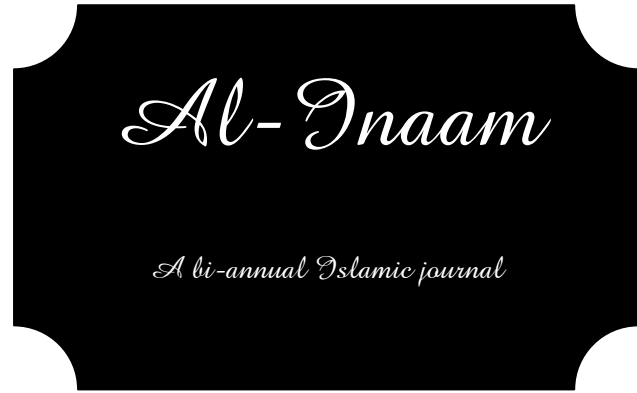


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LESSONS FROM THE QUR'ĀN

Moulānā Ilyās Essack

“And (remember) the day when the wrong doer will bite at his hands, he will say, “Oh! If only I had taken a path with the Messenger. Ah! Woe to me! If only I had not taken so and so as a friend! He indeed led me astray from the reminder (this Qur'ān) after it had come to me. And Shaitān is ever a deserter to man in the hour of need.”

This Āyah was revealed because of a specific incident but the order contained in it is general for all Muslims.

Uqba ibn Mu'īt was one of the leaders of the Mushrikīn of Makkah. He had this habit that whenever he returned from a journey, he used to invite the honoured people of the city for meals. Once, as was his habit, he invited the honoured people of the city and also invited Rasūlullāh ﷺ. When the food was placed in front of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he proclaimed that I cannot eat your food until you bear testimony upon the kalimah. Uqbah recited the kalimah and Rasūlullāh ﷺ fulfilled his promise and partook of Uqbah's food.

Uqbah had a very close friend by the name of Ubay Ibn Khalaf. When he came to know that Uqbah had become a Muslim, he was extremely disappointed. Uqbah excused himself saying, “It would have been a disgrace if the most honoured person from the Quraish (ﷺ) did not partake of my meals, therefore I recited the kalimah.” Ubay ibn Khalaf said, “I will not accept your excuse until

you do not go and spit on the face of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.” The wretched Uqbah did this, thus Allāh disgraced both of them in this world by having both of them being killed during the occasion of Badr. The mention of their punishment in the hereafter is made in this Āyah when Allāh mentions, that when they will see the punishment of the Ākhirah, they will, out of extreme sorrow, bite at their fingers and say, if only I had not chosen Ubay ibn Khalaf as my friend.

Even though this Āyah was revealed specifically concerning the incident of Uqbah but just as the words of this Āyah are general, so too are the injunctions contained in this Āyah. These Āyāt show that those two friends who are united in sin and disobedience and help each other upon evil, their result will be the same that on the day of Qiyāmah they will weep upon their friendship.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ is reported to have said, “Do not befriend except a believer and only a pious person should partake of your meals.” In other words do not keep company or friendship except with a pious person.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ is reported to have said, “Every person is upon the way of his friend, so each person should ponder who he is befriending.”

During the holiday period, evil company and wrong environment will wreak havoc upon our Imān and character. Therefore, let us adhere strictly to the injunctions laid down by these Āyāt of the Qur’ān. ●

From the Dārul Ifiā

Differences of the Imams

Question

Why do the four Imams differ from one other? If all the Imams deduced the laws directly from the Qur'an and Hadith, how is it possible for them to differ on various aspects?

Answer

While it is a fact that all the Imams derived their laws directly from the Quran and sunnah, there are many factors which led to them reaching different conclusions. We will explain a few of these factors in brief, with examples where necessary:

1. Differences concerning the authenticity of a hadith

A- Conditions for acceptance

Each Imam and muhaddith laid down certain conditions for a hadith to be classified as Sahih (authentic) in his opinion. These conditions differed from person to person, thus many a hadith would be sahih according to one and not sahih in the eyes of another. Thus the one who classified it as sahih would deduce a ruling from it while the other would not accept such a ruling. This difference is found amongst the Muhaddithin to a great extent, thus we find Imam Muslim in the foreword to his Sahih,

devoting a special chapter to discussing the difference of opinion between him and Imam Bukhari on certain conditions for authenticity. In his opinion, Imam Bukhari had laid down conditions that were too strict and which would lead to many acceptable ahadith, being rejected.

B. Does a hadith have to be sahih, in order to practice upon it?

Everyone agrees that if a hadith is sahih or hasan, it could be practiced upon. However, differences of opinion arise concerning those ahadith which contain slight weaknesses. According to the majority of Ulama, a slightly weak hadith can be practiced upon, if there are no other narrations on the topic, however some Ulama disagree, thus they would not accept a ruling deduced from such a narration.

C. Difference in the wording of the hadith

It is an accepted practice amongst the muhaddithin to narrate a hadith with different wording, however, ensuring that the meaning was kept intact. However some Fuqaha like Imam Abu Hanifah (Rah) laid down a condition that the one who changes the wording must be a faqih, so that he could ensure that he understands the proper meaning of the hadith, thus not changing the meaning unintentionally. An example of this is a hadith: "He who performs janazah salah in the masjid, then there is nothing against him (Alaihi). " On the basis of this hadith some Imams opine that there is nothing wrong with performing janazah salah in a masjid. However

others, like Imam Abu Hanifah show that the correct wording is "He who performs janazah salah in the masjid, there is nothing for him" ("lahu" not "Alaihi"). The other version is said to be a distortion caused by a narrator who wasn't cautious when changing the wording.

2. Differences in understanding a hadith

These difference are based on two main aspects:

A. Differences in the intellectual capacity of each person

Thus sometimes 2 Imams had seen the same hadith, however Allah granted one of them the ability to deduce a ruling from it, that never crossed the mind of another. An incident that illustrates this very beautifully is one mentioned by Mulla Ali Qari about a person who inquired a masalah from Imam Abu Hanifah. When the Imam answered him, the great Tabi'ee and muhaddith Al-A'mash, who was sitting nearby, asked Imam Saheb: " Where did you get this ruling from?" Imam Sahib then narrated 6 ahadith (none of which mentioned any rulings) that he had learnt from Al-A'mash himself, the combination of which Imam Saheb used to deduce the ruling. Al-A'Mash was dumbfounded and said: "The ahadith that I narrated to you over 100 days, you are mentioning to me in a few seconds! I never imagined that you could deduce anything from these narrations! O Fuqaha! You are the doctors and we (the muhadditheen) are the chemists. (i.e. we supply the ahadith and you deduce the ruling from them).

B. A hadith very often could have two or more meanings

Thus one Imam would prefer one meaning and pass a ruling on it, while another would prefer another meaning.

3. Differences in deducing a ruling from narrations seemingly contradictory to each other

This is amongst the main causes of differences of opinion. The books of ahadith are full of narrations seemingly contradictory to one other. Each Imam laid down his own principles for dealing with these e.g.

Some would try to reconcile between the narrations, by interpreting them in a manner allowing them to conform with one another.

Some would take one to be abrogated and would thus act upon the other

Some would mention reasons for preferring one to the other.

4. Differences based on them being aware of a certain hadith

The ahadith of Nabi (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) and those mentioning the practices of the sahabah number in the millions and there is no-one who can claim to have memorised every single one of them. Thus at times an Imam would issue a ruling on a hadith which he was

aware of, while the others would issue a contradictory ruling on account of them not being aware of this hadith.

These are a few of the primary factors which led to the differences of opinion we find between the Mazahib. ●

This answer is a summary of the incredible book "Atharul Hadith As-Sharif" by the great Hanafi Scholar of Madinah Shaikh Muhammad Awwaamah (Daamat Barakaatuhu). and Allah Ta'ala Knows Best

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The likeness of one who wages jihad in the way of Allah is as the likeness of someone diligently fasting who slackens neither from fasting nor prayer, until he returns. (Hadith)

Audible and Inaudible Dhikr

A Balanced View of Dhikre Jahri and Dhikre Khafi by the eminent saint, Hadrat Moulānā Mirzā Mazhar Jāne Jānā (Rahimahullāh)

This was a letter written by Moulānā Mirzā Mazhar Jāne Jānā (Rahimahullāh) in Persian. Hereunder follows the English translation of the letter.

After praising Allāh and sending salutations to Nabī ﷺ, it should be remembered that a group of Hanafī jurists have exceeded the limits in rejecting dhikre jahri (audible dhikr) and issuing the verdict that it is harām. Some scholars of hadīth (muḥaddithūn) have proven the permissibility of audible dhikr and have endeavoured to prove that audible dhikr is more virtuous than inaudible dhikr. Both these groups have treaded the path of excess and immoderation. They have not been just in this discussion which requires some clarification and a conclusive decision.

This clarification will be discussed hereunder. It should be borne in mind that dhikr means to remember. This is of three types:

Firstly, to engage in dhikr with the tongue only without engaging the heart. It is clear that this type of dhikr is not taken into consideration and is actually a part of the neglect of dhikr.

The second type of dhikr is dhikr of the heart without any movement of the tongue. In the terminology of the Sūfīs, it is termed “dhikr khafi” - silent dhikr. The basis of all the meditation (*murāqabah*) of the Sūfīs is this type of dhikr (khafi). It is practised by all the different groups of the Sūfīs.

This dhikr is of two types:

Firstly, to remember only the being of Allāh and not to ponder over any of His attributes.

Secondly, to ponder over one of Allāh's attributes at the time of engaging in dhikr, together with pondering over His being.

Both these forms are deduced from the verse,

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ...

“Remember your Lord in yourself humbly and fearfully, without loudness of voice...” (Sūrah A'rāf: 205)

The second method is to ponder over the being of Allah together with the bounties He has favoured mankind with. This form of dhikr is like searching for a person by looking at the signs he has left behind. In the terminology of the Sharī'ah, such dhikr is referred to as 'fikr'. This form of dhikr is beneficial for the increase of one's imān. The Qur'ān and the hadīth are filled with the merits of this dhikr.

The third form of dhikr is to engage the tongue together with the heart in remembering Allah. This is the most complete form of dhikr. There are two forms of this dhikr:

Firstly, the person engaging in dhikr only makes himself heard without raising his voice. In Sharī'ah, this is called dhikr khafī. It is derived from the verse,

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً

“Remember your Lord in yourself humbly and fearfully.”
(Sūrah A'rāf, verse 55)

The second form is to engage in audible dhikr whereby the next person can hear you. In Sharī'ah, it is called dhikr jahrī. In certain specific cases, it is more meritorious than the inaudible dhikr. It is not unconditionally more virtuous. This virtue is due to a divine wisdom as in the case of the adhān and the recitation of the Qur'ān during the audible ṣalāhs, the audible dhikr is to awaken those who are asleep.

The virtue of dhikr khafī is that the one engaging in such dhikr is saved from the maladies of ostentation and doing actions for fame. Both these defects prevent the acceptance of good deeds.

The virtue of dhikr khafī over dhikr jahrī has been established from the Qur'ān and hadīth.

In fact, the hadīth, “You are neither calling out to a deaf being or one that is absent” seems to indicate a

prohibition of dhikr jahrī. The audible dhikr done in a specific manner as well as meditation has come in vogue in the latter era of the pious ones. They have not been extracted from the Qur'ān or hadīth but the saints have derived these forms from divine inspiration and from the source of divine abundance (mabda' faid) and instituted them. Sharī'ah is silent on the matter, that is, it neither approves of the practice nor rejects it.

There are other types of benefits as well in this form of dhikr and there is no need to reject it. Yes, this much is clear that whatever is established from the Qur'ān and hadīth is more meritorious than what is established from other sources, even if the latter is permissible and beneficial.

When Nabī ﷺ instructed Hadrat Ālī ؑ to recite the kalimah tayyibah as narrated by Shaddād Ibn Ous ؑ, it meant a moderate loud voice not exceeding any limits as mentioned at the beginning of this very hadīth that Nabī firstly instructed Hadrat Ālī ؑ to close the door. Thereafter he told him to engage in audible dhikr. This indicates that on the whole, concealment was intended.

The issue is not with regard to the permissibility or non-permissibility of jahr but with regard to its being more virtuous or not.

To claim that audible dhikr is unconditionally better than inaudible dhikr is to reject the explicit Qur'ānic verses and Shar'ī proofs. Accordingly, this view is incorrect.

Similarly, to unconditionally claim that dhikr khafī is more virtuous, is tantamount to rejecting the texts of Sharī'ah. In a like manner, to reject all forms of dhikr jahrī is going against Islamic texts. The audible dhikr is not permissible in some instances, e.g. to recite audibly in the sirrī ṣalāhs (those that have to be performed inaudibly). To claim that dhikr khafī is sunnah while regarding dhikr khafī to refer to the *murāqabah* (meditation) as espoused by the Sūfīs or to regard as Sharī'ah-compliant that dhikr jahrī which the Sūfīs have initiated in which the dhikr is excessively loud, is futile, let alone claiming it to be more virtuous.

One should not pay attention to the haughtiness and the discussion raised by some youth on both sides as it is not acceptable.

To claim that audible dhikr is unconditionally better than inaudible dhikr is to reject the explicit Qur'ānic verses and Shar'ī proofs. Accordingly, this view is incorrect.

It is abominable to exceed the limits in any direction. Moderation is the better option. The best speech is the one that is brief and concise.

May peace be upon the one who follows the correct guidance and adopts the path of Nabī ﷺ. ●

(Translated by Moulānā Ebrāhīm Muḥammad from “*Kashkol*” of Muftī Muḥammad Shafī Ṣāḥeb *Rahimahullāh*)

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hambal

(*Rahimahullāh*)

Imam Ahmad (*Rahimahullāh*) was born in the year 164 A.H. and he passed away in the year 241 A.H. Imam Ahmad (*Rahimahullāh*) began his quest for the knowledge of hadith at the age of 16. He set out for Kufah in the year 183 A.H. and to Basra in 186 A.H. and to Sufyaan bin 'Uyaynah in Makkah in 187 A.H. and he went to Imam Abdur Razzaq in San'aa –together with Imam Yahya bin Ma'een- in the year 197 A.H.

He is quite renowned due to his celebrated work known as: "Musnad Imam Ahmad". Ibnul Jawzi (*Rahimahullāh*) states: “Imam Ahmad travelled the world twice and thereafter he compiled his Musnad”

Imaam Ahmad (*Rahimahullāh*) says: " I travelled in search of knowledge and hadith to: Shaam, Morocco, Aljazaair (Algeria), Makkah, Madinah, Yemen, 'Iraq, Persia and Khurasaan and then returned to Baghdad. And when I went to Kufah, at one stage I only had a brick as my pillow!" [Ibid]

Imaam Yahya ibn Ma'een (*Rahimahullāh*) narrates a few outstanding incidents that occurred during his journey with Imaam Ahmad (*Rahimahullāh*) to Sana'a in Yemen for the sake of benefiting from Imaam Abdur Razzaq (*Rahimahullāh*) – the author of Musannaf 'Abdul Razzaq.

He says: "When we set out for Yemen to meet Imaam Abdur Razzaq, we first went for Haj. One day whilst I was in tawāf, I spotted Imaam Abdur Razzaq. So I greeted him and said to him: "Here is your brother Imaam Ahmad ibn Hambal" He replied: " May Allah keep him alive and steadfast for verily I have heard only good about him". I then said to Imaam Ahmad (*Rahimahullāh*): "Allah has shortened our distance, granted us abundance of wealth and he has saved us from a month long journey". Imaam Ahmad said: "In Baghdad I had intended to hear (hadith) from Imaam Abdur Razzaq (*Rahimahullāh*) in San'aa, by Allah I shall never change my Intention".

Imaam Yahya (*Rahimahullāh*) says: "When we went to San'aa, Imaam Ahmad's (*Rahimahullāh*) wealth became exhausted. Imaam Abdur Razzaq (*Rahimahullāh*) offered him a large sum of money but he refused to accept it. Then he asked him to take it as a loan, he still refused. He also refused our wealth that we had offered him. When we checked on him we found that he used to sell belts and consume the profit."

Imaam Ibnul Jawzi (*Rahimahullāh*) states in his book: "Manaaqibul Imaam Ahmad" that once Imaam Abdur Razzaq mentioned Imaam Ahmad (in his gathering) and tears came to his eyes. He then said: "He came to us and stayed for approximately 2 years. I once came to know that his allowance had finished so I took him by his hand behind the door and when we were alone, I said to him: "Verily I do not accumulate a lot of wealth. When we sell the crops, the money gets used up in something or the

other, yet I have found 10 dinars by the women folk of the house, so take it and I hope that before you spend it, we would have acquired more. He replied: "O Abdur Razzaq ! If I ever accepted anything from people, I would have accepted from you."

Imaam Ibnul Jawzi (*Rahimahullāh*) then narrated from Imaam Ishaq ibn Raahuyah (1) that:" When Imaam Ahmad went to Imaam Abdur Razzaq and his expenditure became exhausted, his compatriots offered to assist him but he refused and instead he hired himself out as a porter until he reached San'aa."

Imaam Ahmad bin Sinaan Al-Waasity (*Rahimahullāh*) says: "I have heard that Imaam Ahmad (*Rahimahullāh*) on one occasion pawned his shoes by a baker in lieu of food that he had taken from him!"

Haafiz Ibn Katheer (*Rahimahullāh*) while discussing the hardships that Imaam Ahmad undertook during his student days mentions: "His clothes were stolen while he was in Yemen so he stayed in his room. When his companions became aware of this, they offered him gold coins but he refused. In fact he only took 1 Dinar with the condition that he will become their scribe! He took it as a payment for his service.

The lesson to learn from this aspect of the life of such a great Imaam is that he had remained independent from everyone besides Allaah Ta'ala.

Let us also follow his footsteps, in that if poverty befalls us, we would rather earn our livelihood through our own effort, by placing total reliance on Almighty Allaah.

After all, in this way he became "Imaamul Muslimeen" (These are the words of Imaam Yahya ibn Ma'een Rahimahullāh). ●

(Translated by Moulānā Muhammad Hāroon Abbasomar from "Safahāt Min Sabril Ulamā" of Sheikh Abdul Fattāh Abu Ghuddah Rahimahullāh)



A lawyer is a person who writes a 10,000-word document and calls it a "brief."



Education is what you get when you read the manual...

Experience is what you get when you don't read the manual.

Secular Education

This is a letter from the Vice-Chancellor of `Aligarh Muslim University to Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib of Jalālābād and Hadrat's reply to it.

Respected and honoured Maulānā Masīhullāh Sāhib
Assalāmu`alykum Warahmatullāhi Wabarakātuhi

It is a rather unpalatable fact that the Muslims of India in comparison to the other nations are very backward in the modern branches of knowledge particularly in the field of science. In fact, it won't be an exaggeration to claim that the Muslims are "Not even likened to the dust of the caravan traversing this path.

How strange that the nation that led the world for around three hundred and fifty years in the fields of knowledge and wisdom and which produced professionals of their times in modern sciences in the likes of Jābir bin Hayyān, Khawārizmi, Rāzī, Abul-Wafā, Al-Bayrūni Abu`Ali Sena and Abul-Haytham, today the same nation is not even in the ranks of the followers (let alone in the ranks of the leaders.) Why is this? Why have the Muslims failed to realize that just as the knowledge of the book of Allāh is the knowledge of Dīn, similarly the knowledge of the kingdom of Allāh is the knowledge of science?

This is such an enigma in the annals of history that if it is not impossible to unravel it, it sure is difficult to solve. The circumstances of our times demands that we should

not procrastinate in this enigma but rather we should take swift action in eradicating the indolence of the Indian Muslims in regards to scientific knowledge.

It has become quite evident that due to the economical, educational and social revolution brought about by modern scientific discoveries, the only nation that may dream of an honourable status in international circles is the nation that is proficient in scientific knowledge and technology.

Also, in light of the revolutionising statement - "wisdom is the mislaid (goal) of a believer, - leading the world in sciences and wisdom is imperative upon us Muslims.

You will most definitely be pleased to note that last year the Aligarh Muslim university has established a centre for the promotion of science. The main objective of this centre is to promote scientific knowledge amongst the Muslims of India. Together with making the Muslims aware of the importance of scientific knowledge, the centre will also organise a few educational programmes on scientific issues.

Although this is a rather formidable task, we have firm conviction that if your constant assistance is with us, this task can be completed successfully.

We have enclosed together with this letter a questionnaire. This questionnaire will enable us to learn more about your religious institute. Also, we would like

your views on the imparting of scientific knowledge (in our religious institutes).

We firmly believe that you will fill in the questionnaire and send it to us in the enclosed envelope at your earliest convenience. We also hope that you will honour us with your precious advice regarding our programme. We hope this letter lands you in radiant health.

(Humble servant) Sayyid Hâmid

1407 A.H. 1987 A.D.

Hadrat's Reply

Respected and honoured vice-chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University

Assalâmu`alykum Warahmatullahi Wabarkatuhu

We hope this letter finds you in radiant health.

Your questionnaire regarding the centre for the promotion of science has reached us. In response, we reply as follows:

Just as economics, commerce, sociology, cultural sciences etc. are all branches of knowledge serving mankind without which the wheels of life will cease to turn, the same applies to science. In respect of science being a servant of mankind, this branch of knowledge may be pursued and employed for the success and comfort of man. To this end, there is total Shar'ie permissibility.

However, if science is employed to create devices for the destruction of mankind, or on the strength of science the strong oppress the weak or infringe on their rights, then Shar`iat will never permit such evil misuse of science. Hence, before attempting to focus your attention towards the progress of science, it is more important to produce individuals who will be endowed with the eternal wealth of Îmân and pious actions and individuals who will be perpetually overcome with the fear of Allâh Ta`âlâ. Fearful of Allâh Ta`âlâ, they will become examples of “the mercy of mankind” Sallallâhu `Alayhi Wasalam and instead of being obnoxious to mankind, they will become more soothing. This is evident from the thirteen years of spiritual nurturing of Makkah applied to the Sahâbah Radiallâhum by Rasûlullâh Sallallâhu `Alayhi Wasallam. The centres for preparing such individuals are these Islâmîc institutes more commonly referred to as Arabic Madrasahs. Admission to these Dînî institutes by a student, who acquires Dînî knowledge with sincerity compounded with true zeal, will no doubt leave a favourable impression. As Allâh Ta`âlâ declares in the Holy Qurân: “Only the `Ulamâ from His servants fear Allâh.” [Pârah 22 Rukû 15]

Another method of preparing such individuals is to stay with sincerity and true zeal for some time in a centre for spiritual enhancement commonly referred to as a Khânqâh. As Allâh Ta`âlâ commands: “O You who believe! Assume Taqwâ (Allâh-consciousness) and be with the truthful.”

In short, if the proponents of science possess the aforementioned attributes, they will become total comforters of mankind and not carnage-mongers as evident today.

Hence, taking into account the principal of ‘division of work’, the subject matter of the Dînî Madâris is the production of individuals and not the production of materialistic wealth. These `ilmî Madâris are preserving the knowledge of the Dîn in favour of which Allâh Ta`âlâ declares: “Verily, the (only true) religion by Allâh, is Islâm.” [Pârah 3 Rukû 10]

He also said: “Today, I have perfected for you your religion and I have completed My favours upon you and I am satisfied with Islâm as a religion for you.” [Pârah 6 Rukû 5]

Hadrat `Umar Radiallâhu `Anhu affirmed: “We are a nation whom Allâh had honoured with Islâm.”

Hence, it is imperative upon these Dînî institutes not to deviate from their purpose and remain steadfast in the service of Dîn. The students should remain totally absorbed and devoted to their studies, as it is generally not possible for a student to acquire Dînî knowledge extensively and to gain perfection in the pursuit of science as well. Therefore, the pursuit of both branches of knowledge simultaneously will fall within the ambit of the expression “the pursuit of everything results in the loss of everything”.

Nevertheless, the students acquiring secular knowledge in secular institutes should be motivated to gain

proficiency in the various branches of science. They should also be in the forefront of today's modern inventions. Hence, the establishment of the centre for the promotion of science is an admirable move.

The principal of 'the division of work' is beneficial all round. Hence, if a centre for the promotion of science is established in a Dînî institute and students pursuing secular knowledge in university and colleges are invited to attend such a Dînî institute to major in Fiqh, Hadîth, Tafsîr etc., and then apply these subjects in their respective secular universities, you will also not be prepared to implement such a move.

In regards to students graduating from Dînî Madrasahs and then acquiring science in such centres, we would like to submit that the influence of the surroundings is a natural consequence and also the Matb`û (pursued) leaves a distinct impression on the Tâb`î (pursuer).

Hence, these Madrasah students upon whom there existed some impression of a Dînî environment will now enter into another environment and render themselves susceptible to the impressions of that particular environment, as evident. It is a well-observed fact that some Madrasah students who gain admission into Tibbiyyah (Ayurvedic) medical colleges are adversely affected by such an environment. Their dressing and style changes (for the worse). Even their Salâh suffers from their negligence and indolence. In a similar manner, secular students who join the Tablîgh Jamât or who gain admission into Dînî Madrasahs, they are favourably

impressed by their environment and they eventually also become Dînî inclined. Therefore, the admission of Arabic Madrasah students to such faculties of science is misplaced whilst the admission of secular students to Dînî institutes is Islâmically well placed.

You mentioned that Muslims gained world leadership due to their materialistic progress and they can still acquire that noble position with materialistic progress. To this we would like to comment that every Muslim, as a true Muslim, has firm conviction that the Dînî and materialistic success of the Muslims, and the leadership of the world is dependent upon Îmân and practising good deeds with total submission to the physical as well as the spiritual laws of Islâm and Not on materialistic progress alone. As Allâh Ta`âlâ declares: "You will be supreme if you are believers." [Pârah 4 Ruk`û 5] In another verse, He says: "Verily, the only (true) religion by Allâh is Islâm." The same is contained in the Îman-kindling statement of Hadrat `Umar Radiallâhu `Anhu wherein he declares: "We are a nation whom Allâh has honoured with Islâm."

The supremacy, victory and leadership Rasûlullâh Sallallâhu `Alayhi Wasallam and the Sahâbah Radiallâhu `Anhum enjoyed over the people of Makkah, Rome and Persia was obviously not because of materialistic achievements as evident from the narrations. Compared to their subjugated foes, the Muslims were materialistically very backward. Their supremacy and triumph was based –as divinely promised – on Îmân and good actions. To this day, this divine promise remains

unchanged and it will, Inshâ Allâh, remain unchanged. When the capital of the Muslims, Îmân and good deeds, suffered a loss, then the dunyâ the Muslims were holding onto also left them as evident from the history of Samarqand, Khawârizm, Spain and also India.

A Muslim also firmly believes that –may Allâh forbid - if a nation is deprived of the capital of Îmân and good deeds and no matter how advanced it may be in materialistic terms and even if it is considered a supreme power, it will ultimately be a failure. The ultimate deprivation of all the Namrûdî, Shaddâdî, Fir`aunî, Qârûnî and Tâghûtî forces are not unknown to people. The Holy Qurân openly declares in regards to such people: “They have lost the dunyâ and the hereafter.” This is in contrary to the nation who due to its natural environment may be regarded as materialistically downtrodden but it is endowed with the eternal wealth of Îmân and good deeds, such a nation is truly successful. They will even gain worldly benefits as evident from the divine declaration of the Qurân. They are also promised vicegerency on this earth. As Allâh promises: “Allâh had promised those who believe from amongst you and perform good deeds that He will make them successors on the earth as He made those successors before them.” [Pârah 18 Ruk`û 13]

Since it is an accepted fact that the actual objective of the creation of man is the total obedience and devotion to his Creator and Master, the divine laws of Allâh Ta`âlâ will have to be observed in every single sphere of life whether it is in business dealings or in social life or

whether it is in spiritual life, politics or sociology. This has been explicitly mentioned in the verse, “And I have not created Jinn and man but so that they may worship Me.” [Pârah 27 Ruk`û 3] How should Allâh Ta`âlâ be worshipped? What is the correct method of devotion? This is dependent upon the correct knowledge of Dîn. And Dînî knowledge can be acquired in total from these Dînî Madrasahs. In short, it is imperative upon the Dînî Madrasahs to remain devoted to and occupied with their objective of Dînî knowledge so that this knowledge, upon which is based the preservation of Dîn, continues without interruption.

Nevertheless, students pursuing science are also urged to resort to the Dînî Madâris once they complete their secular studies. This will ensure their success in Dîn and the dunyâ and become befitting of the verse “They are truly successful”.

“O our Lord! Grant us goodness in this world and goodness in the hereafter and protect us from the punishment of the fire.”

In spite of the aforementioned discourse, let it be very clear that we do not refute the employment of material things. How can we refute this when we have been commanded to accumulate material things? Allâh Ta`âlâ says: “and prepare for them (the enemy) whatever you can manage of force and tethered horses so that you may instil awe with it in the enemies of Allâh and your enemies.” [Pârah 10 Ruk`û 4] At another juncture, Allâh Ta`âlâ declares: “O you who believe! Take your precaution.” [Pârah 5 Ruk`û 7] This is more of a general

rule. And He also said: “O you who believe! Exercise patience, and outdo others in exercising patience and be prepared.” [Pârah 4 Ruk`û 11] Hence, the acquisition of material things will become imperative if the time determines its need. In fact, considering the aforementioned verse ‘and prepare for them whatever you can’, will render such acquisition a necessity of life. Nowadays, modern technology and inventions are based on the acquisition of science. So can we refute the permissibility of acquiring science? However, the pursuit of science is not sufficient. Together with this, there should be an accumulation of the means of attaining materialistic wealth. This acquisition is based on the presence of a Markaz (a united Muslim platform).

Therefore, if the knowledge of science is necessary for the progress of the Muslims, then Taqwâ (subjugation to the commandments of Allâh) is even more imperative. Rightful subjugation to the commandments of Allâh Ta`âlâ is based on the presence of a Markaz. In other words, stable progress is based on a Markaz because if the Muslims have one Markaz, it will bring about peace, stability, unity, steadfastness and it will instil awe and fear into the hearts of the enemies of Allâh and His Rasûl Sallallâhu `Alayhi Wasallam – as mentioned above ‘so that you may instil awe with it in the enemies of Allâh and your enemies’.

Nevertheless, progress depends on the formation of a Markaz because the progress of the Muslims is dependent on the formation of a Markaz. However, Taqwâ (Allâh-consciousness) is the first and foremost

condition for this objective. The proof of this lies in the thirteen years of Makkan life, which was a life of Taqwâ. In Makkah, Taqwâ was practically implemented whilst the ten years of Madinah was a life of the Markaz. The Markaz of the Muslims was only established after they came to Madinah Munawwarah.

In short, a correct, honourable, awe-inspiring life of progress is based only and solely on two things; Taqwâ and a Markaz.

Allâhumma Kullal-Khair Li Kulli Muslimin wa Muslimah Wassalâm

Ahqar Muhammad Masîhullâh `Ufiya `Anhu

22nd Muharram 1408 A.H. ●

(Translated by Moulânâ Muhammad Kadwa from
“*Diyâus-Sâlik*” Vol. 1 Page 289-298)

Abū Hurairah ؓ said, "Move your funeral processions on swiftly, for it is either a good thing you are sending forward or an evil thing you are removing from your shoulders."

WOMEN IN ISLĀM

The issue of women in Islām has been subjected to all kinds of controversies, misunderstandings and especially misinformation. To begin with, the most important aspect of this issue is the spiritual aspect. Muslims must accept that the main purpose behind the creation of Jinn and humans is that they should worship none other than Allāh, for Allāh mentions in His Qur’ān:

“That I have created the Jinn and Human only for My worship.”

From this we can see that in this spiritual matter Islām makes no distinction between men and women. Both have a duty to fulfil their religious obligations, both will be judged by Allāh and both will be rewarded or punished according to their individual actions.

At this point a question might arise that if such a complete and comprehensive spiritual equality exists between these two sexes, then why is this identical treatment not found in other rights, duties and privileges. Muslims and especially non-Muslims question why men go out to work while women are encouraged to stay at home, why women have to wear hijāb. Why does a brother receive a larger share of inheritance, why can a man be a ruler over a woman etc. these non-Muslims conclude that Islām treats women as inferior beings.

Before these questions are explained, one must understand that laws can never be discussed without

being explained, so we must firstly consider the fundamental Islāmic ethos that men and women are two different yet complementary sexes. It is an established medical fact that men and women have different biological compositions and temperaments. Allāh ﷻ created us and knows this biological difference better than we do. He has thus assigned to men and women the roles that each excels in due to its nature.

Neither gender is inferior or superior to the other. Instead they complement each other like two halves of a whole. A simple example is that in everyday life we see that society consists of many different kinds of people, all of whom play a particular role to keep the society intact. The farmer and the doctor make different contributions to society, but both are equally important, each one excels in his own field and each provides a service for the other.

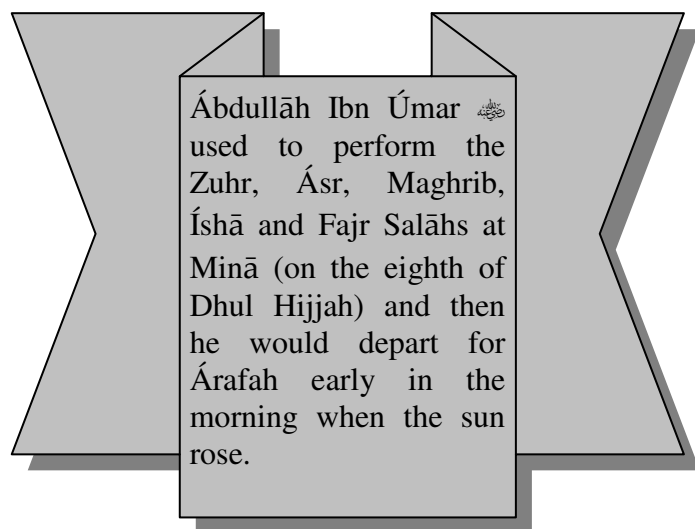
Similarly, men and women are different sexes but they play vital roles in their own areas of excellence. The hadīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ speaks of women with praise and respect. Nabī ﷺ says, “The world and all the things in it are precious, but the most precious thing in the world is a virtuous woman.” (Musnad Ahmad, Sahīh Muslim)

While men are the physically strong sex, the woman’s biological make up has made her excel as a home maker. She alone can be impregnated, carry and deliver the child and then suckle the baby. Her gentle, caring and self sacrificing temperament is best suited to bringing up children and looking after a home.

So, O Mothers and Sisters in Islām, don't feel that Allāh ﷻ has made you inferior. Rather Allāh ﷻ has honoured you and given you an important role in your society and in Islām, for it is you who will bring forth leaders in the form of Huffāz, Ulamā, doctors, lawyers, etc. Those women who are in hijāb should not feel that Allāh has ostracized them by covering them up. Rather Allāh ﷻ has protected them just like how an oyster protects its beautiful pearl.

You, O believing Mother and Sister in the eyes of Islām, are those beautiful pearls. ●

(Translated by Mohseen Essop
3rd year student at In'aamiyyah)



Most western views of Muslims are founded on ignorance

by Sheikh Hamza Yusuf

When a Welsh resistance leader was captured and brought before the emperor in Rome, he said: "Because you desire to conquer the world, it does not necessarily follow that the world desires to be conquered by you." Today one could offer an echo of this sentiment to western liberals: "Because you wish your values to prevail throughout the world, it does not always follow that the world wishes to adopt them." The imperial voice is based on ignorance of the rich traditions of other civilisations, and on an undue optimism about what the west is doing to the world politically, economically and environmentally.

The entrenched beliefs many westerners profess about Islam often reveal more about the west than they do about Islam or Muslims. The Ottomans were history's longest-lasting major dynasty; their durability must have had some relation to their ability to rule a multi-faith empire at a time when Europe was busily hanging, drawing and quartering different varieties of Christian believer.

Today Islam is said to be less, not more, tolerant than the west, and we need to ask which, precisely, are the "western" values with which Islam is so incompatible? Some believe Islam's attitude towards women is the source of the Muslim "problem". Westerners need to look to their own attitudes here and recognise that only

very recently have patriarchal structures begun to erode in the west.

The Islamic tradition does show some areas of apparent incompatibility with the goals of women in the west, and Muslims have a long way to go in their attitudes towards women. But blaming the religion is again to express an ignorance both of the religion and of the historical struggle for equality of women in Muslim societies.

A careful reading of modern female theologians of Islam would cause western women to be impressed by legal injunctions more than 1,000 years old that, for instance, grant women legal rights to domestic help at the expense of their husbands. Three of the four Sunni schools consider domestic chores outside the scope of a woman's legal responsibilities toward her husband. Contrast that with US polls showing that working women still do 80% of domestic chores.

Westerners, in their advocacy of global conformism, often speak of "progress" and the rejection of the not-too-distant feudal past, and are less likely to reveal their unease about corporate hegemony and the real human implications of globalisation.

Neither are the missionaries of western values willing to consider why Europe, the heart of the west, should have generated two world wars which killed more civilians than all the wars of the previous 20 centuries. As Muslims point out, we are asked to call them "world wars" despite their reality as western wars, which targeted civilians with weapons of mass destruction at a time when Islam was largely at peace.

We Muslims are unpersuaded by many triumphalist claims made for the west, but are happy with its core

values. As a westerner, the child of civil rights and anti-war activists, I embraced Islam not in abandonment of my core values, drawn almost entirely from the progressive tradition, but as an affirmation of them. I have since studied Islamic law for 10 years with traditionally trained scholars, and while some particulars in medieval legal texts have troubled me, never have the universals come into conflict with anything my progressive Californian mother taught me. Instead, I have marvelled at how most of what western society claims as its own highest ideals are deeply rooted in Islamic tradition.

The chauvinism apparent among some westerners is typically triggered by Islamic extremism. Few take the trouble to notice that mainstream Islam dislikes the extremists as much as the west does. What I fear is that an excuse has been provided to supply some westerners with a replacement for their older habit of anti-semitism. The shift is not such a difficult one. Arabs, after all, are semites, and the Arabian prophet's teaching is closer in its theology and law to Judaism than it is to Christianity. We Muslims in the west, like Jews before us, grapple with the same issues that Jews of the past did: integration or isolation, tradition or reform, intermarriage or intra-marriage.

Muslims who yearn for an ideal Islamic state are in some ways reflecting the old aspirations of the Diaspora Jews for a homeland where they would be free to be different. Muslims, like Jews, often dress differently; we cannot eat some of the food of the host countries. Like the Jews of the past, we are now seen as parasites on the social body, burdened with a uniform and unreformable law,

contributing little, scheming in ghettos, and obscurely indifferent to personal hygiene.

Cartoons of Arabs seem little different to the caricatures of Jews in German newspapers of the Nazi period. In the 1930s, such images ensured that few found the courage to speak out about the possible consequences of such a demonisation, just as few today are really thinking about the anti-Muslim rhetoric of the extreme-right parties across Europe. Muslims in general, and Arabs especially, have become the new "other".

When I met President Bush last year, I gave him two books. One was The Essential Koran, translated by Thomas Cleary. The second was another translation by Cleary, Thunder in the Sky: Secrets of the Acquisition and Use of Power. Written by an ancient Chinese sage, it reflects the universal values of another great people.

I did this because, as an American, rooted in the best of western tradition, and a Muslim convert who finds much of profundity in Chinese philosophy, I believe the "Huntington thesis" that these three great civilisations must inevitably clash is a lie. Each civilisation speaks with many voices; the best of them find much in common. Not only can our civilisations co-exist in our respective parts of the world, they can co-exist in the individual heart, as they do in mine. We can enrich each other if we choose to embrace our essential humanity; we can destroy the world if we choose to stress our differences. ●

(Shaykh Hamza Yusuf Hanson is the director of the US-based Zaytuna Institute)

The Reality of Man

Moulānā Zul Fiqar Ahmad (Dāmat Barakātuhum)

An elderly man met a rich man who was walking very proudly. They were in two different worlds. The rich man was drowned in the thoughts of his wealth while the other was drowned in the thoughts of Allah ﷻ. Seeing this rich man walking so arrogantly, the elderly person recited a verse from the Holy Quran, which means, "Do not walk arrogantly in the earth. Neither can you tear the ground by the stamping of your feet, nor can you reach the heights of the mountains."

The rich man retorted angrily, "Don't you know me old man?" The old man replied,

أولك نطفة قدرة وأحرك جيفة مذرة وبين ذلك تحمل عذرة

(Your beginning was an impure droplet, your end will be an unclean corpse and in between this birth and death, you carry faeces and other filth in your stomach)." The rich man was stunned by these words from this lover of Allah ﷻ and finally said, "Jazākallāh, you have opened my eyes. I have now realized what I am."

Man cannot claim a more superior status than the angels on the merits of this body alone. Everything of this body is merely a shadow: the beauty of youth fades, and if he fails to bath, his body begins to smell. Moreover, man is so weak that a little virus can incapacitate him, and his beautiful vigour fades immediately from his face. ●

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Qārī Ismāīl Abdul Azīz

B	S	Z	A	B	O	O	R	A	H
F	I	T	T	A	L	L	M	D	A
A	K	H	A	D	I	J	A	A	M
L	A	I	B	R	A	H	I	M	I
Q	A	R	N	U	E	J	O	Z	A
K	B	A	B	D	U	L	L	A	H
Y	A	O	D	H	P	A	Z	G	I
A	H	F	C	I	E	E	S	A	M

Find the answers to the word search puzzle from the clues given below. (Rule a line on the answer.)

- Name of the first wife of the last Prophet ﷺ.
- Name of the cave in which the first words of revelation transpired
- The father of the Prophet ﷺ.
- Son of the Prophet ﷺ.
- Uncle of the Prophet ﷺ.
- Name of the battle that took place in Ramadhān 2 A.H.
- Name of the book given to Dāwūd عليه السلام.
- Name of the house of Allāh.
- Prophet born without a father and mother.
- Name of a Prophet born without a father.

BRAIN TEASERS

1. "What is it?"

- The beginning of existence
- The end of time and space
- The beginning of every end
- The end of every place?

- 2. What can you swallow that can also swallow you?
- 3. When is a cook bad?
- 4. Why is the letter "E" like death?
- 5. What can your left hand hold that your right hand can never hold?



ANSWERS

- The letter "E".
- Water.
- When he beats an egg.
- Because it is at the end of life.
- Your right elbow.