

القاسم

AL-QASIM

GUIDANCE OF ISLAM IN LIGHT OF QUR'AN, HADITH, AND FIQH

NEW BEGINNINGS WITH MUHARRAM

*Muharram and the day of 'Ashura,
the start of the Islamic new year &
the importance of the Hijri Calendar*

HADHRAT HUSSAIN

His virtues and his martyrdom

THE FIRST PEOPLE TO ENTER JANNAH

Avenues to eternal bliss

Q&A

*Everything you need to know
about istikhara*



Jamiah Qasimul Uloom (JQU) is an institute established in 2015 to provide the Muslim community with traditional Islamic education. Mufti Ahmed Bemat (d. 2004) and Maulana Asad Bemat (d. 1993) had a vision to start an Islamic seminary in Toronto for the community. The name, suggested many years ago by Mufti Ahmed, is primarily based on the Prophetic narration in which he ﷺ said, "And indeed I am a distributor (qasim), and Allah is the only One Who truly gives."



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcoming Muharram

A Note From Mufti Adam Koya

Translation by Alimah Nadira B.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

The blessed month of Muharram has arrived. It is the first month of our lunar calendar, and the Hijri year 1446 has begun.

The moon and the sun, both created by Allah, serve as the foundation for all systems of nature. Allah has based Islamic obligations and worship on the lunar calendar, which follows the cycles of the moon's phases, making it an "Islamic" calendar.

Four of these lunar months hold special importance, and they are known as the *ashhurul haram* — the sacred months: Muharram, Rajab, Zhul Qa'dah, and Zhul Hijjah.

During the dark days of *jahiliyyah*, before the advent of Islam, the Arabs would refrain from fighting, bloodshed and usurping of wealth out of respect for these sacred months. For instance, if one were to lay eyes on his father's murderer, he would turn the other way and not take revenge during this time. Muharram was one such sacred month in which pre-Islamic tribes forbade fighting.

This month is vast in greatness. In the blessed ahadith, Muharram is titled "the month of Allah," clearly highlighting its importance and virtue. Outside of Sha'ban and Ramadhan, the Prophet ﷺ would fast the most in this month.

The tenth day, known as 'Ashura is of special significance. Scholars note that fasting on this day was initially mandated, and later abrogated as a supererogatory fast (whose legal ruling changed, but virtue remains the same). Fasting on 'Ashura is considered the best after the fasts of Ramadhan. Aisha رضي الله عنها narrates that the Quraysh would also fast on this day before Islam, as did the Prophet ﷺ. Later, when he migrated to Madinah, he enjoined this fast on Muslims. Our scholars consider fasting on 'Ashura *mustahabb* (recommended).

This magazine issue will highlight the historical relevance and virtuous distinction of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic new year. May Allah accept and bless our minuscule efforts.



THE FIRST TO ENTER PARADISE

A PROPHETIC INSIGHT



BY MUFTI ADAM KOYA

Director and Teacher, JQU

Translated By Maulana Anas Javed

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " عُرِضَ عَلَيَّ أَوْلُ ثَلَاثَةٍ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ شَهِيدٌ وَعَفِيفٌ مُتَعَفِّفٌ وَعَبْدٌ أَحْسَنَ عِبَادَةَ اللَّهِ وَنَصَحَ لِمَوَالِيهِ

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Three of the first people to enter Jannah were presented to me: A martyr, one who stays away from the unlawful and does not beg from anyone, and a slave who worships Allah well and also wishes well for his masters." (Jami at-Tirmidhi, 1642)

The Prophet always spent his life trying to show his nation the path to success, whether it be related to worldly or social affairs. He also clearly elucidated the path to Paradise and how to avoid the

torments of Hell in the Hereafter. For the sake of this religion, the Prophet ﷺ has made unparalleled sacrifices that cannot be forgotten. In the above-mentioned narration, the Prophet ﷺ highlights the qualities of those who will be the first to enter Paradise. This serves as a beacon for those who aspire to enter Paradise and enjoy its bounties, guiding them in their efforts to attain these qualities. The Prophet ﷺ is saying three different types of people were presented to him who would immediately enter Paradise, and then he explains who these three people are.

THE MARTYR (شهيد)

The first is that person who, for the sake of Allah ﷻ, fights the enemies and becomes a martyr. He will be the first to whom Allah تعالى سبحانه و grants entry into Paradise. Martyrdom is a profound blessing bestowed by Allah ﷻ upon individuals of great value. Recognizing life as a blessing from Allah ﷻ and understanding the inevitability of death, such individuals find no better way to utilize this blessing than in the service of Allah ﷻ. Sacrificing one's life for Allah ﷻ's cause becomes straightforward when one embraces this truth.

Life is naturally precious to us, and we do everything to protect it. In times of catastrophe, a person might prioritize their own life over others'. However, when one sacrifices this valuable life for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, He rewards them with unimaginable blessings. Allah ﷻ transforms their blood into fragrant musk and cherishes every wound on their body. There are many virtues that have come in the ahadith regarding them.

عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ اللَّهُ مِنْ قَطْرَتَيْنِ وَأَثَرَيْنِ قَطْرَةٌ مِنْ دُمُوعٍ فِي خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَقَطْرَةٌ دَمٌ تُهْرَاقُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ . وَأَمَّا الْأَثَرَانِ فَأَثَرٌ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَثَرٌ فِي فَرِيضَةٍ مِنْ فَرَائِضِ اللَّهِ "

It is narrated from Abu Umamah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said: "There is nothing more beloved to Allah than two drops and two marks: a drop of a tear shed out of fear of Allah, and a drop of blood shed in the path of Allah. As for the two marks, they are: a mark (received) in the path of Allah, and a mark (resulting) from one of the obligations of Allah."
(Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 1669)

Allah ﷻ never wastes the sacrifices of His slaves, no matter how small. He says in the Qur'an:

إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا

Indeed, We do not let go to waste the reward of anyone who does a good deed. (Surah al-Kahf, 30)

If Allah ﷻ appreciates even the smallest of actions, then imagine His appreciation for the ultimate sacrifice for His sake. No one can predict how long a person will live in this world. The honour and respect that Allah ﷻ will give a martyr in the grave, on the plains of the Day of Judgment, and in Paradise are mentioned in the ahadith. Some privileges, for instance, are that he is forgiven with the first drop of blood, he sees his place in Paradise, he is protected from the punishments

5 THINGS TO NEVER DO:

1. Never intend evil
2. Never bother an innocent man
3. Never abuse the right of the oppressed
4. Never conceal the truth
5. Never try to discover another's fault

– حيرت انكيز معلومات, محمد اسحاق ملتاني

of the grave, a crown of dignity will be placed on his head, etc. (Jami at-Tirmidhi, 1663; Sunan Ibn Majah, 2799; Musnad Ahmad, 17182). Many other virtues are mentioned as well for the one who gives his life for the sake of Allah ﷻ and His deen.

ONE WHO REFRAINS FROM THE UNLAWFUL (عفيف متعفف)

This person distances himself from all haram (forbidden) and unlawful things, not extending the hand of begging to anyone except Allah. Such a person will also be among the first to enter Jannah. The meaning of "staying away from haram" is comprehensive. It means to not say anything haram with the tongue, not look at anything haram with the eyes, not listen to anything haram with the ears, and not do anything haram with the hands and feet. By protecting oneself from every type of sin, one ensures immediate entry into Jannah and the enjoyment of its bounties.

Today, many people focus on performing good deeds but neglect to simultaneously refrain from evil. They mistakenly believe that good deeds alone will save them on the Day of Judgment. This is a deception from Satan. Just as the Qur'an and hadith command us to do good, they also emphasize the importance of avoiding evil.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا عَنَّهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ

O you who have believed, obey Allah and His Messenger and do not turn away from him while you hear [his orders].

(Surah al-Anfal, 20)

Those who focus solely on doing good actions should know that there are certain bad actions that completely eradicate all their previous good deeds. Tomorrow, on the Day of Judgment, people will come to this stark realization. Many people will be proud of their

good actions and assume that they will be receiving lots of rewards. However, upon receiving their Book of Deeds, they will discover with regret that their good deeds were nullified by their sins; the rewards of salah were destroyed because of one sin, and the rewards of fasting were destroyed because of another sin. Their loss will fill them with regret and tears, but at that time, regret will be of no use. Therefore, we must commit ourselves to actively stay as far away from sin as possible during our short lives. We must not neglect the rights of Allah ﷻ nor shall we usurp the rights of the people. We will avoid sin and anything unlawful, and if we do falter, we will immediately turn to Allah ﷻ and seek His forgiveness for our transgressions, whether they are minor or major.

There is another word that the Prophet ﷺ has also mentioned for this second type of person who enters Jannah right away, and that is “متعفف,” meaning “one who does not spread his hand to beg from anyone except Allah.” Such a person puts all his problems before Allah ﷻ and asks Him alone to solve them. Neither does he beg the people, nor does he have any desire for their help. This is also the quality of the person who will enter Jannah immediately.

A SLAVE WHO WORSHIPS ALLAH WELL AND TREATS HIS MASTERS WELL (عبد أحسن عبادة الله ونصح لمواليه)

In the hadith, there is mention of a third person: a slave who not only fulfills the rights of Allah ﷻ but also the rights of his master by dealing with him well. Allah ﷻ will make him one of the first to enter Paradise as well.

Nowadays, people waste the wealth of their employers through lying, cheating and defrauding. So how can a dishonest person who does not fulfill the rights of his temporary employer, fulfill the rights of his true Master, Allah? How can he be truly obedient to Allah? In the hadith, the Prophet ﷺ has encouraged both the slave of Allah ﷻ and the worker to fulfill the rights of both Allah ﷻ and his authorities. He says that one should devote their life in the worship of Allah ﷻ and in pleasing Him, while also being honest and fair to their temporary owner, avoiding deceit or harm. If this is achieved, Allah ﷻ will admit him to Jannah immediately.

We make du'a that Allah ﷻ also makes us from the first to enter Jannah and that He gives us the divine ability to act on the blessed instructions of the Prophet ﷺ.

THE THEMATIC CIRCLE

In a universe pressed inside the dot of a *ba*
our *tawaf* pulsates around the Ka'bah
turning hearts closer to its vortex
counter-clockwise, orbital reflex
like moon around earth
like earth around sun
celestial bodies in palindrome spun
“each one swimming in its orbit” *
night and day, together but split
from womb to grave
from ripple in lake,
concentric rings to returning rain**
to the eye of a storm
and the centre of a galaxy
we follow our months
by the moon, methodically
like the rings we make
with our fingers in tashahhud ***
Like *halaqahs* to remember
in circles of servanthood –
no edge, no end to His infiniteness
boundlessly His mercy will flow
our eyes fill with tears of repentance
So the *qalb*, ever-turning heart can grow
from *tawbah*, *awwab*, coming around ****
to arriving *saleem*, safe and sound.*****

-Nadira B.

Notes:

*Surah al-Ambiya 33, “And it is He who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon; all in an orbit are swimming.”

** Surah at-Tariq 11, “By the sky which returns [rain].”

*** Sunan an-Nasa'i 1265, “he made a circle with two of his fingers [in salah].”

**** Surah Sad 30, “Indeed, he (constantly) turned (to Allah).”

***** Surah ash-Shuara 89, “But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart.”

the IMPORTANCE & ORIGIN of THE HIJRI CALENDAR IN ISLAM

BY MUFTI ADAM KOYA,
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Translated By Hafiz Ashja ibn Haider (Student, JQU)
& Alimah Batool bint Rizwan

The Hijri calendar, also known as the Islamic calendar, is a distinguishing feature of Muslim civilization. The Shariah attaches many actions to this calendar, making it significant in religious observance. Just as Christians, Jews, and Hindus have their own calendar systems, so too do Muslims. All previous nations relied on various standards for counting time to understand their histories.

Narrations regarding the previous peoples' marking of history are found in works like *Al-Bidaya wa al-Nihayah* and *Umdatul Qari*, demonstrating that each civilization had its own calendar system. Imam Tabari, in his encyclopedia of history, narrates from Imam Zuhri and Imam Sha'bi that the descendants of Adam عليه السلام would count history from the year of Adam's descent into the earthly realm. This method persisted until the era of Nuh عليه السلام, after which people began recording time from the great flood. During the time of Ibrahim عليه السلام, the days were counted from the year he was flung into the fire. This pattern continued through the eras of Yusuf, Musa, Sulayman, and Isa عليهم السلام until the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, which established the Hijri calendar used to this day.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HIJRI CALENDAR

During the caliphal reign of Umar رضي الله عنه in the 17th year after Hijrah (AH), Abu Musa Ashari رضي الله عنه wrote a letter to Umar رضي الله عنه, highlighting the need for dated documents. In response, Umar رضي الله عنه convened an assembly of the companions to determine the beginning of the Islamic calendar. Four proposals were considered on which year to start from:

1. The birth year of the Prophet ﷺ,

2. The start of revelation

3. The Hijrah (migration to Madinah), or

4. The year the Prophet ﷺ passed away.

Umar رضي الله عنه decided against the first two proposals due to uncertainties regarding their exact dates. The year of the Prophet's ﷺ passing was also dismissed as it would potentially evoke sorrow for the Muslim Ummah. Therefore, starting the calendar from the Hijrah was considered the most suitable for several reasons:

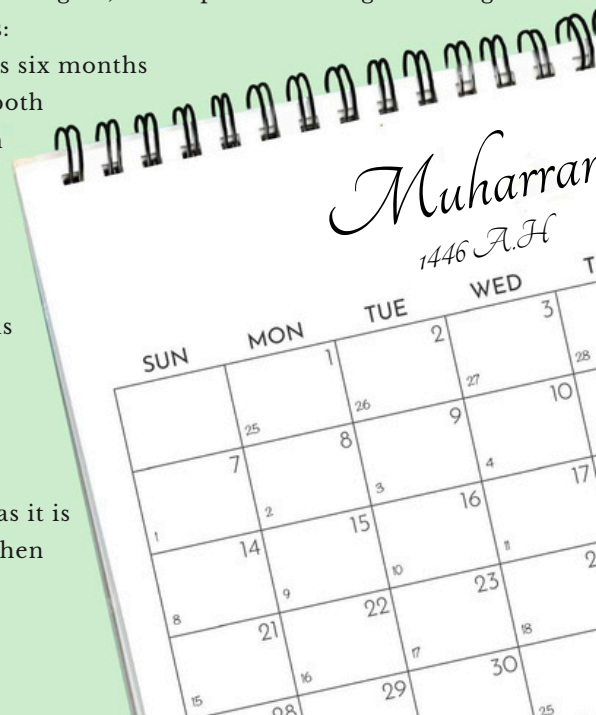
1. It marked a clear distinction between truth and falsehood,
2. It was the year Islam gained strength and honour,
3. It ensured peace and security for Muslims, and
4. Masjid al-Nabawi was constructed that year.

The companions agreed to this, thereby establishing the first year of the Islamic calendar from the Hijrah. Additionally, it was affirmed that the calendar would consist of 12 months, four of which were sacred: Zhul Qadah, Zhul Hijjah, Muharram, and Rajab.

DETERMINING THE FIRST MONTH OF THE HIJRI CALENDAR

The next question was concerning the first month of the calendar year. Again, four opinions emerged among the companions:

1. Rajab, as it is six months away from both Zhul Qa'dah and Muharram,
2. Ramadhan, as it is the most virtuous month in which the Qur'an was revealed,
3. Muharram, as it is the month when



the Hujjaj return from Hajj, or
 4. Rabi al-Awwal, as the Prophet ﷺ, made Hijrah in this month. After considering these opinions, Umar رضي الله عنه decided that the year should begin with Muharram due to two key reasons:

1. The Ansar invited the Prophet ﷺ to Madinah in Muharram, which led to the Hijrah in Rabi al-Awwal.
2. Hajj is an act of worship linked to a specific date, and those who complete Hajj return home in Muharram.

The companions also agreed to this. Thus, the Hijrah was established as the first year and Muharram as the first month of the Islamic calendar.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR

It is known that the first months of both the Islamic and Gregorian calendars are Muharram and January, respectively. However, while most people are familiar with the beginning and end of the Gregorian year, many Muslims remain unaware of the beginning and end of the Islamic year. The month of Muharram often comes and goes without much notice. In contrast, the first of January is widely recognized. This lack of awareness about and tracking of the Islamic calendar, despite its significance in Shariah, is concerning.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'an:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ
 لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ

"They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the new moons. Say, 'They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj.'"

(Surah al-Baqarah, 189)

Mufti Shafi رحمه الله explains in *Ma'ariful Qur'an* that through the moon, we can determine dates and months, which form the basis of our interactions, acts of worship, the season of Hajj, etc. This topic is

further elaborated in Surah Yunus:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا
 وَقَدَرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ

"It is He who made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light and determined for it phases - that you may know the number of years and account [of time]." (Surah Yunus, 5)

This indicates that the moon's phases help us understand years, months, and dates. The sun is also used for calculating time, as is made clear in Surah Bani Israel:

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ آيَاتَيْنِ فَمَحْوَنًا آيَةً
 اللَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَا آيَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِّتَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا
 مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ

"And We made the night and day two signs, then We erased the sign of the night and made the sign of the day visible that you may seek bounty from your Lord and may know the number of years and the account [of time]." (Surah al-Isra, 12)

The Qur'an's language emphasizes the moon for determining dates, particularly for acts of worship such as fasting during Ramadan, Hajj, the days of Muharram, Laylatul Qadr, the 15th night of Sha'ban, etc., all of which rely on the moon's sighting.

THE OBLIGATION OF USING THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR

Scholars have written that it is necessary to determine and observe the lunar date. Mufti Shafi رحمه الله explains it is an obligation (*fardh*) for acts of worship. While the solar date is still acceptable for dealings between Muslims, the use of the lunar date is preferred. He emphasizes that the lunar system is from the public manifestations and significant symbols (شعار) of Islam. However, he points out that the solar calendar should not be given preference to such an extent that the lunar calendar is forgotten. This bifurcation can cause confusion among Muslims. The

widespread use of the solar calendar has overshadowed the lunar calendar so many Muslims do not even know the names of the Islamic months. This situation not only opposes Shariah but also affects the pride of the Muslim Ummah.

While using the Gregorian calendar in dealings with one another for other writings and matters is permissible, it is crucial to use the Islamic date in our everyday lives as much as possible. This practice upholds a *fardh* action, is rewardable in the sight of the Shariah, and preserves the dignity of Muslims. Hence, it is imperative that we uphold our own system and emphasize its significance by integrating the lunar calendar into our daily lives and affairs. This responsibility is essential for our national dignity and self-respect.

ISLAMIC MONTHS	
1. MUHARRAM مُحَرَّم	2. SAFAR صَفَر
3. RABI AL-AWWAL رَبِيعُ الْأَوَّلِ	4. RABI AL-THANI رَبِيعُ الثَّانِي
5. JUMADA AL-OOLA جُمَادَى الْأُولَى	6. JUMADA AL-AKHIRAH جُمَادَى الْآخِرَةَ
7. RAJAB رَجَب	8. SHA'BAN شَعْبَانَ
9. RAMADHAN رَمَضَانَ	10. SHAWWAL شَوَّال
11. DHU AL-QA'DAH ذُو الْقَعْدَةِ	12. DHU AL-HIJJA ذُو الْحِجَّةِ

BLESSED LITANIES

FOR IMPROVING THE MEMORY

Shaikh Haji Imdadullah says that in order to improve one's memory, one should read:

يَا عَلِيمُ عَلَّمْنِي مَا لَمْ أَكُنْ أَعْلَمُ يَا عَلِيمُ

Continue reading this 41 times after Asr salah. Along with that, after Fajr salah, read Surah al-Fatihah (with *Bismillah*) 11 times. Also add a few *durood* before and after these 2 sayings and, Insha Allah, Allah will grant you great memory.

FOR IMPROVING QUR'ANIC MEMORY

One time an old man from a far away village came in the presence of Hadhrat Thanwi and presented him with a question. He said: "Hadhrat, I've just begun memorising the Qur'an, however I fail to remember it and make a lot of mistakes." After hearing this, Hadhrat Thanwi said, "After every Fajr salah, read "يَا عَلِيمُ" 150 times (while adding *durood* in the beginning and end); after doing so, blow on your hands and wipe your hands on your chest. Insha Allah your forgetfulness will go away."

WAKING UP FROM SLEEP ON DEMAND

Someone came to Hadhrat Abdullah ibn Abbas and said: "I make a firm intention in my heart to wake up in the night and pray, however sleep overpowers me due to which I'm not able to wake up." After hearing this, Abdullah ibn Abbas said, "When you intend to go to sleep, read Surah al-Kahf from **قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا** (verse 109) until the end."

Zirr ibn Hubaysh told Hadhrat Abdah that: "Whoever reads the last few ayahs of Surah al-Kahf and they go to sleep, whichever time they intend to wake up, that's when they will wake up." Hadhrat Abdah said, "Every time we tested this method, it was always successful."

THE SENTENCE THAT ERASES SINS CAPABLE OF FILLING UP THE OCEAN

It is narrated from Abdullah ibn Umar that the Prophet ﷺ said that for any Muslim walking the face of this earth, by virtue of saying this sentence, their bad deeds are forgiven even if they amount to the depth of the ocean, and that sentence is:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

THE MONTH OF MUHARRAM AND THE DAY OF 'ASHURA

By Mufti Adam Koya
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The day of 'Ashura, the 10th of Muharram, holds significant historical importance. Well before the advent of Islam, during the days of ignorance, the Quraysh of Makkah considered it a sacred day. They would adorn the Ka'bah with its covering and fast, possibly influenced by some narrations of Ibrahim عليه السلام that reached them. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ often supported virtuous practices upheld by the Quraysh that aligned with the traditions of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ engaged in Hajj even before his prophethood and fasted on 'Ashura both before and after his prophetic mission.

Upon migrating to Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ noticed the Jews fasting on 'Ashura. Recognizing its significance as the day on which Allah saved Musa عليه السلام and his people from Pharaoh's tyranny, causing Pharaoh and his army to drown, the Prophet ﷺ encouraged Muslims to observe fasting on this day. This tradition is documented in both *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*.

Some narrations indicate that the Prophet ﷺ emphasized fasting on 'Ashura in a manner similar to a *fardh* or *wajib* act. Hadhrat Salama ibn Akwa and Hadhrat Rubayyi' bint Muawith ibn Amr

رضي الله عنهم have narrated that the Prophet ﷺ sent a message to the Ansar, who lived on the outskirts of Madinah, instructing that those who had not yet eaten or drunk anything should fast, and those who had already eaten or drunk should act the rest of the day as if they were fasting. When fasting in the month of Ramadhan became obligatory, the emphasized ruling of fasting on 'Ashura no longer remained, and its importance became that of *nafl*, an optional fast. However, aside from the obligatory fasts of Ramadhan, the Prophet ﷺ continued to prioritize this fast above all other voluntary fasts (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, 68; *Sahih Muslim*, 360).

THE VIRTUES OF THE DAY OF ASHURA

Several virtues have been narrated about this day. Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim narrate from Hadhrat Abdullah ibn Abbas:

مَا رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَحَرَّى صِيَامَ يَوْمٍ
فَضَّلَهُ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ، إِلَّا هَذَا الْيَوْمَ يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ وَهَذَا
الشَّهْرَ. يَعْنِي شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ.

"I never saw the Prophet ﷺ seeking to fast on a day that he favoured more than another except this day, the day of 'Ashura, and this month, meaning the month of Ramadhan." (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, 2006)

This narration tells us that of all *nafl* fasts, the Prophet ﷺ especially observed the fast on the day of 'Ashura. In *Tabrani*, it is narrated by Abdullah ibn Abbas رضى الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said:

“In regards to fasting, one day is not more superior than another except for Ramadhan and the day of 'Ashura.”

Another narration from Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه states that the Prophet ﷺ said,

إِنِّي أَحْتَسِبُ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ السَّنَةَ الَّتِي قَبْلَهُ

“I anticipate that Allah will forgive (the sins of) the previous year (by observing the fast on 'Ashura).” (Jami` at-Tirmidhi

752)

The narration in *Sunan Ibn Majah* also includes the words “the year after it”.

These narrations indicate that the day of 'Ashura is highly virtuous and we should take advantage of its reward.

THE VIRTUES OF MUHARRAM

Along with the day of 'Ashura, the entire month of Muharram also has a special virtue. There are four reasons why it is considered virtuous:

1. Its virtue is mentioned by the Prophet ﷺ himself.

Someone asked Ali رضى الله عنه, “Which month should I fast in aside from the month of Ramadhan?” Ali رضى الله عنه responded: “Someone asked the same question to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while I was sitting there. The Prophet ﷺ responded:

إِنْ كُنْتَ صَائِمًا بَعْدَ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ فَصِمِ الْمُحَرَّمَ فَإِنَّهُ شَهْرُ اللَّهِ فِيهِ يَوْمٌ تَابَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ عَلَى قَوْمٍ وَيَتُوبُ فِيهِ عَلَى قَوْمٍ آخِرِينَ

‘If you will fast after the month of Ramadhan, then fast al-Muharram, for indeed it is Allah's month in which there is a day where Allah accepted the repentance of a people, and in which He accepts the repentance of other people.’” (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, 741)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

أَفْضَلُ الصِّيَامِ بَعْدَ صِيَامِ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ شَهْرُ اللَّهِ الْمُحَرَّمَ

“The most virtuous fasting after the month of Ramadhan is Allah's month al-Muharram.” (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, 740)

Abdullah ibn Abbas narrated similarly, “Whoever fasts one day of Muharram will receive the reward of fasting thirty days”

2. It has been called “The Month of Allah.”

The special virtue and importance of this month are underscored by the fact that it is referred to as the month of Allah. This designation signifies that it is a month of Allah's mercy.

3. It is one of the four sacred months.

Four months have a special status over the other Islamic months. They are Zhul-Qa'dah, Zhul-Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab.

4. It is the first month in the Islamic calendar.

Imam Ghazali writes in *Ihya ul-Uloom* that the reason fasting in Muharram is virtuous is that the Islamic year starts with this month. This is why we should perform plenty of good deeds in this month and maintain the hope that Allah will extend the blessing of fasting in this month throughout the whole year (601).

ACTIONS PERFORMED ON THE DAY OF ASHURA

Two activities on this day can be established from the narrations of the Prophet ﷺ :

1. Observe the fast

One should fast on this day, as the previously mentioned narrations indicate. However, the Prophet ﷺ prohibited imitating the Jews, polytheists, and disbelievers. Some narrations mention that the Prophet ﷺ noticed the Jews of Makkah observing the fast on the day of 'Ashura. He asked them about it, and they said it is the day on which Allah granted victory to Musa عليه السلام over Fir'aun. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

فَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ وَأَوْلَى بِمُوسَى مِنْكُمْ . فَصَامَهُ وَأَمَرَ بِصِيَامِهِ

“We have more right, and a closer connection with Musa than you have.” So Allah's Messenger ﷺ observed fast (on the day of 'Ashura), and gave orders that it should be observed. (Sahih Muslim, 1130c)

Additionally, some narrations mention “*khaalifu al-yahood*” (“oppose the Jews”); fast on the 9th and 10th or 10th and 11th of Muharram. The Prophet ﷺ had said that the following year, God willing, he would observe the fast on the 9th as well.

The Prophet ﷺ advised not to fast only on the 10th because it would resemble the actions of the Jews. On the other hand, by not fasting at all, one would miss out on a virtuous fast. So the Prophet ﷺ recommended fasting for two days, to join 'Ashura with the 9th or the 11th. A narration by Ibn Abbas رضى الله عنه in *Sahih Muslim* clearly states that the Prophet ﷺ would fast on 'Ashura and instructed the Companions to do the same. Some Companions mentioned that this day is a day of Eid for the Jews and Christians (their reason for mentioning this was to ask if it was possible for there to be a change in the ruling to avoid resemblance). So, the Messenger ﷺ said,

فَإِذَا كَانَ الْعَامُ الْمُقْبِلُ – إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ – صُمْنَا الْيَوْمَ التَّاسِعَ . قَالَ

فَلَمْ يَأْتِ الْعَامُ الْمُقْبِلُ حَتَّى تُؤْفِيَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When the next year comes, God willing, we would observe fast on the 9th." Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه said, "but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away before the advent of the next year." (Sahih Muslim, 1134a)

It is preferable to fast on the 9th and 10th; however, if one is unable to do so, then one may fast on the 10th and 11th to avoid resembling the Jews. Some jurists have written that it is disliked to only fast on the 10th. However Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri has stated that there are three possible ways of observing the 'Ashura fast:

- To fast on the 9th, 10th, and 11th
- To only fast on the 9th and 10th or on the 10th and 11th
- To fast on the 10th

Among these possibilities, the first is the best option, followed by the second, and then the third. Some scholars have interpreted this third option as *makruh* (disliked). However, considering that the Prophet ﷺ fasted on the 10th and only expressed the desire to fast on the 9th in the following year, how can that be said to be *makruh*?

2. Increase in spending on one's family

Islam encourages us to increase our spending on family, in terms of food and drink. By doing so, we invite blessings that can lead to an increase in wealth throughout the entire year.

It has been mentioned in a hadith by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said

مَنْ وَسَّعَ عَلَى عِيَالِهِ وَأَهْلِهِ يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ وَسَّعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ سَائِرَ سَنَتِهِ

"Whoever expands his expenditure on his family on the day of 'Ashura, Allah will expand his sustenance on him for his entire year." (al-Bayhaqi)

It is clear that Muharram and the Day of 'Ashura are full of blessings and sacred significance. We should engage in acts of worship and strive to earn Allah's special mercy. However, customs and innovations have been adopted in this blessed month, especially on the Day of 'Ashura. We

should remember that just as the reward for good actions increases during this time, the consequences and punishment for sins also increase. It is essential for every Muslim to protect themselves from every type of innovation in this month.

SOME INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- Mourning gatherings/*majaalis maatam*
- Participating in *ta'ziya* (mourning processions)

During the first ten days of Muharram, many Muslims engage in mourning gatherings and participate in *ta'ziya* processions, unaware of the sinful nature of these practices. However, it must be understood that there is no basis in Islamic tradition for such activities, rendering them sinful. Therefore, those who partake in these actions unwittingly bring sin upon themselves.

Similarly, cooking *keechar* (a type of meat stew) on 'Ashura is not permissible and is deemed sinful. Historical accounts indicate that the *Khawaarij* used to prepare such meals out of joy for the martyrdom of Hadhrat Hussain رضي الله عنه, reflecting enmity towards the Prophet's ﷺ family. Hence, those who cherish the Prophet's ﷺ family should abstain from such practices.

Some individuals cook food on the 9th and 10th of Muharram, intending to send the reward to Hussain رضي الله عنه. However, this belief in the deceased having control over earthly matters is incorrect. Likewise, the notion that charity given during this time reaches Hussain رضي الله عنه is a fallacy, as charity can be given at any time.

While offering water and juice to people as a commemoration of Hussain's رضي الله عنه deprivation of water is rewarding, turning it into a specific custom or innovation should be avoided. Likewise, abstaining from joyous occasions or good deeds in Muharram due to superstitions about its unlucky nature is unfounded.

In conclusion, Muharram and its 10th day are indeed virtuous times for performing good deeds and acts of celebration. By adhering to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and avoiding innovative practices, we can attain blessings and protection from sin.

HADHRAT HUSSAIN

AND THE STORY OF HIS MARTYRDOM

By Mufti Adam Koya
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Hadhrat Hussain رضي الله عنه is the grandson of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He was born in Madinah on the 5th of Sha'ban in the 4th year of Hijrah. He was from the tribe of Banu Hashim, who was the great-grandfather of our Prophet ﷺ. His father is Ali, his mother is Fatima رضي الله عنها, and his older brother is Hasan رضي الله عنهما.

When news of Hadhrat Hussain's رضي الله عنه birth reached the Prophet ﷺ, he arrived and took him in his arms; he gave the *adhan* in his right ear and the *iqamah* in the left ear. He then put his blessed saliva in the mouth of the baby, made du'a for him, and named him Hussain. On the seventh day after the birth of Hussain رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ performed his *aqeeqah*, shaved Hussain's head, and gave silver in charity equivalent to the weight of the hair.

The Prophet ﷺ would say "Hussain is from me and I am from Hussain. The one who loves Hussain, Allah will love him. Hussain has a very high status amongst my children" (*Sahih Ibn Hibban*). The Prophet ﷺ had endless love and compassion for Hussain رضي الله عنه. His father, Ali رضي الله عنه and his mother, Fatima رضي الله عنها also loved him immensely. Due to this, he was unique in his virtue and perfection, piety and abstinence, courage and bravery, generosity and soft-heartedness, good character and

qualities. Hafidh ibn Katheer writes that Ali رضي الله عنه would say Hasan resembles the Prophet ﷺ from chest to head and Hussain resembles the Prophet ﷺ from feet to chest. Hasan and Hussain رضي الله عنهما were both handsome and personable like the Prophet ﷺ. Just as they had a physical resemblance to the Prophet ﷺ, they also had a spiritual resemblance to him. The sublime character of the Prophet ﷺ was in them. The Prophet ﷺ used to say they are:

سَيِّدًا شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ

"The leaders of the youth in Jannah."

(*Jami' at-Tirmidhi*, 3768)

The Prophet ﷺ loved Hussain رضي الله عنه immensely. He would always hug him, pick him up himself and place him in his lap, carry him on his shoulders and let him ride on his back. It is mentioned in a narration found in *Jami' at-Tirmidhi* that the Prophet ﷺ would often say to his beloved daughter Fatima رضي الله عنها: "Send Hussain to me, I wish to hug him and hold him". In another hadith in *Jami' at-Tirmidhi* narrated by Ya'la ibn Murra, it is stated that the Prophet ﷺ said "Hussain is my child and I have a special relationship with him. Whoever truly loves Hussain, Allah will love that person." Hussain رضي الله عنه would climb onto the back of the Prophet ﷺ while he was in *sajdah*, and the Prophet would never



scold him nor show any displeasure due to this. Instead, he would prolong the *sajdah* until Hussain رضي الله عنه would himself happily climb down from the back of the Prophet ﷺ. He would kiss Hussain رضي الله عنه on his cheeks and lips, and he would say, "Whoever loves Hussain then he has loved me, and whoever holds enmity for Hussain then he has held enmity for me" (*Musnad Ahmad*).

Hussain رضي الله عنه grew up to be a man of integrity and purity. Both friends and foe recognized his worship, asceticism, piety, generosity, and good conduct. He would stay up every night in the worship of Allah ﷻ and fast the whole year except the prohibited days. He would recite the Qur'an often and would go for Hajj frequently. According to one opinion, he performed Hajj 25 times, and each Hajj was performed on foot. His gatherings were memorable and his conversations were filled with knowledge, wisdom, and eloquence. Gatherings in his presence were serene and undisturbed. The people had a lot of respect for him. Regarding his generosity, the Prophet ﷺ said "Hussain رضي الله عنه has been given my generosity and

courage." The needy and travellers would frequent his door and no one in need would ever be turned away. At times he would go to those in need and fulfill their needs. He would treat servants and slaves like relatives and he was always looking for reasons to set them free. The people of his time recognized his proficiency in knowledge, and would come to him with their religious issues. He would also make du'a in abundance. There is a compilation of his du'as known as *Sahifa Hussainiya*. Hussain رضي الله عنه was very compassionate, and sometimes he would even show compassion to his enemies. He would prefer others over himself to the extent of fulfilling the needs of others at the expense of his own.

THE AHLUL BAYT

It is mentioned in *Sahih Muslim*, narrated by Aishah رضي الله عنها that early one morning, the Prophet ﷺ arrived wearing an embroidered shawl. Coincidentally Hasan رضي الله عنه came. The Prophet ﷺ took him in the shawl; then he took Hussain in the shawl, and he took in Fatima and then Ali رضي الله عنهم as well. After that, he recited this verse of the Qur'an:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ
أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

"Allah only intends to keep (all sorts of) filth away from you, O members of the family (of the prophet), and to make you pure through a perfect purification."

(Surah al-Ahzab, 33)

Then he made a du'a for them:

اللَّهُمَّ هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْلُ بَيْتِي فَأَذْهِبْ عَنْهُمْ
الرِّجْسَ وَطَهِّرْهُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

"O Allah! These are members of my family; remove filth from them and purify them."

In the narration in *Jami' at-Tirmidhi*, it is mentioned that the Prophet's wife, Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها said, "O Messenger of Allah, am I included in this du'a with them?" He said, "You are in your place and you are in goodness."

Mufti Saeed Palanpuri, in his work *Tuhfatul Alma'i* elucidates that this supplication is designated for the esteemed members of the household, comprising Fatima, Ali, Hasan, and Hussain رضي الله عنهم. However, it's pertinent to note that the practical embodiment of the *ahl al-bayt* extends to the Prophet's wives رضي الله عنهن. In several verses of Surah al-Ahzab, various instructions and guidelines

are given to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, and their virtue is also mentioned. Verse 33 (quoted above) was revealed in the midst of those verses. The words *ahl al-bayt* in this ayah refer to the Prophet's ﷺ wives because the entire passage of verses addresses them. In Surah Hud, verse seven, *ahl al-bayt* refers to Sarah, the wife of Ibrahim عليه السلام. However in the above-mentioned verse (33), Allah ﷻ addresses the *ahl al-bayt* using the pronoun “كُمْ” which includes “you all”. So, as soon as the verse was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ came, enveloped the four of his family members with his shawl and made the du'a: “O Allah they are also part of my household.” Allah ﷻ accepted this du'a.

The need for du'a arose because the initial verses were not addressed to these four family members; rather, they were revealed to address the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. However, the verses had a general discourse. Instead of using the plural feminine pronoun كُنَّ, the plural masculine pronoun كُمْ was used. This would indicate that the verse addresses males as well. So the Prophet ﷺ made du'a including the four under this verse as well. Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها wanted to come in that shawl as well, however there was no need for that. It is for this reason the Prophet ﷺ said, “You are in your place, you are in goodness,” indicating that the verse was revealed already for her and all other wives, as they are the primary addressees. Umm Salamah was not in need of this du'a to be included in this verse.

THE LEADERS OF THE YOUTH OF JANNAH

The Prophet ﷺ used to say Hasan and Hussain رضي الله عنهما are the leaders of the youth of Jannah. Mulla

Ali al-Qari says Hasnain (Hasan and Hussain) having virtue over all the youth of Jannah does not mean that they passed away in their youth, but that even as youth, they were sublime in their character and piety.

Due to narrations of this nature, some people are under the false impression that Hasan and Hussain رضي الله عنهما are of a higher rank and status than the four Khulafa, whereas that is not the case. In a hadith narrated by Anas رضي الله عنه in *Jami' at-Tirmidhi* it is stated that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Other than the prophets and Messenger, Abu Bakr and Umar are the leaders of all those who will enter Jannah.” Abu Bakr and Umar رضي الله عنهما both lived to an old age, as did Hussain رضي الله عنه. Based on the aforementioned narration, Abu Bakr and Umar would be the leaders of Hussain رضي الله عنه as well.

Hafidh ibn Katheer in his *Al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya*, mentions a hadith narrated by Barirah رضي الله عنها and Abu Saeed رضي الله عنه which states that Hussain رضي الله عنه is the leader of the youth of Jannah, while his parents are of a higher status than him. In light of these narrations, it is clear that the Caliphs had a status higher than Hussain رضي الله عنه. In Islam, the prophets and messengers are of different levels and ranks amongst themselves. This difference in rank and virtue is also present amongst the Sahabah and *ahl al-bayt*.

MARTYRDOM

The following is a brief narration of the incident of the martyrdom of Hussain رضي الله عنه.

The people of Kufa wrote many letters asking Hussain رضي الله عنه to come to Kufa as they wanted him to become their Khalifah. He began preparing to travel there. However,

before going, he sent his cousin Muslim ibn Aqeel to Kufa to see what the current situation was looking like. When Muslim ibn Aqeel reached Kufa, twelve thousand people of Kufa pledged their allegiance to Hussain رضي الله عنه at his (Muslim ibn Aqeel's) hands. The governor of Kufa at that time, appointed by the Umayyads, was a man named Basheer. He was kind and treated Muslim ibn Aqeel well. Experiencing all this, Muslim ibn Aqeel sent a message to Hussain رضي الله عنه assuring that the situation was good and it was safe to come to Kufa.

Thereafter, Hussain رضي الله عنه set out on the journey towards Kufa. Concurrently, Yazid ibn Muawiyah, the reigning caliph at the time, replaced the governor of Kufa with Ubaidullah ibn Ziyad. Ibn Ziyad, once appointed as governor, announced in Kufa that whoever pledges their allegiance to Yazid, their life will be spared, and whoever does not, will be executed. When the people of Kufa heard this announcement, they broke the agreement they had with Hussain رضي الله عنه and killed Muslim ibn Aqeel. Hussain رضي الله عنه heard about all of this while he was in the midst of his travel to Kufa. Some of the people who were travelling with him to Kufa stepped back and returned when they heard the news. However, Hussain رضي الله عنه continued his journey. After he had reached some distance past a place called Qadisiyya, he was confronted by Hur ibn Yazid and his army of one thousand armed men. Hussain رضي الله عنه showed them the letters written to him (Hussain) by the people of Kufa, proving he had only come due to their invitation. Hussain requested: “If your intentions have changed, then I will go back.” Hur

ibn Yazid did not accept this request. Hussain رضي الله عنه reached the plains of Karbala on the 2nd of Muharram in the year 61 AH. Ibn Ziyad informed Hussain رضي الله عنه through letters that he along with his army must surrender to Ibn Ziyad and the Umayyads. Hussain رضي الله عنه refused. As a result, Ibn Ziyad sent Umar ibn Sa'd with an army to the plains of Karbala. Hussain رضي الله عنه and his army of 72 now faced an army of thousands. When Hussain رضي الله عنه met Ibn Ziyad, he placed these three options in front of him:

1. I wish to go to one of the frontiers of the Islamic lands and defend Islam and its lands.
2. I wish to return to Madinah.
3. I should be given the opportunity to speak with Yazid ibn Muawiyya in person.

Umar ibn Sa'd sent these requests to Ibn Ziyad. He responded that he would accept only one thing, that Hussain رضي الله عنه along with his army, surrender to him.

When Hussain رضي الله عنه heard this response, he addressed his followers, who expressed their loyalty to him. They all spent the night in front of their Lord, praying and making du'a whilst the enemy spent the entire night roaming around the tents. On the tenth of Muharram rows were formed for combat. Umar ibn Sa'd attacked with his army and the battle began. There were casualties on both sides. Eventually the enemy burnt Hussain's رضي الله عنه tent. They showed extreme heartlessness and killed many innocent children. Then Zur'a ibn Shareek struck Hussain رضي الله عنه on his left shoulder with a sword. Due to exhaustion he stepped backwards. Sinan ibn Abi Umar struck him from behind with a spear and killed him. He then separated his blessed head from his body. In this battle, 72 men of Hussain رضي الله عنه

and 88 men of the Kufan army were killed. His blessed head was then presented to Ibn Ziyad, who showed the height of disrespect and struck the lips of Hussain رضي الله عنه with a stick. He then informed Yazid that he had the head of Hussain رضي الله عنه severed from the body.

These people killed one of the leaders of Jannah on that day. If Yazid wished, he could have stopped this. However, he is responsible as he did not prevent this from taking place. The consensus of the majority of the Ulama and position of the scholars in regards to this is that it occurred under the rulership of Yazid and it was his army that perpetrated this act. Although Yazid was known to be a *fasiq* (sinner), it is still better to stay silent regarding him (meaning one should pray for mercy for Yazid and one should not curse him). Imam Abu Hanifah's position was that it is better to choose silence and to suspend judgment regarding Yazid. One should not accuse him of being a *kafir* (disbeliever) nor should one curse him. Rather, his case should be left to Allah (*Fatawa Darul Uloom*). Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi also says that the cautious position for the laymen is that of silence. If cursing is deemed permissible, it should still not be done as there is no benefit in it. If one avoids cursing, there is no harm as cursing is not *fardh*, *wajib*, *sunnah*, or *mustahab*. It is simply permissible. If he is undeserving of the curse, then the one cursing is sinful (*Fatawa Rashidiya*).

It is mentioned in *Sahih al-Bukhari*, that an Iraqi man came to Abdullah ibn Umar رضي الله عنه and asked if a person in the state of *ihram* was allowed to kill flies. Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه responded and said, "The Iraqis martyred Hussain رضي الله عنه and now you've come asking about the ruling of killing flies?" Keep in

mind, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Hasan and Hussain are my fragrant flowers in this world." By reflecting on this hadith, one comes to know that just as flowers bring joy and happiness to the heart and mind, similarly Hasan and Hussain رضي الله عنه brought happiness and joy to the Prophet ﷺ during his blessed life.

The strength and patience with which Hussain رضي الله عنه faced the hardship and difficulty on the plains of Karbala is an example of courage, patience and strength which is second to none. He did not lower his head in front of the enemy, and remained firm on the principles of truth and justice. He is an example for those who follow and stay firm on the truth. The virtue of the Prophet's ﷺ grandson, his status and perfection have been recorded by the historians in numerous books. The incident of Karbala teaches us that every Muslim must strive to proclaim and defend the truth; one can die defending the truth but they cannot lower their head and submit to falsehood.



A FOOL'S PARADISE

By Alimah M. China, Graduate, JQU (Class of 2021)

"This worldly life is no more than play and amusement. But the Hereafter is indeed the real life, if only they knew." (Surah al-Ankabut, 64)

Delusion: Something that is falsely or delusively believed or propagated. That is, at least according to the Merriam-Webster definition. Delusion: if you think you will live for another second. To think that we will live well into our 60s, 70s or beyond is a false reality that is idealized and sought after by our 21st century, social media-driven, capitalistic society. Every single person is tirelessly working for tomorrow, forgetting that their current state of being (the present) is what precedes their future, yet it is the one thing we often overlook. The time we reach the age of retirement, the age in which our backs give out, our knees start shaking, our breathing slows down, and our memories start fading, is when our government and our peers say "You can go for your trips now," "You can start relaxing now," "You can enjoy what you worked for now." But what if I told you that every one of us has an invisible timestamp called death?

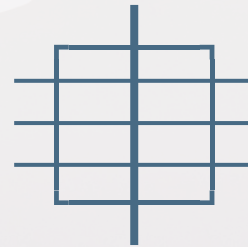
What if I told you that you will die in the next 24 hours? Or in a month? Or in a year? What if I told you that you will not make it to 65? These are not hypotheticals, rather, they are realities that are clouded by the fog of this materialistic world. This "fog" can be understood by the concept of *امل*. *امل* (amal) means hope in the Arabic language, and has two types:

1. Hope and fear (رجاء/خوف)
2. Hope for a long life.

The focus here is on the second one. *امل* is that state a person reaches to acquire a long happy life and/or dunya. Now, it's not necessarily wrong to have long hopes. Does this mean that we don't prepare and work hard for the future? Of course not. Essentially, that would make this life meaningless. If it weren't for the hopes of ulama for a longer life, the thousands of books and seminaries we have would not have come into fruition for us to bear the fruits of their labour. So, whilst hope for a long life isn't something to be sought after, it definitely doesn't equate to having goals and endeavours while being cognizant of the reality that it may not be reached. Ultimately, life is a distraction from death. We know that death is a shadow waiting to overtake us, therefore, being distracted by the rat race of this life isn't a price we should be willing to pay as

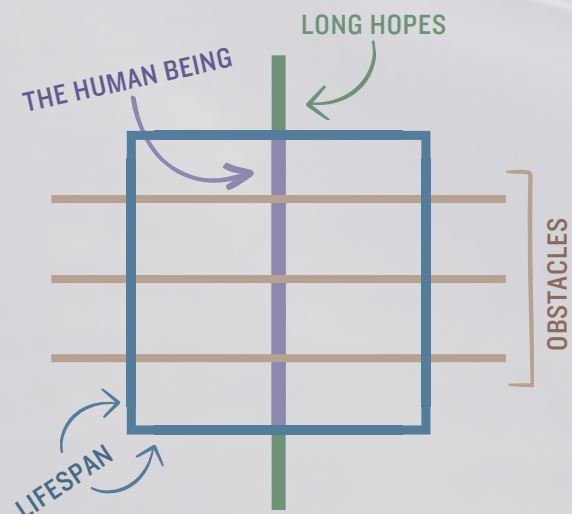
it'll inevitably come to an end. Sometimes, speech isn't enough to convey a message, so in the drawing here, the Prophet ﷺ actually illustrated this concept of *امل* for us to fully comprehend.

Abdullah ibn Masud رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ drew a square and a line in its middle, extending it beyond it. He also drew some smaller lines reaching the middle line from both of its sides.



Then, he said, "This is man and this is his term, encircling him from all sides. This one that is outside is his hope. These smaller lines are the disasters (that may befall him). If this one misses him that one seizes him. If that one misses him, then this third one seizes him" (Mishkat al-Masabih, 5267).

In such a simple drawing, the Prophet ﷺ shows us what the course of our life will look like. This is not restricted to just Muslims, but this is the course of life for every single individual that has lived, is living and will live. The end is the same for all, but what will differentiate the two are the investments made for the hereafter, not for those made for this world.





A Letter to the HARAMAIN

Dear Readers,

In the spirit of transparency and our ongoing commitment to uphold the traditions of our faith, we would like to share with you an important correspondence we have sent to the General Presidency for the Affairs of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque. Over the past two years, the number of *rakats* (prayer units) for the *Tarawih* prayer during Ramadan has been reduced to ten, deviating from the customary twenty *rakats* that have been traditionally observed. This change is contrary to the established Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), a practice that has been steadfastly maintained in the Two Holy Mosques for centuries.

While we deeply appreciate and acknowledge the immense efforts and commendable work done by the Presidency in ensuring the safety, comfort, and spiritual fulfillment of pilgrims, we feel compelled to address this significant deviation. It is with the utmost respect and a heartfelt desire to maintain the sacred traditions of our religion that we have raised this issue.

To ensure that our message reaches those in positions of influence and decision-making, we have sent this letter through multiple channels: via email, express post directly to His Majesty King Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, and to the embassy in Ottawa, Canada. Our hope is that this respectful yet earnest appeal will be received with the same dedication to service and adherence to Islamic tradition that we have always admired in the custodians of our holy sites.

We invite you to read the full letter enclosed within this newsletter, and we pray that our collective efforts will contribute to the continued preservation and respect of our beloved religious practices.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إلى فضيلة الرئاسة العامة لشؤون المسجد الحرام والمسجد النبوي،

فأسعد الله أيامكم بالرخاء والسعادة وأدام الله عليكم النعم التي أكرمكم بها ، ووفقكم لما فيه رضا الله، وثناء المسلمين وشكرهم وطيب الذكر وخلود الأثر ولسان صدق في الآخرين.

هذه رسالة طلب من قبل هيئة العلماء بجامعة قاسم العلوم . هي جامعة تختص بتعليم العلوم الإسلامية من اللغة العربية و الفقه و الإفتاء و الحديث و التفسير و غير ذلك من العلوم التي تجعلها مرجع ثقة في الأمور الدينية.

نتوجه إليكم بأسمى مظاهر الاحترام والتقدير، ونسجل امتناننا العميق للسخاء الذي يميز إفادتكم والعطاء الذي تقدمونه لخدمة الحرمين الشريفين – أمّنهما الله و أعزهما – و زوارهما – أكرمهم الله وتقبل منهم – . إن فضلكم السامي وإحسانكم البارز ليسا مجرد جهود روتينية لا روح فيها، بل هما أشعة من النور تتسلل إلى قلوب المسلمين في كل مكان. تتجاوز خدمتكم الكريمة الحفاظ على أمان وراحة الحجاج والزوار. إنكم مثال حي على التفاني والرعاية الفائقة في خدمة بيوت الله الحرام. إن كرمكم وعطاءكم يتخطى حدود الواجب، فأنتم لا تقومون بمجرد تلبية الاحتياجات الأساسية، بل تفرحون قلوب المسلمين وتمنحونهم تجربة لا تُنسى. كما أنكم، بالفعل، تشكلون مصدر إلهام للجميع، فتفرضون بقوة العزم والعطاء كقادة موفقين في خدمة الحرمين الشريفين. في زمن تتسارع فيه الأحداث، يظل تفانيكم الدائم واستعدادكم الجاد لتقديم الأفضل يمثلان قيمًا يعتز بها المسلمون. نشكر الله على وجود قادة مثلكم.

وبالخصوص، لا يمكننا أن ننسى القيادة الملهمة لسمو ولي عهد السعودية خادم الحرمين الشريفين محمد بن سلمان بن عبد العزيز – حفظه الله و رعاه-، فإن جلالته يعتبر بلا شك واحداً من أعظم القادة في العصر الحديث، حيث يضطلع بمسؤولياته بتفانٍ وإخلاص. إنه وارث عظيم لأسلافه الكرام، والذي يسعى بجديّة واضحة للحفاظ على مكانة المملكة وتطويرها في كل المجالا و يعتبر خير خلف لخير سلف الذين كانوا يهتمون بحفظ تقاليد الحرمين الشريفين و سننها ويحافظون عليها و إنه الذي يحمل تراثهم النبيل بحكمة ورؤية، موجهاً الأمة نحو الازدهار والتقدم.

وإننا نتمنى لكم دوام النجاح والتوفيق في كل مساعيكم النبيلة.فأنتم نبراس عصرنا تنير الدروب، ومصدر إلهام يستنير به قلوب المسلمين. تقديرنا واحترامنا لكم لا يعد ولا يحصى، ونسأل الله أن يجعل كل جهد تبذلونه في خدمة الحرمين في ميزان حسناتكم.

وإنما نريد أن نلفت أنظار معاليكم إلى أمر ذي أهمية بالغة بالنسبة لأمة الإسلام . فإن صلاة التراويح كما تعلمون، تتمتع بهذه الأهمية، لأنها جزء لا يتجزأ من تجربة رمضان، فمن قامها إيماناً واحتساباً غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه. و من المعلوم أن الحرمين الشريفين بقيادتكم و إشرافكم قدوة أساسية لملايين المسلمين حول العالم، و مهد الحضارة الإسلامية يأتي إليهما المسلمون من كل فج عميق و يهتدون بهديهما و يقتدون بهنجهما و ينسجون بمنوالهما و يحتجون بما رأوه فيهما. ولذا، فإننا نعبر بكل احترام و تواضع عن اضطرابنا وقلقنا إزاء القرار الأخير بتخفيض عدد ركعات التراويح من عشرين إلى عشر، و إنه قرار أثار هموم عدد كبير من المسلمين في جميع أنحاء العالم.

و نعترف بأن جائحة كوفيد-19 قد أحدثت تحديات لم يسبق لها مثيل، ويجب أن يكون سلامة ورفاهية الحجاج والزوار أولوية قصوى. ومع ذلك، نعتقد أنه باستخدام التدابير والاحتياطات اللازمة يمكن إجراء صلاة التراويح كاملةً بطريقة آمنة ومنظمة وبهذه المناسبة، نقدم أمام ساداتكم طلباً نرى أنه يثبت قلوب المسلمين و يشرح صدورهم و يسكن نفوسهم و يقربهم إلى سنة الخلفاء الراشدين. فإننا نستحث هممكم و مواهبكم على العود إلى إقامة صلاة التراويح عشرين ركعة، حيث أن التراث الإسلامي اتفق على هذا العدد فهو المعتمد والمتبع في الحرمين الشريفين منذ قرون. فالتراويح بعشرين ركعة سنة أثبتتها عمر ابن الخطاب - رضي الله عنه - بالجماعة وكانت هذه السنة مستمرة لأكثر من ألف عام و الحفاظ عليه يعدّ حفاظاً على السنة النبوية الشريفة فإن النبي - ﷺ - قد قال: "عليكم بسنتي، وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين من بعدي، تمسكوا بها، وعضوا عليها بالنواجذ." فنلتمس من سماحتكم البقاء على ما كان عليه السلف الصالح في إقامة صلاة التراويح عشرين ركعة في الحرمين الشريفين خلال هذا الشهر المبارك.

ونرجو أن تكون هذه الرسالة تعبر عن احترامنا العظيم و تقديرنا البليغ للجهود الجبارة التي تبذلونها معمغ تمنينا أن تأخذوا بعين الاعتبار هذا الطلب المتواضع والمهم، ونأمل أن تستمروا في خدمة ضيوف الرحمن بنفس الروح الطيبة والعطاء السخي الذي يميزكم.

و نعتذر عن هذه الكلمة الصريحة التي لا يحملنا عليها إلا الإخلاص و الولاء لبلاد الحرمين و حكومتها. وفقكم الله و سدّد خطاكم، و جزاكم الله خير الجزاء على ما تقدمونه من خدمة للإسلام و المسلمين. المخلصون لكم ،

جامعة قاسم العلوم الواقعة في تورونتو، كندا (Toronto, Canada)

الأربعاء، 10 رمضان، 1445 هـ الموافق 20 مارس، 2024 م

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

To the esteemed General Presidency for the Affairs of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque,

May Allah bless your days with prosperity and happiness, and may He continue to bestow upon you the blessings you have been graciously given. May He guide you in all that pleases Him, earns the praise and gratitude of Muslims, and ensures your legacy remains honoured and remembered.

This is a request from the Scholars' Board of Jamiah Qasimul Uloom, an institution dedicated to teaching Islamic sciences including Arabic, Fiqh, Fatwa, Hadith, Tafsir, and other disciplines that make it a reliable authority in religious matters.

We approach you with the utmost respect and gratitude for your generosity and the dedication you display in serving the Two Holy Mosques (may Allah keep them safe and exalted) and their visitors (may Allah honour them and accept their acts of worship). Your noble efforts and distinguished benevolence are not merely soulless, routine tasks but beams of light reaching the hearts of Muslims everywhere. Your service extends beyond ensuring the safety and comfort of pilgrims and visitors. You exemplify supreme dedication and exceptional care in serving the sacred houses of Allah. Your generosity and giving go beyond the call of duty; you bring joy to the hearts of Muslims and provide them with an unforgettable experience. Indeed, you are an inspiration to all, demonstrating determination and generosity as successful leaders in serving the Two Holy Mosques. In a rapidly changing world, your unwavering commitment and readiness to provide the best are values cherished by Muslims. We thank Allah for leaders like you.

In particular, we cannot overlook the inspiring leadership of His Majesty Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques - may Allah protect and preserve him. His Majesty is undoubtedly one of the greatest leaders of the modern era, carrying out his responsibilities with dedication and sincerity. He is a noble heir to his honourable ancestors, striving earnestly to maintain and develop the Kingdom in all areas. He is the best successor to the best predecessors who cared for and preserved the traditions and customs of the

Two Holy Mosques. He bears their noble legacy with wisdom and vision, guiding the nation towards prosperity and progress.

We wish you continued success and prosperity in all your noble endeavours. You are the beacon of our era, illuminating paths and inspiring the hearts of Muslims. Our appreciation and respect for you are immeasurable, and we ask Allah to place every effort you make in serving the Two Holy Mosques in the scale of your good deeds.

We wish to draw your esteemed attention to a matter of great significance to the Muslim Ummah. As you know, the *Tarawih* prayer holds immense importance, being an integral part of the Ramadan experience. Whoever prays it out of faith and seeking reward will have their past sins forgiven. It is known that the Two Holy Mosques, under your leadership and supervision, serve as a fundamental model for millions of Muslims around the world. They are the cradle of Islamic civilization, to which Muslims from every corner of the earth flock, guided by their teachings and practices, and emulating their ways. Hence, we respectfully express our concern and confusion regarding the recent decision to reduce the number of *Tarawih* prayer units from twenty to ten, a decision that has worried many Muslims worldwide.

We acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges, and the safety and well-being of pilgrims and visitors must be a top priority. However, we believe that with the necessary measures and precautions, the full *Tarawih* prayer can be conducted safely and in an organized manner.

In this regard, we present to you a request that we believe will reassure the hearts of Muslims, bring them joy, and draw them closer to the tradition of the Rightly Guided Caliphs. We urge your esteemed selves to reinstate the *Tarawih* prayer to twenty units, as this number is the established tradition followed in the Two Holy Mosques for centuries. Performing twenty units of *Tarawih* was established by Umar ibn al-Khattab - may Allah be pleased with him - in congregation, and this tradition has continued for over a thousand years. Preserving it is tantamount to preserving the noble prophetic tradition, as the Prophet - peace and blessings be upon him - said: "Hold on to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, bite onto it with your molars." Therefore, we earnestly request your honourable selves to maintain the practice of twenty units of *Tarawih* in the Two Holy Mosques during this blessed month.

We hope that this letter conveys our profound respect and appreciation for your immense efforts, and we wish that you consider this humble yet significant request. We hope you continue to serve the guests of the Merciful with the same generous spirit and dedication that distinguish you.

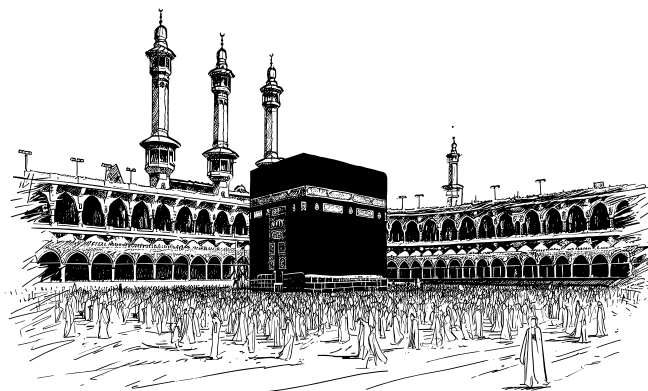
We apologize for this candid expression, driven solely by our sincerity and loyalty to the land of the Two Holy Mosques and its government.

May Allah grant you success and guide your steps, and may He reward you abundantly for your service to Islam and Muslims.

Sincerely,

Qasimul Uloom University located in Toronto, Canada

Wednesday, 10 Ramadan, 1445 AH corresponding to March 20, 2024 AD



VIRTUES OF THE DAY OF 'ASHURA (THE TENTH OF MUHARRAM)

By: Alimah Aisha Patel, Graduate, JQU (Class of 2022)

01 SIGNIFICANCE AND SACREDNESS OF MUHARRAM

Muharram marks the beginning of the Hijri calendar (Islamic lunar calendar). It is one of the four sanctified months about which the Qur'an says,

"Indeed, the number of months ordained by Allah is twelve—in Allah's Record since the day He created the heavens and the earth—of which four are sacred..."
(Surah at-Tawbah, 36).

Abdullah ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما said, "Allah has singled out four months, made them sacred, made their sanctity great, made sinning more severe in them, and made righteous deeds and their reward greater" (Lataiful Ma'arif, 207).



02 PROPHET NUH'S عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام ARK SETTLES ON MOUNT JUDIYY'

On the tenth of the month of Rajab, Nuh عليه السلام embarked on the ark. For six months, the ark sailed over the floodwaters. When it reached the location of the Ka'bah, it circled it seven times. Allah had elevated His House, preventing it from being submerged.



On the 10th of Muharram, or 'Ashura, the floodwaters subsided, and the ark came to rest on Mount Judiyy'. In gratitude, Nuh عليه السلام observed a fast and instructed everyone on the ark to do the same (Tafsir at-Tabari; Tafsir al-Baghawi). However, it is important to note that Allamah Ibn Kathir calls the narration of the ark settling on the day of 'Ashura "ghareeb", indicating that, according to his classification, the narration should be disregarded (Azmi).

03 FIR'AUN'S DEFEAT: A DAY OF TRIUMPH



Abdullah ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما reported that the Prophet ﷺ arrived in Madinah and found the Jews observing fast on the day of 'Ashura. The Prophet ﷺ said to them: "What is the (significance) of this day that you observe fast on it?"

They said, "It is the day of great (significance) when Allah delivered Musa عليه السلام and his people, and drowned the Fir'aun and his people, and Musa عليه السلام observed fast out of gratitude and we also observe it."

Upon this the Prophet ﷺ said, "We have more right, and we have a closer connection with Musa عليه السلام than you have," so Prophet ﷺ observed fast (on the day of 'Ashura), and gave orders that it should be observed (Sahih Muslim, 1130).

04 HISTORICAL FASTING OBLIGATION (BEFORE RAMADHAN)

In early Islam — before the fasts of Ramadhan became fardh (obligatory) — fasting on the day of 'Ashura was fardh. Although it is no longer obligatory after Ramadhan was prescribed, it remains as a practice of the prophets عليهم السلام, and a source of reward (Ma'ariful Qur'an).

Aisha رضي الله عنها narrated: "(The tribe of) Quraysh used to fast on the day of 'Ashura in the pre-Islamic period, and then Allah's Messenger ﷺ ordered (Muslims) to fast on it till the fasting in the month of Ramadhan was prescribed; whereupon the Prophet ﷺ said, 'He who wants to fast (on 'Ashura) may fast, and he who does not want to fast may not fast'"
(Sahih al-Bukhari, 1893).



05 THE PROPHETS عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام FASTED ON THIS DAY

It has been narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه: "Fast on the day of 'Ashura, for verily it is a day that the Prophets عليهم fasted on. Therefore, fast on it"
(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, 9446).

This hadith shows that the significance of 'Ashura, the tenth of Muharram, is acknowledged by previous prophets عليهم السلام.



06 SINS FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR ARE FORGIVEN

Abu Qatadah رضي الله عنه reported: The Prophet ﷺ was asked about fasting the day of Arafah and he said, "It will expiate the sins of the previous and upcoming years." Then, the Prophet ﷺ was asked about fasting the day of 'Ashura and he said, "It will expiate the sins of the past year"
(Sahih Muslim, 1162).

It is recommended to fast on 'Ashura along with an additional day, either the 9th and 10th or the 10th and 11th of Muharram. This distinction from the Jewish practice of fasting only on 'Ashura was advised by the Prophet ﷺ.



Q&A

Answered by Mufti Adam Koya

What is istikhara, and when should be it performed?

Allah created mankind with various faculties of knowledge, intellect, rationality, and intuition, elevating their rank above all creation.

However, despite our gifted knowledge and intellect, there are times when we face situations that highlight our weaknesses and limitations. In these moments, we realize our need for guidance and support from others. For instances of doubt and indecision, the Shariah prescribes a method called *istikhara* (seeking guidance and goodness).

Shah Waliullah, in *Hujjatullah al Balighah* discusses the wisdom behind legislating *istikhara*. In pre-Islamic times (*jahiliyyah*), people engaged in divination using arrows before making important decisions like travel, marriage, or commerce. They would go to the Ka'bah, where these arrows were located, and a diviner would use them to predict outcomes. Other such methods were used, and people followed them as if they were divine law. The Prophet prohibited these superstitions because of their baseless and misleading nature, as they were considered slander against Allah. The Shariah replaced these practices with *salah al-istikhara* as a means of legitimate guidance, aligning with

human nature and primordial disposition.

The essence of *istikhara* is that when a person is unsure about any course of action and there is no clear guidance from religion or intellect, they seek guidance from Allah. Acknowledging their weakness and inability to make the right decision in front of the All-Knowing and All-Seeing, they turn to their Merciful Master, saying, "Oh my Allah, only You can decide which of the options is better and remove what is harmful." This is the wisdom of *istikhara*.

What are the virtues of istikhara?

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, recognizing the needs of the people, taught *istikhara* in a manner similar to how he taught the Qur'an. In *Sahih al-Bukhari*, there is a hadith from Jabir رضي الله عنه:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُعَلِّمُنَا الْإِسْتِخَارَةَ فِي الْأُمُورِ كَمَا يُعَلِّمُنَا السُّورَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ

"The Prophet ﷺ used to teach us the way of doing *Istikhara* in all matters, just as he taught us the Surahs of the Qur'an." (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, 1166)

Another hadith from the Noble Prophet ﷺ states:

مَا خَابَ مَنْ اسْتَخَارَ وَلَا نَدِمَ مَنْ اسْتَشَارَ

"The one who performs the prayer for guidance (*istikhara*) will not be unsuccessful, and the one who takes advice (*mashwara*) will never regret." (*Majma' al-Zawaid*)

This is because the one performing *istikhara* submits their affairs to One who is more caring and loving than a mother, wiser and more concerned with their benefit than a father, and a true Well-Wisher. The

One who is in essence *ar-Raheem* (the Most Merciful) and *al-Kareem* (the Most Generous), has no equal or comparison in generosity, power, and love. Seeking guidance from such an esteemed Being ensures that one is not deprived. A narration from Imam Tirmidhi states:

وَمِنْ شَقَاوَةِ ابْنِ آدَمَ تَرَكُهُ اسْتِخَارَةَ اللَّهِ

"One of the misfortunes of the son of Adam is his neglect of seeking guidance from Allah." (*Jami' at-Tirmidhi*, 2151)

What is the sunnah way of doing istikhara?

The method of *istikhara* has been related to us from the enlightened teachings of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the hadith, transmitted from him in detail. In light of the noble hadith, we can say that for the *istikhara* salah, one should maintain the *sunnah* and *nafl* acts of preparing for salah, perform wudhu in a perfected way, and then pray two *rakats* with the intention of *istikhara*. After the salah, one should praise Allah in abundance and then read the du'a of *istikhara*.

There are no particular surahs legislated for this salah. Nevertheless, Imam Ayni, quoting Ghazali, mentions that in the first *rakat*, Surah al-Kafirun should be recited, and in the second, Surah al-Ikhlash should be recited (*Umdatul Qari*, 3:235). Additionally, Mullah Ali Qari states in *Mirqat* (3:216) that in the first *rakat*, the following verse should be recited:

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ ۗ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ ۗ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

Your Lord creates what He wills and chooses. Choice is not theirs. Pure is Allah and far higher than their

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ascribing of partners to Him. (Surah al-Qasas, 68)

And in the second *rakat*, the following verse should be recited:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا

It is not open for a believing man or a believing woman, once Allah and His Messenger have decided a thing, that they should have a choice about their matter; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he indeed gets off the track, falling into an open error. (Surah al-Ahzab, 36)

In *Islahi Khutbat*, it is stated that when a matter suddenly appears and there is no time, then only the du'a itself suffices without the two *rakats* beforehand.

The du'a is as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ وَاقْدِرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي

"O Allah, verily I seek the better [of

either choice] from You, by Your knowledge, and I seek ability from You, by Your power, and I ask You from Your immense bounty. For indeed You have power, and I am powerless; You have knowledge, and I know not; You are the Knower of the unseen realms. O Allah, if You know that this matter is good for me with regard to my religion, my livelihood, and the end of my affair, then decree it for me, facilitate it for me, and grant me blessing in it. And if You know that this matter is not good for me with regard to my religion, my livelihood, and the end of my affair, then turn it away from me and me from it; and decree for me better than it, wherever it may be, and make me content with it." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 1166)

When reciting this du'a and reaching the phrase "هَذَا الْأَمْرُ" ("this matter"), the matter for which *istikhara* is being done should be made present in the heart. Jurists and scholars of hadith say that after completing the du'a, one should face towards the *qiblah* and sleep.

What are the consequences and outcomes of istikhara?

Many people are concerned and affected by various worries. After completing their *istikhara*, they often wonder which decision will lead to success and avoid failure. How can we recognize the right course of action? What signs should we expect to see? Due to these pressing questions, people often remain anxious after performing *istikhara*. The scholars have two main opinions regarding this matter:

- First, simply performing *istikhara* itself is such that, Insha Allah, whatever decision the person makes will be filled with goodness. *Istikhara* is a du'a for *khayr* (goodness), and the

servant requests from their Lord the best of outcomes. Allah will assuredly bless them with goodness and create ease in their chosen action.

- The second scholarly opinion is that the heart itself will incline toward a particular decision, which will be sufficient to trust. To support this opinion, scholars cite a hadith found in *Ma'arif al-Sunan* (4: 278), where the Prophet ﷺ, addressing Anas عنه رضي الله عنه, states:

يا أنسُ إذا هممتَ بأمرٍ فاستخِرْ ربَّكَ فيه سبعَ مراتٍ ثم انظرْ إلى الذي يسبقُ إلى قلبِكَ فإنَّ الخيرَ فيه

"Oh Anas, when you intend a matter, then do *istikhara* with your Lord seven times. Then whatever decision you feel is most appropriate, do so because in it will be good."

A group of great scholars prefer this second opinion. Among them are:

- Imam Ayni in his *Umdat al-Qari* (5:255)
- Mullah Ali Qari in *Mirqat* (v:206)
- Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri in *Badhl al-Majhud* (2:366)
- Yusuf Banuri in *Ma'arif al-Sunan* (4:278)
- Ibn Nujaym in *Bahr al-Raiq* (2:652)
- Allamah Ibn Abidin Shami in his famous *Radd al-Muhtar*. (1:461)

Is it necessary to see a dream for istikhara?

No, it is not necessary to have a dream. If someone does see a dream, it may help the heart incline towards a certain action. The *mashaikh* (elder scholars) say if a person sees the colors white or green, it indicates that the action has *khayr* (goodness) in it. However, if a person sees the color black, it

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suggests exercising caution (*Ma'arif al-Sunan*, 4:278).

For what kinds of matters should istikhara be done?

Istikhara should be performed when one is uncertain about the correct course of action. It is not necessary for matters where the positive outcomes are clear, such as acts of worship or rulings of the Shariah, or for matters where evils are apparent, like sins and disobedience; this is because the respective correctness and incorrectness of those decisions are evident. *Istikhara* is done for *jaaiz* (permissible and neutral) matters, or for *wajib* (obligatory) actions that do not have specific times or procedures. It can help determine the best times and procedures for such actions (*Hashiyah Tahtawi al Mara'iqi*, 398).

Additionally, *istikhara* is not required for minimal or inconsequentially neutral and permissible acts, but should be reserved for important decisions, such as intending to travel or marry. For day-to-day matters that aren't given as much weight or importance, such as what to eat, *istikhara* is not necessary (*Badhl al-Majhud*, 2:376).

There is no narration specifying particular times of the day for

performing *istikhara*, so it can be done anytime except during the times it is *makruh* (disliked) to pray (*Mirqat*, 3:206; *Umdat al-Qari*, 4:224). Allamah Shami relates from Sadr al-Shariah that he heard from the *mashaikh* that one should sleep in a state of wudhu after *istikhara*. This indicates that it is a tried and tested (*mujarrab*) practice to pray *istikhara* before sleeping (Shaami 1:341).

How many times should one perform istikhara?

If the heart does not incline in one direction or another, the individual should continue the *istikhara* as required. Imam Ayni narrates from Imam Nawawi's *Kitab al-Azkar* that a person should perform *istikhara* three times, as it is established from narrations that the Prophet ﷺ himself recited the *istikhara* du'a three times (*Umdat al-Qari*, 3:225). Another group of scholars deduce from the aforementioned narration of

Anas رضي الله عنه that *istikhara* should preferably be done seven times (*Badhl al-Majhud* 2:344).

To harmonize all opinions, scholars suggest performing *istikhara* once, and if the heart does not incline to one position or another, continue for three days, and finally, seven days if needed. Seven is considered best as it encompasses both one and three, fulfilling all opinions. So, if time is not constrained and the heart is not firm in one direction, performing *istikhara* seven times is best (*Umdat al-Qari*, 4:225).

Whatever the result of the *istikhara*, it is neither *wajib* (obligatory) nor *sunnah* (recommended) to act upon it. However, if the heart becomes firm and there is no fear of following desires, then surely whatever Allah places in the heart after sincere du'a would be best for us (*Imdad al-Fatawa*, 1:599-601).

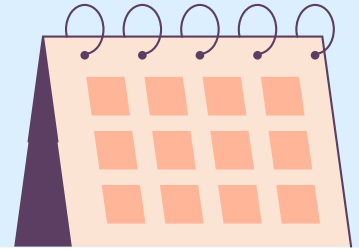
TO SEND IN A QUESTION, EMAIL:
ASKMUFTI@JQULOOM.CA

ISTIKHARA DU'A

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ
مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ
وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ
لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ
بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي
وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ وَاقْدُرْ لِي
الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي بِهِ

(*Sahih al-Bukhari*, 1166)

The Sacred Months



In Islam, we follow the Hijri calendar which is a lunar calendar consisting of 12 months. It was established after our Prophet migrated (did Hijrah) from Makkah to Madinah. From the 12 months, the four mentioned below are special! The Prophet ﷺ said. "The division of time has turned to its original form which was when Allah created the Heavens and the Earth. The year is of twelve months, out of which four months are sacred; three are in succession: Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram, and (the fourth is) Rajab of (the tribe of) Mudar, which comes between Jumada-ath-Thaniyah and Sha'ban" (Sahih al-Bukhari).

- 1
- Dhul Qa'dah refers to the "month of sitting" to "sit out of" or avoid war .
 - Fighting is not allowed during this month to ensure all people travelling for Hajj can do so safely.



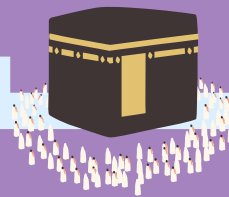
ذُو الْقَعْدَةِ

- 3
- Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar. It translates to "forbidden" or "sacred."
 - Fighting in this month is also forbidden as pilgrims returned from Hajj back to their homes during this time.

- The 10th of Muharram is known as "Ashura". Muslims around the world fast on the 9th & 10th or 10th & 11th.

مُحَرَّم

- 2
- Dhul Hijjah refers to the "month of the pilgrims" . It is the final month in the Islamic calendar.
 - Hajj is completed from the 8th to 13th of this month.
 - The Day of Arafah occurs on the 9th, where Muslims ask Allah for His mercy.
 - The first 10 days of Dhul Hijjah are very special. Fasting and good deeds are encouraged!



ذُو الْحِجَّةِ

- 4
- The word Rajab means to "honour and respect".
 - The great journey of Isra and Miraj took place in this month.

- All fighting was prohibited in this month so people could come to Makkah to perform Umrah and return back to their homes safely.

رَجَب

FACT

Righteous acts that are done during these months are more rewarding than other months, and unlawful acts during these months are more blame-worthy.

Knowing this, we should try our best to increase our good actions during these four months (Ma'ariful Qur'an).





JAMIAH QASIMUL ULOOM

INVITES YOU TO THE

SAHIH AL BUKHARI

AUGUST 3RD, 2024

COMPLETION CEREMONY

WITH OUR HONOURABLE TEACHER:

Shaykh Muhammad Hanif Luharvi
(Shaykhul Hadith of Jamiah Qasimul Uloom)

PROGRAM WILL BEGIN
AFTER ZUHR (1:45 PM)
FOOD WILL BE SERVED

441 NUGGET AVENUE,
SCARBOROUGH,
ON M1S 5E1

FEMALES ONLY PROGRAM WILL BEGIN AT 12:00 PM