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Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creations, and Peace and blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad, the faithful and the honest.

Oh, Allah, we know nothing but what You teach us. You are the All- Knower, the Wise. Oh Allah, teach us what is good for us, and benefit us from what You taught us, and increase our knowledge. Show us the righteous things as righteous and help us to do them, and show us the bad things as bad and help us to keep away from them.

O Allah our Lord, lead us out from the depths of darkness and illusion, unto the lights of erudition and knowledge, and from the muddy shallows of lusts unto the heavens of Your Vicinity.

Mr. Ahmad:

Introduction:

Let us welcome Dr. Mohammad Rateb Al Nabulsi, who is a lecturer in the field of Scientific Miracles of the Holy Quran and Prophetic Sunna in the faculties of Islamic Law and Fundamentals of Islamic Religion. Welcome Dr. Rateb in our program “encyclopedia of Islamic Ethics”.

Dr. Rateb:

Likewise Mr. Ahmad and May Allah reward you.

Mr. Ahmad:

Esteemed sir, ethics is an important, blessed and pleasant issue to talk about, however, does it have anything to do with time and with the oath Allah has sworn in regard of time? And if this connection does exist, what is it?

Dr. Rateb:

In The Name Of Allah The Most Gracious The Most Merciful
Praise be to Allah, The Lord (The One and Only) of the worlds. Blessings and peace be upon our master, Prophet Muhammad, the faithful and the honest.

Man is time and part of him goes with every passing day:

Mr. Ahmad, if we were to compare a human being to everything else, we can say that the inanimate being is something that occupies a space, has a weight and has three dimensions, the plant also occupies a space, has a weight and has three dimensions only it grows, the animal occupies a space, has a weight, has three dimension, it grows plus it moves, whereas the human being occupies a space, has a weight, has three dimensions, he/she grows, moves and above all man thinks.

Hence, Allah has installed a cognitive power in mankind which is man's utmost need, and unless it is fulfilled by searching for the truth, man will forsake his/her human nature and slip to an inappropriate level.



Due to this cognitive power, man should pursue the secret and the purpose behind his/her existence, the reality of this universe, the reality of life, and his/her own reality as a human being.

One of the most specific definitions of the human being according to the esteemed Imam Al Hasan Al Basri is the following:

“Man is but few days, and as everyday goes by, part of him/her goes by too”, and this is an inclusive definition of the human being.

“Every new day that comes upon man says to him: “O son of Adam, I am a new creation and I will witness your deeds. Hence, make the best out of me, for you will not see me ever again till the Day of Resurrection.”

Hence, man is a mobile creature, and according to the scientific point of view in regard of time: if we move a point we will be drawing a line, if we move a line we will be drawing a surface, if we move the surface we will be forming a volume which in turn if moved it will form time, thus, one of the most specific definitions of time is that time is the forth dimension of things.

The human being is a mobile creature according to the relativity theory of Einstein when he discovered the absolute speed in the universe which is the speed of light.

Speaking of which, the following is a scientific indication: the speed of light is 300 thousand Kilometers per second, and any object that travels at the speed of light will turn into light and time will stop therein. Accordingly, our meeting, transmits waves, and it will be seen forever by anyone who is able to travel at the speed of these waves (light), and that is because time stops for any object that travels at the speed of light, and in case of traveling faster than light, time will go backward.

Hypothetically, if we were to travel in a spaceship that is faster than light (which is impossible), we will be able to watch Badr Battle live, on the other hand if we travel slower than light, time will go slower as well.

Hence, man is but time and the latter is the capital of man in life and the priceless thing he/she is bestowed upon with.

As you said, Allah has sworn to the utmost creature (mankind) and when I say the utmost creature I mean man occupies the first rank (among creatures) because Allah says:

((Truly, We did offer Al-Amanah (the trust or moral responsibility or honesty and all the duties which Allah has ordained) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it (i.e. afraid of Allah's Torment). But man bore it.))

[Al-Ahzab, 72]

Allah the Almighty swears by time:

Allah the Almighty has sworn by time to the utmost creature (man) who is not but time, Allah says:

((By Al-'Asr (the time). Verily! Man is in loss,))

[Al-Asr, 1-2]

The subject of that oath is:

((Verily! Man is in loss,))

The creator of heavens and earth is swearing by the time in general to this utmost creature, who is not but time, that man is in loss. If man were to inquire: O Lord how come I am in loss? The answer will be: The passage of time consumes man as days go by, day after day, week after week, month after month and year after

year.

Some said: "Worldly life is nothing but one hour, so spend it in obeying Allah, verify, the self is greedy so adapt it to the state of being content".

Our Lord the Almighty swears by time in general to this utmost creature, who is not but time, and the subject of the oath is that man is at loss because the passage of time consumes him.

Mr. Ahmad:

Excuse me Dr, in the following Ayah Allah says:

((By Al-'Asr (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds,))

If we were to take the following part of it in two brackets:

((Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds,))

And this other part in two brackets:

((And recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf)which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar)which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihad, etc.).))

We conclude that the following part:

((Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism)))

Is nothing but a connection between the previous parts:

((And recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf)which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar)which Allah has forbidden)))

And the second part:

((And do righteous good deeds,))

Also this part:

((And recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf)which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar)which Allah has forbidden)))

Is also a connection between the first two parts, is not that right?

Dr. Rateb:

Time is either consumed or invested:



In fact, Allah's mercy is included in the word:

((Except))

As you have mentioned earlier, man is in a total loss, "every new day that comes upon man it says to him: "O son of Adam, I am a new creation and I will witness your deeds. Hence, make the best out of me, for you will not see me ever again till the Day of Resurrection."

Let me use these two new terms: "Consuming time" and "investing time", namely, whenever man consumes time, he/she will be in a total loss, whereas when man invests time, he/she will be singled out from the subject of Allah's oath which is:

((Man is in loss))

The question to be asked is: How can man consume time? The answer to that question is that man consumes time when he/she spends it eating, drinking and enjoying himself while he/she is totally heedless and is not searching for the secret and the purpose behind his/her existence. In another approach, consuming time occurs whenever one talks, earns money, spends money, has social affairs and lives for the moment without any limitations, such a person is consuming his/her time, and thus he/she is included in the following Ayah:

((Man is in loss))

Now, how can one invest his/her time? When I know the secret and the purpose behind my existence, when I know that I am in a world where I am allowed to pay the price for a better world (the hereafter), when I get acquainted with Allah, when I

apply His method, when I draw close to Him and when I serve His creations, only then I will be investing my time., anything that ends with death belongs to the worldly life, and anything that doesn't accompany the human being to his/her grave belongs to worldly life. This rule is the frame of reference to distinguish between what exactly belongs to worldly life and what belongs to the hereafter. Again, whatever accompanies me to the grave belongs to the hereafter, such like drawing close to Allah by offering a good deed, by proselytizing to Allah, by helping the weak, by feeding the hungry, by spreading Allah's word, by supporting a widow, or by establishing an orphan's institute.

Hence, the entire mercy of Allah is included in the following Ayah:

((Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism)))

Namely, in order to invest time I should offer useful good deeds within the time which passes, and thus, the most prudent is the one who prepares for his hereafter:

Shaddad Ibn Aow narrated that the prophet PBUH said:

((The clever one is he who upbraids himself and works for what comes after death; and the weak one is he who follows his desires and lives on wishful thinking))

[Tirmizi, Ibn Majah and Ahmad]

A story and a moral lesson:

In the literature there are stories of considerable morals like the following one: Two fishermen passed by a brook in which there were three fish, one of them was clever, the second cleverer and the third was retarded (dunce), when the two fishermen saw the fish they set up a date on which they will come back with their fishing nets in order to catch the fish.

The cleverer fish lived the future (the prudent only lives the future) for it was cautious and attentive and said to itself: the prudent should plan for things before they happen, and thus it stopped doing anything else except trying to get out through the place where water comes in from till it was out of the brook and it was saved. The less clever one lived its present and stayed still in its pace till the fishermen came back. There seemed to be an opening between the river and the brook, and this fish was sure that it can pass through it anytime, so it headed to get out from this opening where its former fellow fish went out from, however the opening was blocked, so it said to itself: I am doomed (verify, this is the end of recklessness and only the prudent is the one who doesn't give up hope and who makes use of good opinion). It became nervous being sure that it was about to die, so it tried a trick that might or might not work. it faked being dead and it floated on the surface of the water, so one of the two fishermen caught it and put it on the ground between the river and the brook, and in a blink of eye it jumped to the river

and was saved. The retarded fish was was confused about what to do till it was fished out.

The moral: When I plan for things before they happen I will be in the highest levels of cleverness.

Accordingly, if one saw a man being buried under the ground, he should say to himself: the prudent is the one who prepares for this inevitable hour, and man in one second (the second of death) will lose everything.

All man's loftiness, power, wealth and dominance depends on the width of the one and a quarter millimeter diameter of his coronary artery and depends on his blood liquidity, so if the blood clots at any spot in his head, he might lose his sight, voice, memory or the ability to move according to the spot where the clot hits, and thus, man is in the grasp of Allah. Allah says:

((Verily, they are but plotting a plot (against you O Muhammad). And I (too) am planning a plan.))

[At-Tariq, 40]

In another Ayah:

((And I respite them; certainly My Plan is strong.))

[Al-A'raf, 183]

In physics, strength is to resist pulling, and hardness is to resist pressure, so as if man is tied by a slack rope (with His creator) that will never be cut off:

((And I respite them; certainly My Plan is strong.))

Namely, in one second man could be in the grasp of Allah (die).

When one believes, he should know the truth and should know Allah the Almighty and the creator of heavens and earth, and when he unfolds the great reality of this universe, accords with it, obeys his creator, offers Him good deeds and spreads the word of truth, only then he will be saved from the loss which is man's result according to Allah's oath when He swears by time.

Mr. Ahmad:

Since you brought us back to the time issue, this reminds me of the following Ayah:

((Verily, As-Salat (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahsha' (i.e. great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) and Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc.)))

[Al-Ankabut, 45]

And in another Ayah Allah says:

((Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.))

[An-Nisa', 103]

So let us listen to your answer in regard of connecting salat to time, and why it is not open but is offered only at fixed hours?

Dr. Rateb:

Connecting between salat and time:

1- salat under no condition should be waived:

In responding to that question, Islam has five pillars among which salat is the only repeated act of worship that should under no condition be waived, for we offer Shahadah once, Zakat is not paid by the poor, Hajj can't be offered by the sick or the poor, and Sawm is not offered by the sick and the one on travel, thus, salat is the only repeated act of worship that should under no condition be waived, and that is because it is the foundation of this religion.

((salat (prayer) is the pillar of this religion, whoever performs it, will be establishing for this religion, and whoever leaves it will be demolishing this religion))

[Mentioned in the Tradition]

((Not all those who pray are prayers, as I accept salat from only those whose salat make them humble to My greatness, who don't follow their desires, who don't insist on disobeying Me, who feed the hungry, who cloth up the needy, who are merciful to the injured, and who house the stranger, and only if all are done for My sake))

[Mentioned in the Tradition]

2- salat includes all the meanings of Islam pillars within:

By the way, salat (prayers) includes all the meanings of other Islam pillars within. Namely, when one leaves food and drink in Sawm (Fasting), he also leaves them in salat as well besides ceasing any move or talk and this is among the senses of Sawm.

In Hajj one is headed to Kabah (Al Bait Al Haram) and in salat we face the direction of Mecca, and this is among the senses of Hajj.

Zakat is paid by those who earn money and since the latter needs precious time in order to be collected, also salat needs precious time in order to be offered.

Also in salat we say the Shahadatain (Bearing witness in that there is no diety but Allah and that Mohammad is His Servant and messenger), therefore, all Islam pillars are connected to each other and that is because the religion is all about

connecting with Allah the Almighty, and if we were to summarize the entire religion in one word, it would be “connecting with Allah”, now who is the benighted? He is the one who is disconnected from Allah. And who is the believer? He is the one who is connected with Allah.

((And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently.))

[Aal-'Imran, 159]

Whenever one is connected with Allah, this connection will be manifested in mercy that fills his/her heart and will be reflected later on as lenience.

((And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you))

[Aal-'Imran, 159]

Therefore, in order to avoid the inevitable loss, one must search for the truth, abide by it, spread it and be patient enough to do all that, and this is the only way to be saved from the loss, for man is not but time.

Mr. Ahmad:

Allah the Almighty says:

((Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up As-Salat (the prayers) [i.e. made their Salat (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times, etc.] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell.))

[Maryam, 59]

We should understand this severe menace from Allah's towards those who have given up salat.

Dr. Rateb:

He who forsakes salat is menaced by Allah:

The following is serious and specific in regard of this topic, and I hope that the spectators comprehend it completely.

((Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers)))

Leaving salat is enough for being not firmly established:

I ask you by Allah to answer me: do we have the succession on earth? Absolutely not. Do we have the authority and upper hand? Absolutely not. Are we safe? Absolutely not.

Verify, for Allah, the disappearance of the entire universe is easier than breaking His promises to His believers, so how can we comprehend this fact? The Ayah again is the following:

((Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up As-Salat (the prayers) [i.e. made their Salat (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times, etc.] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell.))

Actually Muslims are punished with this Ghai (being in all kinds of adversities). The fact, that Allah will not break the promises He made for His believers, is mentioned in so many Ayahs:

((And that Our hosts, they verily would be the victors.))

[As-Saffaat, 173]

((And (as for) the believers it was incumbent upon Us to help (them).))

[Ar-Rum, 47]

((Verily, We will indeed make victorious Our Messengers and those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) in this world's life))

[Ghafir, 51]

Therefore, what should we do with this severe paradox between the reality of Muslims nowadays and the promises they are granted in the noble Quran? The following Ayah answers that Question:

((Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up As-Salat (the prayers) [i.e. made their Salat (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times, etc.] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell.))

By the way, one of the most outstanding things that is said by interpreters about the following Ayah:

((The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart [clean from Shirk (polytheism) and Nifaq (hypocrisy)].))

[Ash-Shu'ara, 88-89]

Is that the clean heart is the one that is clean from any desire which does not please Allah, clean from believing any news which contradicts with the divine revelation, clean from worshipping other than Allah and clean from resorting to other than the divine laws.

Mr. Ahmad:

Allah the Almighty says:

((And seek help in patience))

[Al-Baqarah, 45]

Since we are talking about being firmly established on earth which is not our reality nowadays, and since we didn't pay in advance what it takes to deserve the establishment, and in order to hold the reins of power all over again, Allah has given us the following piece of advice:

((And seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer)))

[Al-Baqarah, 45]

But what is the connection between patience, which is a conduct, and salat, which is an act of worship?

Dr. Rateb:

The connection between forbearing and salat:

You put your finger on a very serious fact, May Allah reward you abundantly, for salat is the reality of connecting with Allah, the connecting of this weak evanescent creature with the absolute origin of this universe (the creator). When the weak has a connection with the powerful, he gains power, and when the poor has a connection with the rich, he becomes rich, and by the same token, the entire goodness lies in connecting with Allah the Almighty.

salat is the foundation of this religion as I have mentioned earlier, so when should I be patient? That will be when people are compensated for their patience. Hence, if there were an affliction or a disaster, the connection with Allah the Almighty in such hardship brings about tranquility without which man is miserable even if he owns everything else, and with which he is happy even if he lost everything else.

O Lord, what did he lose, he who found You? And what did he find, he who lost You? If Allah is with you, who will be against you? And If Allah is against you, who will be with you?

The Quranic indication about the speed of light:

Mr. Ahmad, I will bring to your attention to a very outstanding fact. A lot of conferences were held about the inimitability of Quran. One was held in Moscow, another in Beirut, then in Dubai. In the conference that was held in Moscow, an unbelievable topic was discussed, it is about the relativity theory of Einstein which changed forever the rules of physics and which remarkably is mentioned in an Ayah in the noble Quran, which is the following Ayah:

((And verily, a day with your Lord is as a thousand years of what you reckon.))

[Al-Hajj, 47]

Arabs consider the lunar year, and we all know that the moon rotates around the earth once per month, and if we take the center of the earth and the center of the moon and draw a straight line between the two, this line according to architects and mathematicians is the half diameter of a circle which is equal to the moon orbit around the earth, and it is easy to calculate that: half diameter of earth plus half diameter of moon plus the distance between the two equals half diameter of the moon's orbit around the earth, if we multiply that by 2, we will get the diameter of the orbit, and if we multiply that by 3.14 we will get the circumference of the orbit, and if we multiply that by 12 (the months of a year) then multiply that by 1000 years we will have the distance that the moon travels in 1000 years and this number will be in kilometers.

So if we divided the distance that the moon travels in its journey around the earth in 1000 years using the recent seconds, how many hours in a day? 24.

So we multiply 24 by 60 minutes and by 60 seconds, and this brings us to a stunning surprise, because the result of all these calculations will be the specific speed of light which is 299,752 kilometers per second, and this means that the distance, which the moon travels around the earth in 1000 years, equals the same distance that the light covers in one day, and thus this Ayah includes the exact speed of light.

I have mentioned earlier that the approximate speed of light is 300 thousand Kilometers second, however the exact speed is 299,752 kilometers per second, and this is the exact speed of light.

The conclusion:



Hence, when is man saved from loss? When does he win? When does the bliss in worldly life continue till after life? The answer to these questions is when he knows the reality of the universe, the reality of the worldly life, and his own reality which is nothing but time, and the latter is the most precious thing man has, it is his only capital in life, and it is either consumed as most heedless people do, or invested by offering good and useful deeds in the passing time.

Since Allah has installed a cogitation power in man, the latter should first seek the truth, then abide by it and third of all, he should spread it, and he should be patient in doing all this.

Mr. Ahmad:



Making use of time by the human being in investing it in order to be his provision in the hereafter reminds me of the following Ayah:

((Indeed whosoever purifies himself (by avoiding polytheism and accepting Islamic Monotheism) shall achieve success, And remembers (glorifies) the Name of his Lord (worships none but Allah), and prays (five compulsory prayers and Nawafil additional prayers).))

[Al-A'la, 14-15]

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