

Bismillahir Rahmaanir Raheem

RAMADAAN | AN OPPORTUNITY TO FULFIL THE OBJECTIVE OF OUR LIFE

Hadhrat Moulana Dawood Seedat Sahib (Daamat Barakaatuhu)

In a programme recently, Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Sahib (Daamat Barakaatuhu) mentioned that our situation has become such that when a person is trying to become pious, many a time that person is looked down upon. ...Forget the kuffaar, we as believers find fault with and criticize the person; even mock the person. We talk in our circles that the person has become too pious, as if this is inappropriate and distasteful. However, the object of our life was to become pious.

The whole objective of this life that Allah Ta'ala gave us is for us to become pious, for us to worship Allah Ta'ala, for us to realise and recognise who our Allah Ta'ala is.

There are many examples of this kind of negative and even belittling response from our side when others are trying to please Allah Ta'ala: We have our family gatherings. If someone, who is making an effort to be pious and obedient to Allah Ta'ala, requests for purdah arrangements – for the men and women to be separated, that person will be criticised ... whereas what he is requesting is what Allah Ta'ala is instructing us.

A person starts growing his beard and people start with their discouraging comments and tease him. People mock and ridicule him whereas he is wanting to look like Rasulullah Sallallaahu 'alayhi wasallam.

If we are involved in gheebat (backbiting) and someone points out to us that it is Haraam, we immediately make excuses for our actions. We justify what we are doing. Again, the person's piety is frowned upon; looked down upon.

This malfuz of Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Sahib (Daamat Barakaatuhu) brought two points to mind:

1. Hadhrat Moulana Yunus Patel Sahib (Rahmatullahi alayh) used to mention that in India there was a certain type of snake. Its poison used to affect the person's tastebuds. The person who was bitten by it could not taste anything bitter.

In that era, they did not have the technology and medical care as we have today. One traditional treatment was to first administer the antidote. Thereafter, something bitter-tasting - a little quinine or neem - was given to the person to taste. If it was not tasting bitter, more medication was given. That procedure continued; giving the antidote and then something bitter until eventually the patient tasted the bitter. Hazrat (Rahmatullahi 'alayh) used to say: *"When the bitter tastes bitter, then the patient is getting better."*

Hazrat (Rahmatullahi ‘alayh) would say that we must take a lesson: The person was bitten by a snake and had the poison of the snake in his system; as such he could not taste the bitter. We are injected with the poison of nafs and shaytaan. Our bodies are so poisoned that we cannot taste the bitterness of our sins.

Today, sins have become normal for us. They have become a way of life. If the person is not reading Salaah, involved in interest, gambling, adultery, etc., he sees that as normal. The situation is so sad that we now find wealthy Muslims loaning money on interest. This has become a norm in the business world. And such individuals are not shy about their involvement in Haraam. There is no concern that they are feeding their families Haraam.

2. Ramadaan Shareef is a month that the pious look forward to, desirous of seeking its abundant blessings. However, people like us, with our weaknesses, consider Ramadaan as a burden, whereas Ramadaan is the object of our life. It is that opportunity to become pious and closer to Allah Ta’ala. Allah Ta’ala states in the Qur`aan Shareef:

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become pious.”

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:183]

In the month of Ramadaan, in some homes, the television is switched off and other Haraam comes to an end. Unfortunately, more often these sins are merely put on hold and postponed until after Ramadaan, whereas sins were to be given up fully.

Due to these restrictions in Ramadaan, the children start feeling that they are missing out whereas those actions are sins, and sins are bitter. Since we have become so congested with the poison of shaytaan we cannot taste the bitter anymore. We regard the bitter as sweet, and that which is sweet, we are tasting as bitter. We are not tasting the sweetness of Imaan and a'maal.

It is mentioned that immediately after one Ramadaan, the Sahabah (Radhiyallahu anhum) would look forward to the next Ramadaan. ...The pious become excited with the nearness of Ramadaan. They look forward to it. This is how a Mu'min should be. In the Sunnah, we are taught the dua: *O Allah, bless us in Rajab and Sha'baan and grant us life to see Ramadaan.* - There is anticipation and enthusiasm building within the pious. They are looking forward to standing and listening to the entire Qur'aan Shareef in Taraweeh, fasting during the days of Ramadaan, increasing in good and nurturing taqwa - which is the object of Ramadaan and the object of our life.

In most cases these days, many see Ramadaan as interrupting their entertainment and Haraam pleasures. They consider Ramadaan as a kind of prison where they will be tied down

with the fasts. Sadly, we now find that there is no regard and esteem for the month of Ramadaan and for many of us, sins continue.

So many are looking for the flimsiest excuse not to fast. In many Masaajid, the Imam commences with the Salaah but those who are supposed to be following, delay and only join the Imam when he goes into ruku. A really sad state of affairs. Then to add insult to injury, as the mubarak month passes, the Masjid gets empty. One, one saff is made shaheed. ...Where are the musallis? ...This is a matter to cry over. What has become of us as an ummah?

In previous times, there was a norm in the community of Madina Munawwarah: When a person turned 40, he cut himself off from all worldly engagements. He turned to Allah Ta'ala, engaged in Ibaadah and prepared to meet Allah Ta'ala.

Our situation is poles apart. A large percentage are not making Ibaadah; not even the five Fardh Salaah. Our Ibaadah, if made, is merely fulfilling rituals – with no enthusiasm, sweetness and love. Our relationship with Allah Ta'ala is short of love and enthusiasm.

We should look forward to being in the first saff for Salaah, keeping the fasts of Ramadaan, listening to and reciting the Qur'aan Shareef and maximizing on the opportunities to earn the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and increase in our provision for our journey to the Aakhirah.

Unfortunately, our response to these blessed occasions is lackluster or uneasy. We are uncomfortable at the prospect of Ibaadah and spending more time in the Masjid. Hadhrat Maalik ibn Dinaar (Rahmatullahu 'alayh) had said that the believer in a masjid is like a fish in water – most comfortable and content, and a hypocrite in the masjid is like a bird in a cage – just waiting to get out.

Many smokers become perturbed and tense at not being able to smoke due to fasting. At the time of sehri, such a person is ending it by pulling on a cigarette. At the time of iftaar, he begins with a cigarette. The person has become a slave to the cigarette, losing out on golden moments when duas are accepted.

Allah Ta'ala grant us the appreciation for Ramadaan and the taufeeq of spending it in all that will please Him and achieving taqwa, the objective our life.