

الجزء الخامس

The Fifth Chapter



MASIMA ABOL-MUHT

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الجزء الخامس The Fifth Chapter

One of the miracles of the Qur'ān is that when we study it, there is no ending to the understanding that can be achieved from its words.

The 5th Chapter covers Surah Nisa (from verses 24-147)

One of the verses which we will mention in the in this Juz is:

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا

Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction.

The Qur'ān invites us to ponder and reflect upon it. It is an open book which challenges human intellect to think and ponder and delve deeper into a book which most of us have lived with our whole lives.

Many people recite the Qur'ān in their prayers, and complete full khatams¹ during the month of Ramadan, simply as a practice they were taught from childhood.

Yet many never realise that within the very book they have been reciting all their lives lies an immense ocean of meaning, wisdom and guidance that they have never truly explored. The Qur'ān is not only to be completed. It is to be discovered.

¹ Completing the recitation of the Qur'ān from Surah Fatiha to Surah Nas, over any period of time. This can take days or years.

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Naturally, every person who studies the Qur'an will be influenced differently, based on their understanding, their surroundings and circumstances. This is the miracle of the Qur'an; the fact that it can be personalised to each individual that accesses it. It is as if it has been revealed for each specific person.

As Muslims, we have claim to fore-bearers of the rights of women, centuries before modern society. The concepts of women's rights, and the regulation of the laws of marriage were unheard of at the time of the Prophet ﷺ before revelation began.

Although issues such as slavery, or the failure to acknowledge women as citizens, or even human were common concepts at one point in time. The laws of man are dependant on their own moral compasses which are built upon the foundations of the societies and cultures they live in.

Although all humans have moral compasses, often, our morals and ethics can be changed and warped by our surroundings. Due to this, we always refer back to the Qur'an. The laws of Allah are eternal. They do not change, they are not dependant on emotion.



يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا

(28) AND IT IS ALLAH'S WILL TO LIGHTEN YOUR BURDENS,
FOR HUMANKIND WAS CREATED WEAK.

The fifth Juz begins with the verse:

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

And [also prohibited to you are all] married women except those your right hands possess.

This verse is a continuation of the previous verse in chapter 4 which lists all of the women a man cannot marry. In this verse,

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Allah ﷻ says it is permissible for a man to consensually have relations with his slave girl. Many question this verse, thinking it is advocating slavery. However, Islam came as a way of life. It came as a form of regulation, in order to remedy many of the ill practices of those who lived at the time of its revelation.

Slavery was a common practice at that time, and it was heavily unregulated. However, Islam could not come and abolish it with one command, this would have been to much of a stark change, and would have deterred people from embracing the religion.

Instead, Allah ﷻ took on a gradual approach. And whilst the complete abolition of the practice was unrealistic, the Qur'ān and Sunnah implemented a whole system of legal rites and regulations on the slave trade.

Furthermore, if one was to research the expiation for many misdemeanours, for example, breaking the fast intentionally, or breaking an oath, the first step in expiation is always to free a slave.

This same approach was taken in regards to the gradual prohibition of wine.

The entire surah is based on foundations of justice and fairness. We can see this throughout the Surah in regards to marriage, women, the rights of orphans, inheritance, and so on.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

Allah wants to make clear to you [the lawful from the unlawful] and guide you to the [good] practices of those before you and to accept your repentance. And Allah is Knowing and Wise.

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This is a key theme of the Qur'an that is repeated time and time again in each chapter.

Within the lawful and the unlawful, Allah ﷻ stresses the importance of the purity of ones income. We find out lives with the money that we earn; the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the house we live in. If our source of money is tainted with Haram, then everything we use it for will be tainted so. Thus, we are directly affected by it. Without us knowing, we are weighed down by the clothing that we wear, we are poisoned by that food that we eat, and we are surrounded with the darkness of the house we live in; all which was bought with the wealth tainted by our sins.

Ibn Abbas states that Abdullah Ibn Ma'ud said: "There are five verses in Surah Nisa that I would prefer to the life of this world and everything that is in it." They are:

The First - Verse 31

إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلًا
كَرِيمًا

If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins and admit you to a noble entrance [into Paradise].

The Oneness of Allah is the first pillar of Islam. It is a concept we, as Muslims all believe in, but must be wary of.

It is a common practice in our society to idolise celebrities, performers and for some, this can even happen with Islamic figures.

In regards to the former, although we live in a society where we are constantly exposed to content - through our TV's, computers and phones - although it is not completely haram to indulge ourselves

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in our free time with watching movies, or TV shows, and so on, we should be wary of balance. We should not consume such material to the point of obsession, or laziness. We should not allow such things to get in the way of our Ibadah.

Another extreme in regards to this are those people who become obsessed with a certain celebrity, or TV show, or game, to the point where they do not realise that their idolisation of these things can lead to a form of minor shirk.

The Second - Verse 40

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ^ط وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Indeed, Allah does not do injustice, [even] as much as an atom's weight; while if there is a good deed, He multiplies it and gives from Himself a great reward.

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبُوا ^ط وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْنَ ^ع وَأَسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. And ask Allah of his bounty. Indeed Allah is ever, of all things, Knowing.

We have all been born with our strengths and weaknesses. This is the beauty of humanity, we all fit together as pieces of a puzzle. If we as individuals were all equal, we would not be individuals.

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ^ع فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ ^ع وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ

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دُشِرُوهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ^ط فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا
عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ^ق إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard. But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance - [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike them. But if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Grand.

Men have been given the responsibility of protecting women and guarding them, not controlling them; this is a common misconception, and to do so is considered a sin. Each gender has its strengths, and likewise their duties and responsibilities correlate with those strengths.

Yes, it is possible for gender dynamics to shift in certain circumstances, but when we speak of gender roles, we speak generally. Individual circumstances are always susceptible to change.

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا
إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا ^ق إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا

And if you fear dissension between the two, send an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from her people. If they both desire reconciliation, Allah will cause it between them. Indeed, Allah is ever Knowing and Acquainted [with all things].

The beauty of Islam is that it does not wish for any of its followers to suffer in silence.

This verse points out specifically, “if they desire reconciliation,” this is important, as often when two parties are disputing and cannot resolve the matter amongst themselves, each party approached arbitration/conversation as if they are fighting a case in court. One must approach such situations with an open mind, both airing their grievances, but also accepting their own part in taking responsibility for what has gone wrong.

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وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِّلرِّجَالِ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا أَكْتَسَبُوا^ط وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا أَكْتَسَبْنَ^ج

(32) AND DO NOT CRAVE WHAT ALLAH HAS GIVEN SOME OF YOU OVER OTHERS. MEN WILL BE REWARDED ACCORDING TO THEIR DEEDS AND WOMEN 'EQUALLY' ACCORDING TO THEIRS

Encourages contentment and trusting in God's distribution of blessings.

The Third - Verse 48

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ^ج وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ
فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا

Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin.

Here, Allah ﷻ speaks with striking clarity about the gravity of shirk. He declares that associating anything with Him is the one sin that will not be forgiven if a person meets Him upon it. As for everything besides this, no matter how great it may seem, it remains under His will and His mercy. He may forgive whom He chooses.

This verse powerfully reminds us that the greatest injustice is not against people, but against Allah Himself, by giving His right to another. For this reason, the Qur'an describes shirk as a tremendous and fabricated sin. The weight of this warning is emphasised further by the fact that this very message is repeated

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twice within this same surah, underscoring how central pure tawhid is to faith and salvation.

The Fourth - Verses 36-38

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا^ط وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ^ق إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا

Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbour, the neighbour farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful.

There is a story which is often narrated about a single pious man who lives in a village full of sinners. This man spent his days in the continuous worship of Allah, however, he never left his house, in fear of the heinous acts which took place outside.

The transgressions of this community escalated to the point wherein one day, Allah ﷻ ordered the angels to destroy them all.

The angels then asked of the one believer that lived there, for surely he did not deserve such a punishment. Then Allah ﷻ said that although his faith was strong, he was a selfish person for never attempting to share his faith with his neighbours. And so he suffered the same fate as those he spent his life avoiding.

In Islam, our neighbours and communities have a right over us. Hence, giving Zakah is an obligatory acts of worship, and giving in charity is heavily encouraged.

The Prophet ﷺ said once that Allah ﷻ emphasised the rights of the neighbour so much that he thought that He would include the neighbours amongst the obligatory inheritors after one passes away.

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The Fifth - Verse 110

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

And whoever does a wrong or wrongs himself but then seeks forgiveness of Allah will find Allah Forgiving and Merciful.

A great portion of this surah is dedicated to speaking about the hypocrites. Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

Indeed, the hypocrites [think to] deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them. And when they stand for prayer, they stand lazily, showing [themselves to] the people and not remembering Allah except a little,

It was mentioned in a previous chapter that Allah would expose what we have hidden in our hearts on the day of Judgement. Although it is important for us as Muslims to portray ourselves in a positive manner whilst out in public, we must always be wary of our actions when we are in private also.

Riya, in light of Islam, is to perform an act of worship primarily to show off to others. This is also a form of hypocrisy.

The most common example which is often used is a person who prays in the masjid, or in a public place in front of people with great concentration, beautiful recitation and careful, precise actions. However, when he is praying in private, his concentration is wavering, his recitation rushed and his actions rapid, this prayer is being performed merely for the sake of the obligation, and whilst he is praying he is thinking of all the things he will do as soon as

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he faces his shoulders and says the ‘salam.’ Although a person may receive praise from others for the seemingly beautiful prayer he performed, his reward from Allah will be nought.

It is important to remember a saying of Ibn Abbas:

“Riya is more hidden than a black ant crawling beneath a dark stone on a moonless night.”

Hypocrisy and ostentation (Riya) are two sins which are easy to fall into, but very difficult to come out of. We, as Muslims should always be checking our intentions and ensuring that every act we do is for the sake of Allah ﷻ.