

Surah Al-Muzzammil

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

You must have read the stories of great men in the way of Allah who went without proper food for long periods of time. Kept fasts and then after the long day of work would break their fast with just dates and water. They even went to war, travelling hundreds of miles in the hot desert with minimal provisions, or transport... so have you ever wondered what was the source of their energy? How did they survive those extreme conditions? Never in any Hadith or narration have I heard any self pity or expression of resentment or any sense of deprivation. Now compare it with the abundance of food and luxuries of our present situation and surprisingly people are not satisfied. Talk to anyone you want and most of the time you will listen to a long list of problems and complaints. Everyone seems to be angry at the circumstances and full of self pity... why? Isn't this a strange equation? They had nothing and they were energetic and enthusiastic... we have everything and yet feel lost and confused. Obviously there must be some ingredient which they had and we don't... and I believe it was that very ingredient which gave them energy and deep satisfaction.

Wouldn't you like to discover that secret? I just found it in today's surah Al-Muzzammil...

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ {1} قُمْ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا {2}

O you who wraps himself in clothing! Arise to Pray at night except for a little-

This surah was revealed in the early years of Makkan period. The task of receiving the divine revelation and then conveying it to others required a lot of effort. So Allah Ta'ala is calling the Prophet (s.a.w) in such a loving way to get energy from the closeness of His Lord in the last part of the night. And this prayer has one special ornament... the beautiful recitation of Quran:

.....وَرَتَّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا {4}

.....and recite the Qur'an in slow, measured, rhythmic tones.....

To experience the delight of this gift... which is the night prayer, you need to have faith in Allah. Otherwise if someone mentions to us Tahajjud, the first thought which enters our mind is "how will I get my sleep?" and so we remain empty and deprived from this great pleasure, this total satisfaction which fulfils all our needs. That is why we have this emptiness in our

lives... because we are missing out on this treasure which is laid out every single night of our lives and we are too ignorant or lazy to get up and grab it with both hands!!

There are a lot of people I know who want to do great things for Allah but they complain of having no energy. But the same people will get energy for all the worldly tasks... strange, isn't it? Some of us even go as far as to recognize that our Nafs is too spoilt and doesn't want to do anything except to fulfil its desires. But then we don't get any clue how to train our inner "self". Allah is telling us here the golden rule that if you want to train it then you will have to make it work!!

إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْءًا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلاً {6}

Surely the getting up at night for prayer is most effective for controlling the self and most suitable for reciting *the Qur'an* as well;

Everything in our religion makes sense... nothing is against human intellect. Of course the one who created our intellect and who made the rules of life, are not different... but the one and only Allah. So how could there be any contradiction in what we need and what we have? It is only prejudice which makes us doubt the commands of Allah and we think there is no requirement for them. Such people may ask that what is the need for Tahajjud when we already have five prayers to connect to Allah... Isn't that enough for spiritual nourishment? The answer is in the next verse:

إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا {7}

Because, during the day you are hard pressed with worldly affairs

There has to be sometime during the cycle of night and day when we can be close to Allah with absolutely no distraction whatsoever; and that is possible only at night:

وَاذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلاً {8}

Remember the name of your Rabb and (detach from everything to) devote yourself to Him exclusively.

To be cut off from all things does not imply that you leave your home and family and start living in jungles or mountains. Rather it means a sort of mental detachment at the time of prayer. Imagine you love someone most dearly. No matter where you are, you remember that person. But when you are in the company of that most beloved person you don't remember anybody else... such should be our relationship with Allah. But sadly we are totally opposite... when we are with Allah we don't forget duniya... throughout prayer we are

immersed in the thoughts of people or things... and when we are in duniya, we forget Allah and do exactly as the duniya expects us to do...

But are we so blind that we don't understand who is more worthy of our love and devotion? Imagine someone who owns everything and can give you all that you need... will you not turn to him completely?

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا {9}

He is the Rabb of the east and the west: there is no God but Him, therefore, take Him as your Protector.

If today you get this good news that there is someone who is willing to take all your worries and is promising to sort out all your problems... how will you feel?

So try it out tonight and give Allah the burden of your heart. Just experience the pleasure of breathing easy☺

But what about people and their unfair attitudes? They make life so miserable and there seems to be no solution... but look here; Allah has a solution for everything...He is so perfect!!

وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا حَمِيمًا {10}

Bear patiently with what they say and leave their company in a polite manner.

In other words we have to be patient and learn not to be judgemental. If someone tries to come between you and Allah... just be very calm and find another route. Allah is everywhere!!

The day of recompense is not far and we should all be worrying about that instead of wasting our energies on petty little issues:

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ الْجِبَالُ كَثِيرًا مَّهِيلًا {14}

On the day when the earth with all its mountains will be in a violent commotion, and the mountains will crumble into heaps of shifting sand.

The thought of the hereafter is enough to remind us of the reality of life. Without the end in mind, we tend to magnify small irritations and trials, into huge problems. But really the thought of Allah's judgement brings everything into the right perspective. That is why Allah says:

إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا {19}

Surely this is but a reminder, so let him who wills, take the Right way to His Rabb.

I love this ayat because it gives an unbeatable answer to an excuse largely used by people who are so much in love with their worldly life that they cannot think of anything beyond its boundaries... and then they say things like “It is Allah’s will whom he wants to guide... so if he will guide us we will also pray or do Hajj.” Especially for Hajj people usually say “Only he can go whom Allah calls”. But see how clearly Allah is saying that whosoever wants, can make a way towards Allah... The guidance is clear; now it is up to us whether we go to the right way or keep hiding behind excuses.

The next and final ayah is a long one and I will take it in parts because there are very important lessons which deal with practical application of the wonderful concepts discussed earlier...

The first point is that Allah knows our limitations and weaknesses so he made things really easy and do-able by saying these beautiful words:

.....فَاقْرَأُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ.....therefore, read from the Qur’an as much

as you easily can.

This is because people are in different situations and they can judge from their own routine how much they can sacrifice from their sleep:

عَلِمَ أَن سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ مَّرْضَىٰ وَآخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَآخَرُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَ

..... فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَاقْرَأُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ He knows that there may be some sick people

among you, and some others who travel through the land to seek Allah’s bounty; and yet some others fighting for the cause of Allah. Therefore, read as much of the Qur’an as you easily can.

This is such a beautiful example of Allah’s love and mercy for his faithful slaves. On one hand he does not give orders to read any definite amount of Quran... secondly He also hasn’t given us a complete leave from this duty... work hard to meet the requirements of life but the Quran will go side by side...and not just for the night prayer but even in the day; whether you memorize it or keep a copy in your bag! Just read whatever you can easily read... but do not leave it behind☺

The night prayer and reading the words of the beautiful Quran at that time; is really an act of love and desire... Allah must appreciate it so much... but does it mean you can now skip your fajr salah? Or other duties? NO not at all...

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا Establish the Salah (*five time daily prayers*) and pay the Zakah (*poor due*), and give to Allah a goodly loan.

We have discussed before, what it is to give loan to Allah; but I heard a most amazing definition from a scholar and want to share it will all... "Qardhan Hasan" (giving beautiful loan) means to spend our lives and our belongings for the sake of Allah without any expectation of payment. It doesn't mean that you don't want reward from Allah... rather it means that while giving, your heart should just want to give out of love of Allah and not to spend in a calculating way. It means to give generously and selflessly... there is a difference when you calculate what you will get out of it. And see the next words say it all:

وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا Whatever good you will send forth for yourselves, you will find it with Allah, which will be much better and greater in reward.

It seems as if there could be no more to be said but one thing remains and that is to humbly ask Allah's forgiveness... why? Because nothing you do is without faults. It is human nature to make mistakes and the only thing which erases these errors is Allah's loving forgiveness because He certainly is the most Merciful:

..... وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ {20}

Seek Allah's forgiveness, surely Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

We need to spread this truth to others too because there are so many doubts and misconceptions in the minds of people due to ignorance and over-involvement with the affairs of daily existence. They need to be told that the real source of everything is Allah and the only way to peace and happiness is to put your trust in Him and turn to Him with love and humility. Our hearts are so burdened with pressures of all kinds but Allah is offering His protection to us. Why should we deprive ourselves when we have such a forgiving and merciful Rabb who is willing to take us into His mercy... if only we turn to Him and follow the path that leads to success... InshaAllah.