

## **ISRAF – THE FROWNED UPON WASTEFUL LIFESTYLE**

**Jumuah lecture by Mowlana Syed Aftab Haider on Friday 12 January 2018  
(24 Rabi Al-Akhar 1439) at the Ahlul Bait (a.s) Masjid, Ottery, Cape Town**

Almighty Allah (SWT) says in verses 26 and 27 of Surah Israa' (chapter 17 of the Holy Quran):

26. "And give to the near of kin his due and (to) the needy and the wayfarer, and do not squander wastefully."

27. "Surely the squanderers are the fellows of the Shaitan and the Shaitan is ever ungrateful to his Lord."

One of the very important issues emphasised a great deal in the Holy Quran and in the

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teachings of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) is the issue of Israf, which refers to leading a wasteful lifestyle. The Holy Quran establishes principles in how we as believers should conduct our lifestyle. How a Mu'min (believer) lives, and how he interacts with himself, with the people and with the environment.

Therefore, the Holy Quran defines very important principles in this regard.

### ISRAF EXPLAINED IN THE HOLY QURAN

There are plenty of verses in the Holy Quran which reminds us of this terrible shortcoming in our lifestyle, whereby we do not value the blessings and favours of Almighty Allah (SWT).

The Holy Quran generally establishes principles that these resources which He has created, is for us to enjoy. We already spoke about the issue of Dunya (worldly pursuits) in previous Jumuah lectures, whereby it is stated in the Holy Quran that we should not forget about our share in this material world. Verse 11 of Surah Dhuha (chapter 93 of the Holy Quran) refers:

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“And as for the favor of your Lord, do announce (it).”

There is nothing wrong to enjoy and benefit from the resources which Almighty Allah (SWT) has provided us. However, the question is how we approach the enjoyment of these resources. This is a matter of lifestyle, and the Holy Quran is very clear in establishing the guiding principles in this regard. Almighty Allah (SWT) warns us not to waste, in verse 31 of Surah A'raaf (chapter 7 of the Holy Quran):

“O children of Adam! Attend to your embellishments at every time of prayer, and eat and drink and be not extravagant; surely He does not love the extravagant.”

Israf is a phenomenon which is repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Quran and the Prophetic Sunnah.

ISRAF – A CRUCIAL SUBJECT IN ISLAMIC SCIENCES

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This is a very important issue and in fact one of the main topics of Akhlaaq (morals/etiquettes) in Islamic sciences. Commentators of the Holy Quran have analysed this topic at a much deeper level. They have translated Israf to mean “crossing the limits”. Such people are strongly condemned, when they cross their limits in their spending and speaking ie. Talking too much!

Of course, the most common reference to Israf is the wasteful usage of resources. Islam is extremely sensitive about this ie. the resources which Almighty Allah (SWT) has bestowed upon us should be handled with the utmost of care.

Sometimes, in our minds, we think that Israf refers to going to extreme measures of wasteful lifestyle. Rasulullah (SAWA) clarified, as recorded in authentic Hadith narrations that the matter of Israf does not only apply to the rich and famous. It applies as much to those who are poor and need to manage with limited resources, but spend beyond their means!

ISRAF EXPLAINED BY IMAM JAFAR SADIQ (A.S)

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There is an important Hadith from the sixth Imam of Ahlul Bait (a.s), Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s), to put the matter of Israf into context so that we understand what the limits are.

Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s) explains what Israf is by using the following example. He says that if you have a set of clothing which you wear to go out (presentable, clean, neat clothing) and end up going to bed in the same clothing, then that is Israf! Imam Sadiq (a.s) gives another example of what Israf is, saying that Israf is when you drink water from a cup and throw away the little water that is remaining in the cup!

This is the lifestyle which the Ahlul Bait (a.s) promoted and wanted their followers to establish in their lives ie. to value the resources!

A Hadith narration from Rasulullah (SAWA) says that fire should be used TO THE EXTENT REQUIRED to prepare your meal, as it is a source of energy. Energy should be consumed and not wasted!

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### ISRAF APPLIES TO OUR WATER USAGE IN THESE TESTING TIMES

The Holy Quran explains that those who have a wasteful style of life, who have no concern for the resources available to society, are the brothers of Satan and are the enemies of Allah (SWT). Of all the resources that Almighty Allah (SWT) has granted us, we find extra sensitivity being placed on efficient use of water, since it is the source of life and requires respect.

This is therefore a reminder to be mindful of water usage, especially given the severe water restrictions we currently are challenged with. For example, the manner in which we perform Wudhu needs serious reflection, when we contrast this with early Islamic history and how Wudhu was performed in those days when water resources were really scarce.

How is it possible for Rasulullah (SAWA) and his Sahaba (companions) and the Imams of Ahlul Bait (a.s) to splash water all over the show when performing Wudhu?!

Again, our sixth Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s) relays an important example. Bear in mind that there were no showers or taps in those days, so they used the bucket system for bathing etc. Now, if your body is Najis (impure) and you wash yourself, causing the water to splash on the ground

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after cleaning the impurity, and due to the splashing, this impure water rebounds, causing your body to once again become impure, resulting in you needing to use more water to wash again.

Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s) says that he would splash water on the ground to clean it before taking a bath, so that if water from his bath splashes with the water on the ground and rebounds, then based on Islamic principles, everything is pure until proven otherwise, because you are not sure whether the water that rebounds is primarily pure or impure. So Imam Sadiq (a.s) would create doubt for himself in this manner, and because of the principle mentioned about everything being pure until proven otherwise, he would therefore not wash himself repeatedly.

This is further demonstration of the practical teachings of Islam. In these testing times of water shortages, we need to humbly remind each other towards caring and considerate usage of water, which is a great gift and blessing from Almighty Allah (SWT).

Indeed, we are seriously tested this year with our drought problem!

SECOND KHUTBAH: REFLECTIONS ON MATRIC RESULTS AND LATEST ON SHAIKH ZAKZAKY

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Over the past week there were a number of issues to discuss.

### OUR YOUTH SHOULD FURTHER THEIR STUDIES ON ANY PRICE

Firstly, we congratulate our youth who completed their matric examinations successfully. We pray for their success in the continuation of their education, which is absolutely essential. In the first khutbah, I spoke about Israf (going over the limits). However, there is no Israf in seeking knowledge, as Rasulullah (SAWA) has commanded us in authentic Hadith narrations to seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave. Knowledge and education clearly has no limits!

Also, there is no limit from where you gain knowledge! Again, it is recorded in authentic Hadith narrations, that knowledge is the lost property of a Mu'min (true believer)! Take it, wherever you get it! There is no space limitation either! Again, we have authentic Hadith narrations from Rasulullah (SAWA), where he says seek knowledge even if you have to go to China!

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Why did our beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) make reference to China of all places? He was trying to explain that knowledge is not limited to Hadith and Quran. In fact, the knowledge of Quran is an inclusive knowledge, and its message is an inclusive message. Also, naturally, there is Aalim sitting in China to teach you! So, take knowledge from whomever you can get it from. The teacher's Imaan is not a condition! If you are getting wisdom then take it!

Gender is also not a limit. Once again, authentic Hadith narrations from Rasulullah (SAWA) teach us that the seeking of knowledge is compulsory on every male and female. There are no restrictions or limitations to seeking knowledge. Therefore, we hope and prayer for Almighty Allah (SWT) to grant our youth the ability to continue with their education.

Also, for our adults to increase their knowledge, and not stop their learning at any stage of their life. Young or old does not matter, and one should not feel shy either to learn from whomever they can.

**PRINCIPAL RIYAADH NAJAAR OF SPINE ROAD HIGH SCHOOL DESERVES SPECIAL MENTION**

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Secondly, we also want to take this opportunity to congratulate respected Br Riyaadh Najaar for his proud achievements again this year, as the principal of Spine Road High School. What he has demonstrated at this school is that you can learn, teach and achieve even in the most difficult and challenging conditions. You can educate and be educated in the most adverse conditions. There can be no valid excuse for staying away from learning.

May Almighty Allah (SWT) reward him for his tireless sacrifice in providing his learners with the tools to make something of their lives.

Subjects such as physics, chemistry, mathematics etc. are branches of the subjects taught in Madrassa, namely Akhlaq (noble character). You need Imaan (faith) and Aqeedah (ideology) to build character, together with Taqwa most importantly. You need to be aware of the pleasure and displeasure of Almighty Allah (SWT)!

Therefore, attending our disciplined Madrassa program this year, which boasts much better learning facilities, is of primary importance.

### THE LATEST SITUATION WITH SHAIKH IBRAHIM ZAKZAKY

The third matter I would like to discuss is the situation with our respected Shaikh Ibrahim Zakzaky, who is the leader of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria. This man leads more than 3 million people in Nigeria and has taken a firm stance for justice, and has the best relationship with followers of other religions and faith traditions in Nigeria.

Recently, this Islamic Movement celebrated and shared the blessings of Christmas with the Christian community of Nigeria. This group under his leadership do not promote hate and division against other faiths. This movement stands firmly and unconditionally for the Palestinian cause under the leadership of Shaikh Zakzaky and raises their strong voice for the Palestinian people, in this highly strategic country in Africa.

This man has been tortured by the Nigerian authorities, and especially the military. He has been illegally imprisoned along with his wife for a number of years now. He lost his one eye when he was attacked upon being arrested. According to the latest news that we received, he has also lost his second eye, rendering him blind. His health condition continues to deteriorate as a result of his incarceration. We recall how 3 of his sons were martyred in a Quds Day protest a few years ago.

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The people of Nigeria are protesting peacefully for the past week for his release. However, we see that the police opened fire on them, resulting in 2 of the protesters being killed. You may recall that the Nigerian courts cleared him from any wrongdoing 2 years ago and ordered the Nigerian government to free him. They have still not freed him!

We raise our voice of support for the release of Shaikh Ibrahim Zakzaky along with a number of members of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria, of whom there is no trace. They are missing. One cannot understand the policy of the Nigerian government and under whose influence and pressure they are doing this.

They have extremist groups in the form of Boko Haram, who kill innocent people and create instability in that country and we have law-abiding people in the form of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria under Shaikh Ibrahim Zakzaky who have been harassed, assaulted, attacked, tortured and imprisoned illegally. I leave it to you to figure out whose interest this serves!