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A CURE FOR THE HEART

EPISODE 1: TOGETHER, AS ONE





*“O humanity! Indeed, there has come to you a warning from your Lord, **a cure for what is in the hearts**, a guide, and a mercy for the believers.”*

(Surah Yunus 10:57)



THE SABBATH

وَسَأَلَهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ
يَعْدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حَيْثَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ
شُرْعًا وَيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُونَ لَا تَأْتِيهِمْ كَذَلِكَ نَبْلُوهُمْ
بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

*And ask them about the town that was by the sea -
when they transgressed in [the matter of] the
sabbath - when their fish came to them openly on
their sabbath day, and the day they had no sabbath
they did not come to them. Thus did We give them
trial because they were defiantly disobedient.*

وَإِذْ قَالَتْ أُمَّةٌ مِّنْهُمْ لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْمًا لَّا اللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ
مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۗ قَالُوا مَعذِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ
وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

*And when a community among them said, "Why do
you advise [or warn] a people whom Allāh is [about]
to destroy or to punish with a severe punishment?"
they [the advisors] said, "To be absolved before your
Lord and perhaps they may fear Him."*

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ أَنجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
الْسُّوءِ وَأَخَذْنَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا بِعَذَابٍ بَئِيسٍ
بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

And when they [i.e., those advised] forgot that by which they had been reminded, We saved those who had forbidden evil and seized those who wronged, with a wretched punishment, because they were defiantly disobeying.

(Surah Al-A'raf 7:163-165)





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COMMUNAL SINFULNESS

- One crucial aspect to pay attention to is whether the Ayah or the passage of the Quran is talking about individuals or talking about communities.
- At times, Allah SWT addresses sin at the individual level, as seen in the stories of Prophet Adam AS and Iblis. However, many instances in the Quran Allah SWT highlight sins at the community level, showcasing examples of communities such as the people of Nuh AS, the people of Lut AS, and the people of Hud AS. **They sinned as a community and they were punished as a community.** This Ayah is another example of it.
- When the Israelites settled by the sea, Allah SWT bestowed upon them legislation, a ruling prohibiting work on the day of Sabbath, similar to how Muslim men must not work during *Juma'ah* prayers as they would be at the Masjid. However, for the Israelites, this prohibition extended throughout the entire Sabbath day.



REST DAY

- The term "Sabbath" has its roots in the Hebrew language, derived from the word "*Shabbat*," which translates to **"to cease" or "to rest."** In Malay, the word for Saturday is "*Sabtu*," which is believed to have originated from the old Portuguese term "*Sábado*," directly corresponding to the word Sabbath.
- Therefore, the Israelites were prohibited from fishing, which constituted their primary source of income. From this verse, we learned that Allah SWT had "inspired" the fish to avoid that area on other days while ensuring an abundance of fish specifically on the Sabbath.
- **Allah SWT intentionally subjected them to a trial relating to their Rizq because of their history of being disobedient and ungrateful.**

When we do
not care about
Halal or Haram,
Allah makes the
Haram even
more tempting.





SAVED BY ALLAH

- Due to the abundance of fish on the Sabbath and their scarcity on other days, **they were tempted and invented a workaround.**
- According to Tafsirs, their workaround involved laying traps or nets on Friday, allowing them to catch fish that came on the Sabbath. They justified this action by claiming that they weren't physically fishing on the Sabbath, deeming it completely Kosher for them.
- The community was divided into three groups:
 - **One group:** clearly disobeyed
 - **Second group:** did not disobey but they did not speak up either
 - **Third group:** did not disobey and they spoke up. Even though wrongdoing was still occurring, they spoke up against it.
- What is particularly insightful for us is that Allah saved those who forbade evil. **Only those who spoke up were saved!**



THE FOUR POWERFUL LESSONS

1. Question business practices

- Sometimes as Muslims, we obsess over whether specific products have minute traces of pork, whether it's Halal or Haram. However, **we seldom question the ethicality of the business practices** involved in bringing that product to market.
- This scenario illustrates a situation where the product itself may be deemed perfectly Halal, yet the unethical business practices used to have it on the shelves render the overall process Haram.

Point of reflection:

Look beyond the mere *Halal-ness* of the product itself and research into the processes behind its creation. Were all the business practices involved in making this product Halal and ethical?



Ask
yourself:
What kind of
a consumer
are you?





Every dollar
spent is a vote

- either for
something
or against
something.



MAKE A GOOD CHANGE



2. Allah SWT rejects workarounds

- While we may find ways to do a workaround and deceive ourselves with it, Allah SWT does not accept such workarounds.
- For example: Nowadays, many businesses deceive consumers by advertising something as "free" when, in reality, they're withholding important information or taking something from us in return. Some companies even go as far as to legitimise this through contracts, attempting to "Halalify" their actions. However, Allah SWT does not accept such workarounds.
- This is a reminder for us that **if we want to make a change, it should be a change in substance and not just in form.**



TAKE A MEANINGFUL STAND



3. We shouldn't be complacent

- It is not enough to be complacent in our own obedience; we have a duty to take action within our means.
- This message is particularly challenging given the prevalence of wrongdoing in our surroundings—neglecting obligatory prayers, not covering one's Awrah, cheating etc.
- **Where does one even start in fulfilling the obligation to stand up against wrongdoing?**
This isn't to suggest that we must constantly remind every individual every single day, rather directionally, we must take a stand and engage in meaningful action within our means.



On the authority of Abu Sa`eed al-Khudree RA who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say,

“Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith.”

(Muslim)



- By not taking a stand, we are normalising the behaviour. We are allowing the behaviour to be normalised.
- Drawing from Kak Natasha's personal experience three decades ago, there was a prevailing culture where people would speak up when a work colleague wasn't praying. However, today, Muslims who genuinely prioritise fulfilling Islamic obligations are often subjected to being shamed.

• We need to rekindle a culture where sinning is not the norm and establish a culture of obeying!



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WORRY NOT OF THE OUTCOME

4. The reward beyond the outcome

- Did the disobedience or the wrongdoing stop? It did not.
- They continued to fish on the Sabbath, yet Allah SWT saved those who spoke up, despite having no immediate outcome for their actions.
- However, those who argue, "*My choice as a single consumer won't impact the outcome, so why bother?*" miss the point. **We are not expected to change the outcome!** Rather, our responsibility lies in controlling our own actions.
- We are accountable only for our own choices and actions; we won't be judged based on the actions of others. Thus, whether others change is beyond our responsibility, as **we are solely answerable for our conduct.**



ALLAH'S ROLE VS. OURS

- In the Quran, Allah SWT reminds us that it's not our duty to change the world or guide people.
- We often overlook this, so it's crucial to remember that Allah SWT guides hearts, not us. Our role is simply to offer advice and point others to the right direction.
- We only need to strive to do what is within our means. When we don't, we are not only letting our Deen down but also our relationship with Allah SWT and the Quran.
- It is entirely within our means to consistently make ethical choices in every situation.



WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

1) Start with your Prayers

- Amidst the prevalence of wrongdoing, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and unsure where to begin.
- However, Kak Natasha wisely advises to prioritise prayer as a starting point. In environments where we can facilitate the ease perform *Solah*, such as ensuring meetings start and end on time or scheduling breaks explicitly for prayer, we should do so.
- **Even if we find ourselves as the lone individual advocating for our right to pray, we must not hesitate to assert it.**
- We should never fear standing up for our religious obligations. It's important to remember that our actions could also positively impact others.



2) Who we bank with

There are two categories of Islamic banks:

a) Conventional/Native Islamic banks:

- These are conventional banks that have established an Islamic arm or branch.
- The primary concern with these banks is **the comingling of funds**. When we deposit money here, it becomes intermixed with other funds, blurring the distinction between conventional and Islamic banking.
- While we may prioritise the services offered by these banks, we often overlook the broader impact: deposits are still deposits. **Our deposits will enable the bank to engage in lending activities**. Therefore, it's essential to consider where these funds are ultimately being directed. Some banks may lend funds to industries such as defence, gambling, or tobacco.

b) Fully Islamic banks:

- Such as Al-Rahji bank and Kuwait Finance House.

It's not just
about us not
earning interest,
rather, it's about
being mindful of
how our money
is utilised.



بارك الله



May our
money
accumulate

Barakah

and not sins!



HEART WORK

ACTION:

Check how your money is being utilised and managed - are the banks you use investing in unethical industries?

REFLECTION:

Do you protect your rights to pray? How do you feel about walking off an event that is set during prayer time?

CONTRIBUTION:

Share and discuss with a loved one one of the four lessons shared by Kak Natasha in this episode.