Imaan is going to be seriously battered and bruised. Tell them that you will go in Jamaat and spend your time correctly there. Get someone to talk to them. Use the skill that all youngsters possess to get their way with their parents. Use that skill to get "out of the way" of going to places that are toxic for your Imaan. Plead with them, appeal to them... and cry if you have to. Most of all, engage in much istighfaar and earnest du'aa. Beg of Allah Ta'ala to protect you from every vice and guide you and your family to His pleasure at all times.

ADVICE TO PARENTS

The question above is not unique. May Allah Ta'ala bless all such young people and keep them steadfast. In this time of vice, when people are "competing" in

sinning, how wonderful it is to have such youth who swim against the tsunamis of peer pressure and even family pressure in order to earn the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. It is perhaps through the blessing of their sacrifices that we have been saved from many calamities.

Tragically, in the frenzy of "fun" which captures almost everyone during the so called "silly season", many parents are unconcerned of the impact their manner of holidaying and entertainment is having on the imaan of their children. The environment at this time of the year in most "holiday" venues is charged with nudity, extreme immorality and a host of other evils. Children are constantly bombarded with exposure to almost every vice. This constant exposure severely weakens their imaan, and with the slightest nudge from Shaitaan, they fall headlong into some of the vices themselves.

Many young people have reached out for help to various 'Ulama and social workers. They are battling with drug addiction, involvement in zina, drinking, gambling, etc. Many have confided that these vices "sparked off" while on holiday. Those who avoided the evils above still complained of being totally spiritually drained due to constant involvement in zina of the eyes on the beaches and other holiday venues. Hence, there was no drive to even perform salaah and the inclination towards sin had become very strong. Is this really "wishing well" for our children?

Let us guide our children towards becoming true slaves of Allah Ta'ala. We are all heading towards the grave... and we could be lying there much sooner than we think. Let us work hard to secure our and their "holiday" in the grave and the non-stop entertainment in Jannah, which is awaiting those who sacrificed the impermissible, superficial fun and entertainment of this world for the true and everlasting bliss of the Hereafter.

STAY AWAY

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throw away the water they had drawn from the wells of this area and to also discard the dough that was prepared using this water (due to the effects of the punishment that came in this place). Thereafter, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) covered himself with his shawl and rode swiftly until he passed through and departed from the area. (Saheeh Bukhaari #3378)

The following aspects are the highlights of this hadeeth:

- ◆ Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) hastened out of this area and urged the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) to do the same.
- ◆ When out of necessity one enters such areas where the punishment of Allah Ta'ala has descended, one should be conscious of this and pass through there crying.
- ◆ Even the water of such places is contaminated and the effects of the punishment remain even after centuries.
- ◆ When passing through, one should fear that one is not afflicted by the same punishment.

One should bear in mind that this was the blessed conduct of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), when passing the area of Hijr, despite the fact that more than a thousand years had passed since the punishment of Allah Ta'ala had descended there. If this was the blessed conduct of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) in a place where a thousand years had passed since the punishment of

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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 *Islaahun Nafs* (inner-self reformation). Hereunder is an answer to a question posed to him.

PROTECTION FROM SINS

Bismihi Ta'ala

Respected Mufti Saheb

Assalaamu 'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuhu

Each day Shaitaan seems to be overpowering me even more. I have been troubled for one entire year. When I sit to recite the Quraan Majeed or when I commence my salaah, then too Shaitaan overpowers me. If a beautiful woman has to pass, then I cannot help but look at her. I am helpless when it comes to falling into arguments, lies, backbiting and enmity. Due to all these issues, I do not get a peaceful sleep and I am always distressed and troubled. Please show me a remedy through which Allah Ta'ala will relieve me of my troubles.

Reply:

Sit in solitude with your eyes closed and ponder for some time (7 –10 minutes) that Allah Ta'ala is fully aware of every move you make. He is even aware of the intentions in your heart and the glance of the eye:

يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُورُ

“He (Allah Ta'ala) knows the deceit of the eyes and all that which the heart conceals.” (Surah Ghaafir, v19)

Continue to practise on this to the extent that this remains present in front of you at all times. Furthermore, whichever sin you have a desire to commit, keep in mind the punishment for that sin and insha-Allah this will protect you from committing that evil. (Maktoobaat vol. 5, pg. 28)

Allah Ta'ala rained on the people, then we can well imagine how a Muslim should conduct in a place where due to abundance of sins, the punishment of Allah Ta'ala could suddenly descend. The tsunami that struck on 26 December 2004, which affected fourteen countries and claimed 230 000 lives, almost within

minutes, is a stark reminder that one should never be heedless and go in the midst of all the nudity, sin and vice. .

During this “holiday season”, when numerous fitnas are on the increase, we make du'aa to Allah Ta'ala to safeguard us all and bless us to remain in places where our imaan will remain secure, aameen.