

Islamiat Mark

Q2)

Fast is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word, faest, which means firm or fixed. In Islam, fasting refers to the practice of abstaining from food or drink for a definite period of time, in order to develop spiritual discipline and self control. Fasting is a pillar of Islam, and has been made obligatory on Muslims in the month of Islam. In this regard the Quran say:

" O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint" [Surah Al-Baqara: 183]

During fasting Muslims are prohibited from eating or drinking, the prescribed time of fast ~~starts~~ is from dawn (fajr) to dusk (maghrib), and Muslims open their fast once the adhan has begun. Fasting is made compulsory on all individuals who are deemed physically fit, however, there are certain people who are exempted. This includes the sick, a traveller, pregnant women and women who are going through menstrual bleeding. Many Muslims associate fasting with only abstaining from food or drink, overlooking the whole purpose of fasting, which is to promote righteousness that is a progressive cultivation of spiritual values. The emphasis of this is evident in the saying of Prophet Puh.

" He who abstains from food or drink during the period of fasting but does not strive to abstain and safeguard himself against moral lapses, starves to no purpose"

The collective abstaining of food and drink from dawn till dusk and then opening the fast together, creates a sense of unity in ~~the~~ Islamic communities. Muslims feel like they are a part of something bigger and are united by such practices which the entire ummah is performing. ~~the~~ During fast, muslims practice self-restraint, not just by avoiding food but also by forgoing other sinful practices that they previously indulged in. Such self control is help one to overcome their Nafs, and doing so solely for the purpose of pleasing the Almighty, establishes a deeper ~~and~~ connection of a person with his creator. It also improves the discipline of the society as a whole and instills a feeling of leniency towards others. The prophet ^ﷺ states in this regard

" Verily, Verily, fasting is not only from eating and drinking. Rather fasting is from vanity and obscenity. If some one abuses you or acts foolish against you, then say: Indeed, I am fasting"

(Q5)

Ans: There is no doubt that the Ummah is ~~is~~ is in decline as most of the muslim majority nations are facing ~~threats~~ ~~and~~ challenges that endanger ^{the} lives of many and pose a threat to ~~survival~~ the Ummah as a whole. There are a plethora of factors that have contributed towards the downfall of the Ummah and brought it down to where it stands ~~not~~ now. Following are ~~the~~ & some of the challenges that the ~~the~~ muslim world currently faces.

The ineptitude of muslim leaders and the political system in general is one of challenges that the Ummah presently faces. Most of the muslim nations are under dictatorial rule. They have full control of the judiciary and other state institutions, elevating them above law with no accountability. Many of these leaders are corrupt and give ~~no~~ ^{no} heed towards the needs of general Public. These nations are in dire need of capable leadership, which is ~~is~~ quite unlikely ~~given~~ ~~since~~ ~~the~~ in ~~in~~ a system where the monarch's heir will inherit the throne, ~~irrespective~~ ~~any~~ regardless of their capabilities. More over the so called democratic muslim nations are not far away from dictatorial ~~is~~ system. In most of these nations, the established political parties are deeply influenced by dynastic politics, meaning the leadership position is passed down to only members of a particular family. These parties, when they come into power, have a strong influence on judiciary. ~~and~~ ~~the~~ The present leaders of the states can take inspiration from Islamic way of governance. The poor practice of dynastic politics and inheritance of the throne

to the ~~leader~~ monarch's heir should be avoided, instead the most capable and experienced member next in line should be ~~given~~ entrusted with the responsibility to govern the state. This inspiration should come from how the transfer of power was conducted between the first four caliphs of Islam, despite having heirs, the responsibility of the throne was given to the most experienced next in line. Furthermore, the muslim states are always meant to be welfare states, where every one is equal in front of the law. This is the example set by Prophet ^{Pbuh}, when he established the state of Madinah. The leader of the states avoid in corrupt practices and should be ~~answerable~~ answerable to people. An example in this context is regarding the ~~incident~~ ~~int~~ incident that occurred with Hazrat Umar ^{R.A}, despite being the caliph ~~at~~ of the time and having an authoritative figure, he was openly questioned ~~per~~ pertaining to the cloth he ~~is~~ obtained from Baitul Mad. However, the issue was quickly resolved when the son of H. Umar ^{R.A} informed everyone that he gave his cloth to his father.

Another ~~was~~ challenge that the muslim world faces is the illiteracy and reluctance towards obtaining modern education. The importance of seeking knowledge in Islam can be perceived by the following ~~is~~ hadith "The ink of a scholar is more precious than the blood of the martyrs"; looking back at the ~~is~~ Islamic history, one can acknowledge the contributions of scholars and scientists that helped Islam reach its peak. However,

Presently there is a prevailing misconception that modern education is associated with western culture. Consequently, the muslims are hesitant towards obtaining modern education and therefore are ~~being~~ ^{falling} behind in many fields such as technology, medicine throughout the world. The muslim nations should also prioritise literacy education in their respective states. They should set Prophet ^ﷺ as a role model and take inspiration from all the efforts he ^ﷺ placed to ensure that the muslims receive quality education. ~~An example of these efforts~~

Disunity among the ummah is another problem that the muslims currently face. Different ^{muslim} nations around the globe are solely driven by their own interests and gains, completely ignoring the issues that many muslim nations face and hence overlooking the concept of unity established by Islam. Regarding unity the Holy Quran says "And hold firmly to the rope of Allah and do not be divided" (3:103). The holy prophet ^ﷺ has also said in this regard "Verily, the believers are like a structure, each part strengthening the other", and the Prophet ^ﷺ clasped his fingers together. Sadly, today the Muslims have forsaken this teaching and are putting their own interests first, an example of this is ~~so~~ the failure of Saudi-Arab to have a strong stance towards Kashmir because of their investment in India. To overcome this impediment the Ummah must ~~revisit~~ ^{strengthen} the concept of unity and should spread awareness regarding this. The Ummah should collectively back the weaker muslim nations and use platforms such

as OIC to ~~address~~ ^{for} the solely ~~with~~ the objective of addressing problems of the Muslim world.

~~The Distorted~~ ~~Image~~ ~~of~~ Islam

Sectarianism is perhaps the most important factor that poses as an impediment towards the rival of Ummah. The Prime Minister of Malaysia identifies "sectarianism as Ummah's curse". Different sects are created when a group of people develop ~~into~~ differences in beliefs and practices to such an extent where they demand distinct identities. The underlying cause of sectarianism is the ^{extreme} attachment towards religious personalities, whose words and opinions are deemed as the final verdict, regardless of how accurate it might be. Questioning these personalities is considered equal to blasphemy, ~~hence aggravating the~~ ~~if~~ The lack of knowledge ~~between~~ of different sects is what fuels the problem. The child born in such households ~~are~~ is compelled to adhere by the beliefs that the Parents practice. Such a child ~~feels~~ develops a sense of infallibility towards his sect and grows hostile towards the people from different sects. Prophet ^ﷺ has said "If a man says to his brother, O Kafir! Then surely one of them is such (Kafir)". This hadith indicates ~~se~~ the severity of calling a fellow believer Kafir, a practice that Islam discourages, but ~~still~~ is ~~quite~~ ^{quite} prevalent, ~~and~~ despite that ~~the~~ it is quite ~~prev~~ prevalent. Islam condemns sectarianism, The Holy ~~quran~~ ^{Quran} states in this

regard " And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves themselves " (3 : 105) . The solution lies within the Quran as well ~~as~~ as " Let there be no compulsion in religion " (2 : 256) . The muslims should pay heed to this verse and think logically what the creator wants from us . ~~The verse indicates that the almighty wants us to~~ . No one should be coerced into accepting ~~and~~ ~~the~~ beliefs, rather the person should follow what they feel is right . Furthermore, the muslims should be receptive towards other sects and have rational discussion pertaining to the differences in beliefs and ~~the~~ mutually agreed on practices and beliefs that have stronger evidence in Quran and ~~set~~ Sunnah .

is
 (Q) 6) Islam is a monotheistic Faith, that enjoys the concept of believing in oneness of Allah. This is ~~one of~~ ~~the~~ a fundamental belief and one cannot enter the folds of Islam without ~~establishing~~ accepting the Oneness of Allah. The concept of tauheed is also rehearsed in the shahadah, which is essential for any non-muslim to ~~not~~ undertake if they want to enter the folds of Islam. Moreover, this shahadah is also apart of the five obligatory prayers. The shahadah states:

"I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger"

Now the question arises who is Allah? The holy Quran answers this in perfect words.

"Say: 'He is Allah, the ~~only~~ only One. Allah, the One taking care of everything. He did not give birth and He was not born. And there is none like Him"
 [Surah Al-Ikhlās]

One must also believe in the following characteristics of Allah:

- 1) Allah is all powerful and has control over everything
- 2) Allah is just and judges everyone fairly
- 3) Allah is the most merciful and forgives when an individual repents sincerely.
- 4) Allah is all-loving and loves His creation

.) Allah is above and beyond anything that exists in the world.

Believing in Oneness of Allah can have benefits on individuals and society as a whole. When an individual believes in oneness of Allah, it makes them dignified and elevates self respect. This is because they believe that Allah alone is the controller of the worlds, so instead of kneeling before others and asking for their help, one only kneels before Allah and ask Him for sustenance. ~~what~~ ~~Another~~ ~~impact~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~sense~~ ~~of~~ ~~Accountability~~, one learns to practice self-restraint and avoid practices which might displease Allah. People ~~believe~~ know that even if their actions are hidden from others, Allah can still see them and therefore they would be accountable in the hereafter. The same belief has an impact on the society as a whole, since people know that they would be punished for their doing in the hereafter, even if they manage to escape the punishment of the society. ~~The~~ ~~Tauheed~~ creates a feeling of hopefulness in individuals. People know that the problems they are facing, could all dispell upon a single "Kun" from the Almighty, this instills hope in individuals, In Regards to hope the Quran says

" Verily with hard ship comes ease" [94:5]

The verse indicates that the present hardships

that the individuals face is only temporary and that it will not last forever. Tawheed removes fear of life and death and other worldly matters from a person's heart. The believer knows that when their time is up there is not that can prevent them from dying, therefore it gives them the courage to do the right thing, regardless of the repression it might entail. It also creates a sense of brotherhood among the ummah. People know that ~~all~~ ^{all Muslims} ~~are~~ are brothers in faith, this in turn creates unity among them. The Quran in this regard states

"The believers are but brethren, therefore make peace between your brethren and be careful of (your duty) to Allah that mercy may be had on you" [49:10].

(Q7) The current world faces dire economic conditions. It has failed to bridge the gap between the poor and the rich. The growing wealth of the west and increased inflation in the developing world is a testament to a failed economic system that shelters the rich and exploits the poor. Islam provides an excellent economic system that can bridge the gap, protect the poor and elevate the living conditions of people. Madina being the first successful state of the world, is the evidence of the effective economic policies laid down by Islam. First and

foremost, the practices ~~pre~~ pertaining to interest should be abolished. Interest is considered a major sin in Islam. Interest is deemed ~~with~~ as a practice that makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. This is the same problem that the modern world faces. The Quran prohibits interest in the following words:

"O believers, take not doubled and redoubled interest, and fear God so that you may prosper".

The Holy Prophet ^{Pbuh} has also condemned riba in strong words. The prophet ^{Pbuh} said:

"Cursed are the receiver and the payer of interest, and the one who records it, and the two witnesses to the ~~trans~~ transcription. All are alike".

The ~~act~~ act of charity and zakat should be widely practiced. Zakat is made obligatory on financially capable Muslims. Zakat is so important that the first Caliph of Islam ~~the~~ declared jihad ~~an~~ against those who didn't give. Zakat is considered as a means to eradicate poverty and control inflation. It also reduces the class difference among people. The non-Muslims, since zakat is not compulsory on them, can ~~voluntarily~~ ~~not~~ give charity. However, it should be ensured that the charity

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reaches the poor states which have high inflation rates, rather than just circulating in wealthy countries.