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Advice for Intending Holiday Makers

Shaykhul-Hadīth Hadrat Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat hafizahullāh

It is a common trend in this day and age for people to take a break for recreation, including going on holiday. Undertaking leisure activities, such as travel, are regarded as promoting general wellbeing. This concept is not inconsistent with our Dīn, as from amongst the commands of Allāh Ta'ālā is the safeguarding of one's health, both physically and mentally. Alḥamdulillāh, as with all areas of life, we find guidance in our Dīn for this aspect too, so we can make our actions a means of acquiring the pleasure of Allah Ta'ālā.

Be a Healthy Believer

Health and strength are from the blessings of Allāh Ta'ālā that help us to excel in Dīn and in this worldly life.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ has stated:

A strong believer is better than a weak believer. (Muslim)

We can understand from this Ḥadīth that a believer who looks after his health and wellbeing, will be able to perform those good actions, which a believer weaker in health will not. Health is of such importance that we find in another Ḥadīth Rasūlullāh ﷺ lamenting a ṣaḥābī who was neglecting his health:

Verily your body has a right upon you (Al-Bukhārī)

Rasūlullāh ﷺ has encouraged us to give our bodies rest and relaxation, so that a person remains motivated and does not fall prey to boredom or exhaustion. This will enable one to maintain enthusiasm and energy to carry out the Commands of Allāh Ta'ālā and perform good deeds. It is related by Anas ibn Mālik رضى الله عنه that once Nabī ﷺ entered the masjid and found a rope hanging between two pillars. He asked, "What is this?" The Ṣaḥābah رضى الله عنهم replied, "It is for Zaynab. When she feels tired (whilst praying), she holds onto it." Nabī ﷺ said, "No, untie it (i.e. this is incorrect). Pray as long as you feel energetic; when you become tired, you should sit down." (Al-Bukhārī)

Stay Focused

Like the need for a good balanced diet, sleep and exercise, a break from one's daily routine, if spent in line with the principles of Sharī'ah, can help to enhance a person's health both physically and mentally. However, it is important to remember that in fulfilling this necessity, we do not take a break from our religious obligations, nor cross the boundaries laid down by the Sharī'ah. Precautions must be undertaken to ensure that whilst engaging in any leisure activity, a person does not become heedless of the remembrance of Allāh Ta'ālā and compromise his religious and spiritual obligations, thereby causing harm to his eternal life of the hereafter.

The following advices will inshā'allāh help us achieve a balance and make our 'time out' fruitful in this world and the hereafter.

1. Intention and Objective

The intention for taking a break must be correct; it should not be to merely follow the prevalent culture of the day. Our every action should be to fulfil the objective of our existence and creation, the worship of Allāh Ta'ālā. Allāh states:

I did not create the Jinns and the human beings except for the purpose that they should worship me. (56:51)

In light of this, if one's objective for taking a break is to rest and refresh the body and mind, in order to return home and thereafter exert more effort to perform good deeds and fulfil the rights of the Creator and the creation, then this will be a rewarding action. Similarly, the aim to spend quality time with the family is also a worthy intention.

2. Ensure suitability

We must ensure that the trip we are undertaking is in compliance with Sharī'ah. Many are those who, without having undertaken research, book a holiday package. Only after arriving at their destination do they realise that they have arrived at an unsuitable place; an environment of irreligiousness, obscenity and nudity. On returning home, they are regretful and concede that the environment was such that they were unable to refrain from sin.

If one intends to travel abroad for a holiday, then it is not necessary to visit those places where everyone else is going. To avoid finding oneself in an unsuitable situation, thorough research should be undertaken on the proposed destination and to only proceed to such places wherein the disobedience of Allāh Ta'ālā is not taking place.

3. Shayṭān's Ploy

As stated earlier, during any leisure activity or holiday we should not overlook our obligations. Shayṭān places into the mind this thought, 'We have come here for rest and relaxation, there must be total freedom from every type of restriction'. Those on holiday therefore absolve themselves from tilāwah of the Glorious Qur'ān, dhikr, ma'mūlāt etc. Only ṣalāh remains and that too is of the lowest standard. In this respect, we should ask ourselves the following questions: Do I reduce the hours of my sleep while on holiday? Do I reduce the amount of food that I consume? When we do not reduce our sleep nor food intake, there is no excuse for reducing or altering one's 'ibādah. It is therefore of paramount importance to prepare a timetable, so that one will remain punctual in all of one's a'māl. It should also be noted that, just as supplications made during travel are more accepted, similarly there is greater barakah in the dhikr and 'ibādah performed while on a journey.

4. Avoid Extravagance

We should avoid unnecessary expenses and extravagance. Allāh Ta'ālā states:

Surely, squanderers are brothers of satans, and the Satan is very ungrateful to his Lord. (27:17)

As it has become common to take a break by travelling abroad, all too often people go on holiday packages that they cannot afford by taking out loans. In their desire for a luxury holiday, they become embroiled in unnecessary extravagance. It is incorrect to believe that rest and relaxation can only be achieved by travelling abroad for a holiday. Even if one cannot afford a holiday due to financial difficulty or is unable to identify a suitable destination, then what is the harm or loss? People in the past did not go on such holidays, yet arguably had greater peace and happiness in their lives in comparison to ours.

Beneficial Guidelines

In order to safeguard one's time and a'māl, in particular during a holiday journey, some further beneficial guidelines should also be borne in mind:

1. Always remain engaged in the remembrance of Allāh Ta'ālā. Keep this thought in mind that my Allāh Ta'ālā is watching me with love.
2. Maintain modesty and be mindful about unlawful gazes, dressing appropriately in accordance with Sharī'ah and injunctions relating to contact with non-maḥrams.
3. Take out some time for muḥāsabah (taking account of one's past actions) daily. In particular, ponder over how much of life has passed and how much more remains.
4. Make firm resolutions for the future by thinking about what one needs to and what one intends to do from now to make amends for the past.
5. Refrain from the disobedience of Allāh Ta'ālā at all times. Stay away from places of sin and indecency and avoid unnecessary extravagance in spending.
6. Abstain from all non-Islamic practices. Spend your time in such a way that when you return, it is with both a healthy body and a healthy soul.

May Allāh Ta'ālā safeguard us all and grant us the correct tawfīq. Āmīn.

Lessons From The Glorious Qur'ān

Extracted from Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān of Muftī Shafī 'Uthmānī Rahmatullāhi 'alayh

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

Success is really attained by the believers

Merits and Special Features of Sūrah al-Mu'minūn

Upon the revelation of the opening verses of Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, the Prophet ﷺ said to his companions, "Just now ten verses have been revealed to me, and anyone who follows them will go to Heaven." He then recited the first ten verses of Sūrah al-Mu'minūn.

Once Yazīd ibn Babnūs questioned Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها about the habits and the behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to which she replied that it was according to what has been revealed in the Qur'ān. Then she recited these ten verses of the Qur'ān and said, "These verses describe his behaviour."

What is Falāḥ?

The word falāḥ (translated above as ‘success’) has been used in the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth on numerous occasions. For example, the call to prayer (adhān) invites every Muslim towards falāḥ five times a day. The word falāḥ signifies the attainment of all desires as well as protection from all misfortunes.

It is so comprehensive in its meaning that it may be regarded as the pinnacle of one’s desire — but the total falāḥ, where no desire remains unfulfilled together with complete immunity from any tragedy, is not achieved in this world. In this temporary world, there is an ever-present fear of a decline in or loss of good fortune, or the apprehension of an impending disaster, and no living person can claim to be free from it.

Thus, it is evident that total falāḥ cannot be achieved in this world, which is a place of pain and suffering, where nothing is everlasting and everything must ultimately perish. However, this priceless commodity will be available in another world, namely Paradise, and it is there that people will achieve all their wishes very promptly. Allah mentions with regards to the people of Paradise:

وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدْعُونَ

“For them there is whatever they ask for” — (36:57)

In that world, together with receiving whatever one desires, there will be no sorrow, no distress, and no difficulties. Therefore, one can attain the true falāḥ.

In brief, while total falāḥ may be obtained in Paradise only, in the present verses Allāh has promised falāḥ to those believers who possess seven attributes. In shā’ Allāh, we will discuss these attributes over the next few issues.

Lessons From The Hadīth

Mawlānā Tahir Patel

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: " لَا تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا. وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّى تَحَابُّوا. أَوْ لَا أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ إِذَا فَعَلْتُمُوهُ تَحَابَبْتُمْ؟ أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ بَيْنَكُمْ". (مسلم)

Sayyiduna Abu Huraira Radhiallahu Anhu narrates that Rasulallah ﷺ said: By the one who controls my life. You cannot enter Paradise until you are a (perfect) believer. And you cannot be a (perfect) believer until you love one another. Would you like me to guide you to an act that, if practiced, will lead you to love one another? Spread Salaam amongst yourselves. (Muslim)

Islām places significant emphasis on fostering strong relationships among Muslims, highlighting unity and mutual affection. The Leader of the Prophets ﷺ described the Muslim Ummah as “a single body.” In his noble teachings and actions, the Prophet ﷺ consistently offered practical guidance to strengthen this unity.

“Afshū as-salāma baynakum” – Spread Salām among yourselves

The Arabic term Afshū (أَفْشُوا) means “to spread” or “to publicise.” Reflecting on this, the esteemed Shaykh al-Ḥadīth, Mawlānā Muḥammad Saleem Dhorat ḥafīẓahullāh highlights two key ways to spread the greeting of Salām:

1. Say the Salām loudly and clearly

Pronouncing the Salām audibly ensures more people hear and benefit from it. It's essential to avoid mumbling or rushing. We should strive to say the full greeting: "As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh."

2. Say the Salām at every opportunity

Whether meeting another Muslim, entering or leaving a home, or parting ways, we should make it a habit to greet others with Salām consistently.

May Allāh Ta‘ālā grant us the understanding and ability to act upon these beautiful teachings of our beloved Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. Āmīn.

Sīrat Khātam al-Anbiyā' ﷺ

Muftī Shafi' Uthmānī Rahmatullāhi 'alayh

Journey to Shām with Abū Tālib & the Encounter with a Jewish Scholar

While under the guardianship of his beloved uncle Abū Tālib, the Prophet ﷺ, at the age of 12 years and 2 months, travelled to Shām in the company of Abū Tālib. On the way, they stopped at a place called Tāmā. As they stayed there, a Jewish scholar by the name of Baḥīrā, the monk, passed by and saw the beloved Prophet ﷺ. He inquired, "This boy who is with you—who is he?" Abū Tālib replied, "He is my nephew." Baḥīrā remarked, "Do you wish to be kind to him and safeguard him?" Abū Tālib replied without hesitation, "Yes, without any doubt." Baḥīrā exclaimed, "I swear by Allah, if you take this boy to Shām, they will kill him. This boy is the Prophet of Allah, who will abolish the religion of the Jews. I have found his characteristics described in my book (i.e., the Torah)." Upon hearing this, Abū Tālib sensed danger to the life of the Prophet ﷺ and decided to send him back to Makkah Mukarramah.

Second Journey to Shām and the Marriage to Khadījah رضي الله عنها

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was known by the titles Ṣādiq (Truthful) and Amīn (Trustworthy) among the people of Makkah Mukarramah. Khadījah رضي الله عنها, a wealthy, successful, and intelligent woman, upon observing these traits in the Prophet ﷺ, sent a message requesting him to manage her business and travel to Shām to conduct trade. She offered that he would receive a greater share of the profits than anyone else.

The Prophet ﷺ agreed and embarked on the long journey. Khadījah رضي الله عنها sent her servant Maysarah to accompany and assist him. During the journey, at a certain junction, a monk named Nastūr saw the Prophet ﷺ and recognized him through signs mentioned in the earlier scriptures. He asked Maysarah, whom he had seen on previous journeys, "Who is this man with you?" Maysarah replied, "He is a respected man of the Quraysh." The monk exclaimed, "He will be a Prophet."

The Prophet ﷺ returned from the business trip with more goods and significantly more profit than usual. Khadījah رضي الله عنها witnessed the noble and astonishing character of the Prophet ﷺ, which led to sincere belief and a natural inclination toward him. As a result, Khadījah رضي الله عنها, who was forty years old, sent a proposal for marriage to the Prophet ﷺ, who was twenty-five at the time. The nikāḥ was conducted by the Prophet's uncle, Abū Tālib, at his house, in the presence of the leaders of the Banū Hāshim and Mudhar tribes.

Children

The Prophet ﷺ had six children with Khadījah رضي الله عنها - two sons and four daughters. The sons were Qāsim and Ṭāhir (also known as 'Abdullāh according to some narrations) رضي الله عنهم, and the daughters were Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Fāṭimah, and Umm Kulthūm رضي الله عنهن. Both sons passed away at a very young age.

The Prophet ﷺ also had a son named Ibrāhīm رضي الله عنه, born to his slave-girl Māriyah al-Qibṭiyyah رضي الله عنها. He too passed away during childhood.

Courage To Sin

When it comes to the Hereafter, we boldly disobey, exclaiming: "Allāh Ta'ālā is al-Ghafūr and ar-Raḥīm (The All-Forgiving and The All-Merciful)." My question is: Is Allāh Ta'ālā not Ghafūr and Raḥīm in this world too? (Indeed, He is.) Then why do we fear harmful things in this world? Why do we not consume poison and say that Allāh Ta'ālā is Ghafūr and Raḥīm?

The reason is that the harm of the world is in front of us, but we are oblivious to the harm of the Hereafter. It is only after death that we will understand the reality.

Our Pious Predecessors - Shaykhul Hind Mawlānā Mahmūdul Hasan Deobandī - Part 2

Rahmatullāhi Alayh
Mawlānā Muhammad Mogra

Respect and Etiquettes

Ḥaḍrat Shaykh al-Hind raḥmatullāhi ‘alayh was spiritually connected with Ḥājī Imdādullāh Muhājir-e-Makkī raḥmatullāhi ‘alayh, but upon the instruction of his spiritual guide, he was told to frequent the company of Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī raḥmatullāhi ‘alayh, as Ḥājī Imdādullāh Muhājir-e-Makkī raḥmatullāhi ‘alayh was residing in Makkah Mukarramah and he (Shaykh al-Hind) was in India.

Adhering to these instructions, in search of spiritual guidance and the company of his Shaykh, he would go and visit Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī raḥmatullāhi ‘alayh on a weekly basis when leave was given from ‘Aṣr ṣalāh on a Thursday till Maghrib ṣalāh on Friday. The astonishing fact was that Gangoh - a small village - was approximately 30 miles from Deoband, where Shaykh al-Hind raḥmatullāhi ‘alayh taught. He would not take any transport to Gangoh; rather he would walk the 30 miles out of respect, reverence, and etiquette for his spiritual guide Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī raḥmatullāhi ‘alayh, and would return 30 miles again walking ... this was a habit of his for many years!

Demise

This package of spirituality and piety, ocean of knowledge and selfless freedom fighter returned to his creator after a short illness on the 18th Rabī al-Awwal 1339 AH - corresponding to 30th November 1920 - whilst making dhikr of “Allāh, Allāh” seven times. The eighth time his tongue touched the palate, but his soul departed this temporary abode and met his Creator. *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji‘ūn*

He passed away in Delhi and was transported to Deoband, where he was buried next to his teacher Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Qāsim Nānautwī raḥmatullāhi ‘alayh in the cemetery of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband.

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Making the Most of the Holidays – A Spiritual Perspective

Mawlānā Suhayb Nadat

With the summer holidays approaching, only one thing seems to occupy our minds: how can I make the most of my holidays? How can I truly enjoy them? Some may plan a vacation abroad, while others may choose to spend their time engaging in activities within their own country.

However, as Muslims, our focus should be slightly different. Our questions should be: How many times did I remember Allāh Ta‘ālā ? How can I please Him? How can I stay away from His disobedience? When we reflect on our lives, we often find that while we seek enjoyment, we tend to forget Allāh Ta‘ālā . Our hearts become ghāfil (negligent) - they forget the Power and Favours of Allāh Ta‘ālā.

My most respected mentor, Hadrat Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat Sāhib ḥafīzahullāh, mentions that the heart is like a computer, and the mind is like its monitor. The monitor only displays what the computer transmits. Therefore, when ghafalah (negligence) takes root in the heart, it naturally extends to the mind as well.

Sometimes, we completely forget that Allāh Ta‘ālā is watching us. At other times, we are aware that He is watching, hearing, and fully aware of our actions, yet our hearts remain negligent of His Power and Might.

The first scenario is one of complete negligence – a person does not remember Allāh Ta‘ālā at all. The second scenario reflects partial negligence – a person knows that Allāh Ta‘ālā is aware of him, but the fear of His displeasure does not enter the heart due to a lack of true awareness of His Majesty.

What Must We Do?

1. Make our hearts dhākir (engaged in remembrance) by increasing in dhikr (remembrance of Allāh).

My respected Shaykh, Hadrat Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat Sāhib ḥafīzahullāh beautifully illustrates this with an example: imagine a room engulfed in darkness. If you light one candle, the darkness begins to decrease. Light another, and it reduces further. The more candles you light, the less darkness remains. Eventually, when the entire room is lit, no darkness remains. Similarly, our hearts are like rooms filled with the darkness of ghafalah. To dispel this darkness, we must light the candles of dhikrullāh. The more we remember Allāh, the more this darkness disappears. In order for a person to stay on the straight path and avoid disobedience to Allāh Ta‘ālā, his heart must remain engaged in dhikr. Allāh Ta‘ālā lovingly advises us:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

O you who believe! Remember Allāh in abundance. (Sūrah al-Aḥzāb 33:41)

Therefore, we must make it our goal to remember Allāh Ta‘ālā so much that our hearts are filled with the nūr (light) of dhikr, and the darkness of ghafalah is completely removed. When the heart is illuminated with nūr and devoid of ghafalah, a person does not only fear the displeasure of Allāh – he begins to love Allāh too. He realises that Allāh created him and has granted him all the blessings he enjoys in this world.

2. Recite the Qur’ān daily, as this is among the best forms of dhikrullāh.

3. Remain engaged in abundant istighfār (seeking forgiveness), ṣalāt ‘alan-Nabī , kalimah Ṭayyibah, third kalimah, and other forms of dhikr wherever and whenever possible.

If we adhere to these simple yet profound pieces of advice, then, in shā’ Allāh, our hearts will soon become dhākir. Once our hearts are filled with the remembrance of Allāh, obedience to Him will become easy and natural. May Allāh grant us all the tawfīq (ability) to achieve this noble goal. Āmīn.

Believers Are One Body

Rumaysā fell asleep once again with her thoughts drifting to children just like her but not like her at all. She had a full tummy this night, as she did every single night of her 9 years. She had a home, whilst they had a tent with water leaking from a sagging roof. She had a family and someone to call “māmā,” “pāpā,” and they had no one to call to but Allāh. Silent tears rolled down her cheeks.

“Yā Allāh! Please help them. Please let me help them”

But how could she help them? And how could she be more grateful for all that she had? Because she had so much.

“Rumaysā, is everything okay?” Her mother’s gentle voice stirred her. Rumaysā looked at her through heavy sleepy eyes. She hadn’t even noticed the door opening and her mother checking up on her.

“Māmā, I can’t sleep,” she admitted. “I can’t stop thinking about the children in Gaza.”

Her mother came and sat beside her on her bed. She ran her fingers through her daughter’s hair and prayed she would find the right words to say.

“Rumaysā,” she said fondly. “It’s normal to think about them and others oppressed like them.”

Rumaysā sat up and leaned into the warmth of her mother, soaking in her familiar scent.

“Rumaysā,” she continued. “In one hadīth Nabī ﷺ, tell us that the believers are one body; if one part of the body hurts, all of the body hurts. So yes, we should feel the pain, and my dear child, we do feel the pain.”

The young girl felt relief and solace in her mother’s words.

“But Māmā, I wish we could help them,” she said softly. Her mother smiled wistfully.

“We might not be able to protect them, Rumaysā, or feed them or shelter them in our homes. However, we can du‘ā’ for them and all the oppressed every night, as that is their right over us. Dear child, what we need to do is be grateful to Allāh Ta‘ālā and obey His commands. So that He accepts our du‘ās,” Rumaysā’s mother advised her.

“Yes Māmā,” Rumaysā said. She made a firm intention to make du‘ā’ every chance she got.

“Māmā, in shā’ Allāh from now on I am going to wake up for Fajr with you,” she said eagerly.

Her mother nodded, “That’s a good idea, in shā’ Allāh. Remember my dear child, first, we must change ourselves and become better”

Did You Know...

- Palestine is home to the third most blessed Masjid – Masjid al-Aqsā.
- Masjid al-Aqsā was the first qiblah of the Muslims; it was one and a half years after the Hijrah that the qiblah changed to the holy Ka‘bah.
- The reward of one Salāh in Masjid al-Aqsā is equal to the reward of 500 Salāh.
- Our beloved Prophet ﷺ travelled to Masjid al-Aqsā during the Night Journey (al-‘Isrā’ wa al-Mi‘rāj).
- Our beloved Prophet ﷺ led all the prophets in prayer at Masjid al-Aqsā.