

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

ALCOHOL AND HASHISH

'Aql (intellect) is among the greatest of Allah's *ni'am* (favours) to man. In the introduction to *Talbees-u-Iblees*, Ibn-ul-Jawzi (ra) described it as the greatest *ni'mah* (favour) because it is the *apparatus* man uses to recognise Allah and the truthfulness of His messengers.¹ Man also uses 'aql to differentiate between right and wrong. Hence, 'aql is a prerequisite for *shar'i* obligation. Accordingly, the laws of the *sharee'ah* do not apply to insane people. More importantly, the significance of 'aql is highlighted in a number of Qur'aanic *aayaat*. For example:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

*In that are signs for people who understand.*²

قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

*We clarified the signs for you so that you may understand.*³

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

*Fear Allah O people of intellect, perhaps you may be successful.*⁴

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي النَّهْيِ

*In that are signs for people of intellect.*⁵

¹ *Talbees-u-Iblees*, Pg.1

² Surah An-Nahl, Aayah 12

³ Surah Al-Hadeed, Aayah 17

⁴ Surah Al-Maa'idah, Aayah 100

⁵ Surah Taha, Aayah 128

Thought-Provoking

Ponder over the following conversation between a man and the famous scholar, Abdullah bin Mubaarak (ra).

Questioner: What is the best thing given to man?

Abdullah: Intellect

Questioner: If he doesn't have it?

Abdullah: Good manners

Questioner: If he does have that also?

Abdullah: A compassionate brother whom he can consult.

Questioner: If he doesn't have one?

Abdullah: He should remain silent for as long as possible.

Questioner: If he cannot do that?

Abdullah: A quick death! (He might as well die!)⁶

An Intriguing Debate

Scholars of the past debated which is superior; *'aql* or *'ilm* (intellect or knowledge)? Some reasoned that in the Qur'aan Allah described himself as *'Aleem* not *'Aaqil*. Put differently, *'ilm* rather than *'aql* is an attribute of Allah. Hence, *'ilm* is superior. The preferred opinion, however, is that *'aql* is superior because *'aql* is the source of *'ilm*. Just as there cannot be light without the sun, there cannot be *'ilm* without *'aql*. Haarith Al-Muhaasiby (ra) alluded in his *Ar-Ri'aayah* that the relationship of *'aql* to *'ilm* is comparable to the relationship of a lamp to your eyes. *'Aql* is like a lamp and *'ilm* is like your eyes. A

⁶ Abu Haatim Al-Busti, *Rawdat-ul-'Uqalaa*, Pg.11

man bereft of *'aql* cannot benefit from *'ilm* just as a blind man cannot benefit from a lamp.⁷

Astonishing

Hasan Basri (ra) said, "If *'aql* could be purchased, people would have paid exorbitant prices for it. It therefore astonishes me how some people use their money to purchase that which inhibits their *'aql*? This brings us to our topic: alcohol and hashish. You may have been questioning the relevance of *'aql* to the topic. Well, now you understand. One of the objectives of the *sharee'ah* is protection of man's necessities among which is his *'aql*. This is one of the reasons for the prohibition of alcohol. A Bedouin was asked why he did not drink alcohol. He replied, "How can I drink something which in turn will drink my *'aql*?" Dahhaak bin Muzaahim (ra) asked a man why he drank alcohol. The man replied, "It digests my food." Dahhaak exclaimed: "Listen! It digests more of your *deen* and your *'aql*." Thus, we often observe the drunkard's inability to differentiate between earth and sky, male and female etc. Sometimes he behaves like an animal and on other occasions he seems insane. Often, he later regrets his actions under the influence.

In Pre-Islamic Ignorance

Among the few people in pre-Islamic ignorance who swore not to drink alcohol was Qays bin 'Aasim. The reason being that he

⁷ Shaikh Abdul Fattaah Abu Ghuddah, Footnotes on the *Risaalah Al-Mustarshideen*, Pg.153

woke up one morning and noticed his daughter's (or sister's) absence. Upon enquiry, he was told: *Don't you know what you did last night? You were drunk and tried to defile her, so she ran away.* Hearing this, Qays felt so ashamed of himself, he swore to never drink alcohol again.

Why am I Looking Like This?

Another person woke up one morning and looking in the mirror, saw that his face was very badly bruised. "Why am I looking like this?" he asked his family. They told him: *You were drunk and swore to bring down the moon. So you repeatedly jumped up and fell on your face!* He too felt so ashamed of himself and swore to never drink alcohol again.

Laughable yet Disgusting

Imam Qurtubi (ra) narrates in his *Tafseer* that a drunken man passed urine and doing so, took the urine in his hands, washed his face and said:

اللهم اجعلنى من التوابين و اجعلنى من المتطهرين

*O Allah! Make me among those who repent and make me among those who stay clean.*⁸

Your Chain is Weak

A scholar of *hadith* and a Christian were travelling by ship. The Christian took out some alcohol, poured it in a glass and drank a little. He then filled more in the glass and offered it to the scholar who thoughtlessly accepted it and started drinking. The

Christian then exclaimed, "May I be sacrificed for you, it is alcohol!" "How do you know?" asked the scholar. The Christian replied, "My slave purchased it from a Jew who swore that it is alcohol." Hearing the Christian's answer, the scholar gulped the rest of the class and retorted, "You fool! We (the scholars of *hadith*) discredit the likes of Sufyaan bin 'Uyainah and Yazeed bin Haroon. Would we then believe a Christian narrating from his slave who in turn narrates from a Jew? By Allah, I drank it because your chain is weak!"

The Arabic Word for Alcohol

The Arabic word for alcohol is *khamr* the root of which means to conceal. The headscarf a lady wears on her head is called *khimaar* – derived from the same root as *khamr* – because it conceals her head. Similarly, alcohol is called *khamr* because it conceals the 'aql. Consequently, the *shar'i* law of alcohol applies to all intoxicants. Thus, Ibn Taimiyyah (ra) said: "Hashish is *haraam*. The person who consumes it should receive the same *had* (legal punishment) as the alcoholic. In fact, it is worse than alcohol in the sense that it thwarts man's intellect and disposition and often results in effeminacy, cuckoldry and many other social illnesses. Furthermore, it hinders one from the *dhikr* (remembrance) of Allah.

Don't Despair

Substance abuse is among the worst calamities to afflict modern society. Let alone non-Muslims, countless Muslims

have fallen prey to this scourge. Destroying their lives with narcotics, they dig their graves with their own hands! Thus they become lifeless bodies – bodies with neither *rooh* nor *aql* (bodies with neither soul nor intelligence). Yet, as Muslims, we should not despair.

During the pre-Islamic period of *jaahiliyyah* (ignorance) alcohol was such a common feature in Arab society, it was regarded as an object of pride. However, after establishing the foundations of *tawheed* and sound *aqeedah* (belief) and delivering its adherents from the worship of fellow creation and *shahwah* (desires) to the worship of Allah alone, Islam abolished this infatuation with alcohol. Polished with the etiquettes of Islam, the Sahaabah (ra) abandoned every activity that angers Allah and His Rasool *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*.

Consider the example of Hassaan bin Thaabit (ra). Prior to Islaam he said:

و نشرها فتركنا ملوكا — و أسدا ما ينهتنا اللقاء

*We drink it and it transforms us into kings
And lions who are unhappy to go to battle.*

However, when Islam penetrated his heart his poetry became more painful for the *mushrikeen* (idolaters) than arrows.

Abu Mihjan Thaqafi (ra) is another example. In the pre-Islamic *jaahiliyyah* he said:

و اذا ما مت فادفنى الى جنب كرمه - تروى عظامى فى المماتى عروقها
و لا تدفننى بالفلاة فاننى - أخاف اذا ما مت ألا أذوقها

*When I die, bury me next to a grape vine so that its roots may
quench my bones.
But do not bury me in the desert because I fear that when I die, I
will never taste it again.*

Yet, when love for Allah and His Rasool *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* penetrated his heart, he played a magnificent role in the historic Battle of Qaadisiyyah.

In short, the solution to alcoholism, substance abuse and all other social problem affecting the *ummah* today lies in returning to the commands of Allah and the *sunnah*.

و آخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

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