- **Today's khutbah is about one verse of the quran… "Wa ma khalaqtuljinna wal-insi illa liya3budoun" I did not create the Jinn and the humans EXCEPT to worship me… Only one verse that we will talk about today. Some would say, we know the verse well, we read it and heard many talks about it in the past. We know it inside out and use it in our discussions with others.**
- **I say to all that "fine". However, this Quranic verse is do fundamental and so essential that it deserves to be studied more and discussed at all times.**

روى مالك عـــن نافع عن ابن عمر قال: "تعلم عمر البقرة في اثنتي عشرة سنة، فلما ختمها نحر جزوراً" لأنه رضي الله عنه ما مر على آية إلاّ تدبرها وطبقها

- **If Omar ibn al-khattab took 12 years to memorize surat Al-Baqarah (286 verses) which averages to 2 weeks /verse. This verse should take us our life time to study this verse, carefully comprehend it and fully implement it.**
- **It is the corner-stone of our existence in this life.**
- **We take pride in using it when we discuss religion with non-Muslims. We claim that our religion is the only one that explains the reason for our existence and our purpose in life.**
- **But… we take a deep search in our soles and a thorough examination of our lives and guess what? This verso to us is but a few fancy words that we utter with our tongues and is not reflected in our lifestyles.**
- **Some would reply "hold it right there… what do you mean… we worship Allah, and do our fard and live a clean healthy life".**
- **Well, to settle this argument and make a long story short, we go back and read the verse again… "I did not create the Jinn and the humans EXCEPT to worship me". Allah (swt) created us for one purpose and one purpose only: to worship him. No other reason, no other purpose, and no other function.**
- **Does each one of us fully comprehend this fact… Worship Allah is all we were created for and we can't do anything else other than worshipping him.**
- **It is not just worship him and then we have the option to do other things… It is not just that there are times for worship and the remaining time is ours to do with it what we please.**
- **It is not like a job you do 40 hours a week then the rest of the time is open. It is a full-time commitment 100% worship 24/7 every hour and every minute. Every breath of our lives.**
- **Some would say, we know that and we know that worship has much wider meaning than just the prayer and the fasting and zakat… We know that all aspects of our lives are worship.**
- **I remind myself and remind you that yes, this is true, but do we honestly and sincerely implement it this way???**
- **To implement we need comprehension and appreciation that things become part of our nature… to be alert to your worship duties every breath we take… Do we do that?**

ttp://islamicity.com/mosque/arabicscript/Ayat/3/3_19.gif **InnadDeena 3indallahelIslam:** Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) [3:19]

3:19 The Religion before Allah is Islam (submission to His Will).

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- **This ayah we may translate as "the religion to Allah is Islam"…**
- **Translating the word "Deen" to religion greatly reduces its magnitude and magnificence. The word DEEN is much greater than just a belief or ideology which is what is usually meant by the word RELIGION.**
- **DEEN in Islam is not jus a dogma or an ideology, it is a comprehensive way of life.**
- **We recall the Hadeeth[1] of the Prophet, pbuh, when Jibreel asked him about Islam, Iman, and Ihsan. At the end of the event, the Prophet, pbuh, tells the Sahaba (his companions): this was Jibreel, came to educate you about your "DEEN".**
- **So, the Prophet, pbuh, used the word DEEN to refer to Islam, Iman, and Ihsan" Islam was the 5 foundations and Iman was the belief system and Ihsan was excelling in execution: ann ta3budallah ka annaka tarahu fa en lam takun tarahu fa innahu yarak. To worship Allah as if you see him because if you don't see him he sees you.**
- **Yes Brs and Srs, the Islamic scholars assure us that Deen is Islam, Iman, and Ihsan, and that is the only Deen that Allah acknowledges and recognizes.**
- **So, the Ayah is telling us that the only way of life acceptable to Allah, now, and always, and on the Day of Judgment is Islam. No other approach to life, no alternates and no substitution is tolerated. Only Islam.**
- **Islam is not just a religion to believe in, not just worships that we do and rituals that we carry out. Islam is an integrated approach to life that we should exercise 24/7. Every breath we take and every second that goes by.**
- **When we walk and when we talk, we are Muslims**
- **When we work and when we play, we are Muslims**
- **When we eat and when we sleep, we are Muslims**
- **No vacation from Islam and no retirement from Islam**
- **It is a "Minhaj" or an approach that must be integrated in all aspects of our lives.**
- **To be able to live Islam, we must (MUST) understand it: fully comprehend it the same way we understand and comprehend 1+1=2.**
- **If I raise two fingers and ask how many these are, we all would recognize them as 2. This is a sign of understanding the fact that 1+1=2. Only a beginner in Math would count them and say 1+1=2. To us it became so understood that we did not need to count them or add them.**
- **The answer 2 was at the tip of our tongues when the question of how many was raised. This is the level of comprehension that we need in understanding Islam. To be fully ingrained in our systems, and to be fully imbedded in our souls.**
- **It should become second nature to us (better yet, first nature). No need to think about it, we simply live it and live by it. We don't question it.**
- **So, the question that we need to ask ourselves is: Do we truly understand Islam that well?**
- **Because if we do, then, "this" would not be our condition as individuals, as communities, or as a nation.**

- **Islam as a way of life is designed to bring out the best in us human beings. It is the optimum approach to this universe.**
- **The early Muslims understood Islam and used it to lead the world.**
- **As we lost this understanding, the world leads us.**
- **If we regain the proper understanding of Islam, we would regain the proper position for Islam and Muslims in this world.**
- **We would overcome the weakness that we suffer as individuals, the weakness of the Muslim communities, and the weakness of the Islamic Ummah.**
- **So, it is upon us to do our best to understand this DEEN. To comprehend all its aspects. To make it our way of life. Simply put: TO LIVE IT 24/7.**
- **Yes, Brs. And Srs., To live Islam, we need to understand it and to understand it; we need to love it and love to study it.**
- **We need to seriously study it, the way we study the knowledge we need in our professions and even the knowledge we busy ourselves with in our hobbies and in our trivia pursuit.**
- **We need to study it the way physicians study medicine and the way engineers study engineering**
- **We need to love it the way we love our hobbies and spend our wealth, time, and energy indulging ourselves in**
- **We need to take our learning of Islam as serious as we take school and college education**
- **We go to colleges, universities, and learning institutions to become professionals in our fields.**
- **We take classes, listen to the lectures, read the book, go to the library and get more references and reading material, and we ask the professors to help us with what we could not understand the first time**
- **We do the extra credit assignments and we discuss class material and homework solutions with our peers.**
- **We practice what we learn, do the drills and exercises and we go through quizzes and exams.**
- **We sweat it to get that grade at the end of the course and we struggle to get that degree at the end of our schooling, and we feel proud of our education.**
- **We feel proud of our understanding and we become eager to put our knowledge to use.**
- **We love our professions and excel in implementing our knowledge in the field.**
- **One can not be a good engineer if he/she does not understand engineering**
- **One can not be a good physician if he/she does not love and understand medicine**
- **One can not be an accountant if he/she does not love and understand accounting**
- **So, to live it, we need to love it and understand it. Then and only then, do we derive the full benefit of this Deen, and then and only then, that we expect to be at our best and that this Deen would bring out the best in us.**
- **In the Hadeeth, the Prophet, pbuh, tells us: Mann uridellahu bihee khayran yufaqihuhu fedDeen**
- **Whomsoever Allah would like to guide him to goodness and wellness, Allah would make him understand and comprehend the Deen (of Islam)**

- **This Hadeeth is telling us that if we understand Islam then we are on our way to good life and to happiness.**
- **That is exactly what Islam is for: a way of life to bring out the best in us and to provide us with the best. To give us guidance and happiness. The true happiness that we all dream of.**
- **The understanding that goes beneath the surface. The understanding that goes beyond the rules and regulation. The understanding that goes beyond the rituals.**
- **We need a true understanding that corrects the immense misunderstanding that killed the Islamic momentum and distorted the Muslim identity.**
- **The Prophet's Hadeeth uses the word ufaqihuhu (derived from Fiqh) fee adDeen.**
- **To most of us, the word "Fiqh" is automatically associated with the rules and regulations, and with the rituals more than the essence.**
- **The true usage of the word Fiqh is to indicate deep understanding and true comprehension.**
- **So, Fiqh of Deen is comprehending how Islam should be a way of life and how to integrate it in all our affairs**
- **That is exactly what the Hadeeth is telling us: if we truly comprehend how Islam should be a way of life and how to integrate it in all our affairs, then we will have the best and we be at our best… we would have the goodness that Allah intended for us.**

- **Let us test our understanding by examining a Hadeeth that we all know very well and we all assert that we understand and implement.**
- **Buniyal Islam 3ala Khamsin === Islam was built on FIVE. These are the exact words narrated to us as a Hadeeth of our Prophet, pbuh.**
- **Typical understanding of this Hadeeth implies that Islam consists of five pillars: The testimony (Shahadateen), prayer (Salat), Zakat, fasting (Siyam), and Hajj for able adults.**
- **The picture that comes to mind as a result is that of a structure of five pillars or five columns labeled with the five things: The testimony, prayer, Zakat, fasting, and Hajj.**
- **In fact, this is how most of us present Islam to others… whenever we are asked about Islam; we quickly and proudly talk about the five pillars of Islam.**
- **Non-Muslims are always asking and wondering about the five pillars of Islam, the fascination and obsession of now-a-days societies with numbers, counting, and categorization gives the five pillars that prominence in the media. And we Muslims fall in the trap and we focus on the trivia as opposed to the essence.**
- **Moreover, the five column picture is typically used to educate our children about Islam and we see the graphic illustration on posters in our Islamic schools**
- **In presenting this image, we reduce the beauty of the holistic and comprehensive scheme of life that Islam brings to humanity to a mere count of five things**
- **We lost the bigger picture and we lost the objective**
- **Examining this image of the five pillar structure, we recognize that the testimony should be in fact the foundation to this structure and not just another column**
- **The correct image is a foundation of Lailah illa Allah, Muhammadun Rasulullah, with the four other columns of prayers, fasting, Zakat and Hajj erected on this essential and fundamental foundation**

- **As we correct this aspect of the presentation, we discover that the picture is still short of conveying the message.**
- **We discover that we are in fact presenting Islam as a skeleton structure to a building that was never completed. A deserted building that is not livable and was never inhabited**
- **A building that looks like the ruins and remnants of a past.**
- **Foundation and four columns and no walls, no ceiling, no, furniture, no yard … no life.**
- **Guess what, that picture truly portrays our limited understanding of Islam.**
- **We have reduced the way of life (Islam) to rituals.**
- **We treated Islam as the deserted skeleton of ruins and we do not live there.**
- **Yes, we erect this bare bone building and we go live somewhere else.**
- **Who would like to live in a bare bone building of foundation and columns, no walls, no ceiling, no doors or windows, no furniture, no heating or cooling, no garden, … no life?**
- **We established for ourselves different living quarters with different foundation and different columns and different environment.**
- **We adopted a completely different lifestyle founded on non-Islamic values and we made it our Deen and our way of life.**
- **And we maintain the deserted Islamic structure as a place we claim ownership to.**
- **When we have to, we go visit the Islamic bare bone ruins and rush back to our "more comfortable" habitat as soon as the visit ends.**
- **We visit to do our prayers and snap right back.**
- **In Ramadan, again we visit the Islamic "ruins" just like tourists and we return back to our normal life soon afterwards**
- **We do the same for Zakat and Hajj.**
- **Yes, it is more like a tourist visit where we get "temporarily" engaged in the event or visit, but we go back to "normal" once the event or the visit is over**
- **If we were to complete the Islamic building beyond the foundation and columns. If we were to add the walls, the ceiling, the doors, the windows, the furniture, the heating and cooling, the garden, … and live in it.**
- **Then and only then that we can claim that we appreciate the meaning of Islam as a way of life.**
- **That would be the true implementation of "InnadDeena 3indallahelIslam" and "Mann uridellahu bihee khayran yufaqihuhu fedDeen"**
- **If were to build this Islamic house right, with solid foundation, columns that are well founded and well cemented to the foundation, walls and ceiling that are well bonded to the foundation and columns, a structure with integrity and strength, comfortable environment and homey furniture, a pleasant garden with a view, who would not want to enjoy living in such house.**
- **We would live in this house with joy and pride.**
- **We would be always looking for opportunities to invite others to visit our house and we would be anxious to show it off.**
- **But with us living in a different house and maintain the Islamic house as a bare bone skeleton, we have no pride to show the Islamic house to others.**

- **What are we telling them? Look how beautiful this skeleton is. Look at these columns, they truly mean something.**
- **The natural reply would be: if you truly believe in this as the house to live in, how is it then that you are not living in it. If this is the mode to adopt, how come you are adopting a different model?**
- **So, Brs. & Srs., let each one of us ask himself/herself a simple question: Are we truly in full command of this Hadeeth? Do we really understand and comprehend our Deen?**
- **==========**
- **Now, let us argue the case from the perspective of those who assume that our Deen is primarily the "5 Pillars", and they are predominantly the things that we need to focus on.**
- **The question is this case, again, are we doing them right? Do we understand them the way we should?**
- **If we carefully examine the reality that we live, we will find that we are not really benefiting from our practice of the 5 pillars the way we should.**
- **When you think about the worships that Allah SWT Has prescribed for us are for our own good, for our own guidance, and for our own happiness.**
- **Allah is self-sufficient; He derives no gain from any of our acts or worships and is never harmed by the lack of it.**
- **He does not need anything from us, He is not waiting for the return of our prayers, He is not benefiting from our fasting, he is not gaining any privilege from the Zakat that we are paying, and he is not gaining any advantage from our Hajj or the hardships that we go through in doing it.**
- **Who are the beneficiaries from all these acts and worships? It is us…**
- **We know that all what we do in Islam is for a great benefit, and also know that we are the true beneficiaries of all the worships we do.**
- **We really have to think about this point because some of us think that these worships are dues that we owe Allah and we have to "pay" him these dues.**
- **The true beneficiaries of our prayers are us. The true beneficiaries of our fasting, Zakat, and hajj are us. The true beneficiaries of committing to the testimonies of Islam are us.**
- **So, we ask ourselves, are we seeing the benefits of performing the five pillars in our lives?**
- **Are we enjoying the returns that Islam promises us for performing the prayers in preventing "Fah'shaa and Munkar" (evil deeds and disapproved behavior), in giving us internal peace and relieving us from stress, and many other promised rewards. Are we seeing any of that in return of our prayers?**
- **Are we seeing the Taqwa (piety) or the strength and perseverance that the fasting should give, are we seeing the prosperity and community strength the Zakat should give, or are we seeing the brotherhood and sisterhood and unity of the Muslim Ummah that hajj should give?**
- **The honest answers to all these questions is a "no" or at best a "not quite".**
- **Hence, if we are not drawing the benefits that these worships should produce in our lives, this means that we are not doing them right. As simple as that.**
- **Furthermore, if we are not doing them right, that means we don't understand them; because if we do, then we would be integrated in our lifestyles.**

- **So, we ask ourselves: Do we believe in the worships Allah has prescribed for us the way we believe in the medicine a doctor prescribes to us? If we do, then we would take them seriously and follow the prescription accurately in when and how, and what to do and what not during the course of treatment.**
- **We must recognize here that we are not talking about a human prescribing for us, and we are not talking about a doctor who is giving us a prescription that he guessed would be good for us. We are talking about the Creator… The Ultimate in Knowledge, The Almighty, The One Who Knows what is best for us and He prescribed for us these prescriptions and these worships.**
- **Yes, Brs. & Srs., The holistic picture for our Deen can never be complete without those pillars (columns). Our Muslim life and Muslim house can never be strong without the complete building.**
- **We can't build the walls and the ceiling and add the furniture and life without the columns. The complete picture should be that of an integral comprehensive system that we have to be taken as a whole. We should not take one part and leave the other, and we can't emphasize one side and ignore the other side.**
- **One can't be good to people and to family and neglect his/her worships; likewise, one should not indulge in worships and leave family uncared for.**
- **The approach to the Islamic life should be balanced, comprehensive, and holistic.**
- **The house has to be strong, strong foundation, strong columns, well adhering walls, strong ceiling, furniture, life, and all.**
- **Brs. & Srs., we really have to examine this picture very closely and we have to do our best to make it a reality; the reality of our lives.**
- **We have to do our best in this regard, and the best can only be done through sincerity; as sincerity is the key to success.**

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[1] *Jami' al-'Ulum wa'l-Hikam* by Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali Commentary on the Second Hadith of Imam Nawawi's "Forty"
https://www.sunnah.org/ibadaat/Rajab_commentary40hadith.htm

Also from 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, there is that he said, "While we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless with him and grant him peace, one day a man came up to us whose clothes were extremely white, whose hair was extremely black, upon whom traces of travelling could not be seen, and whom none of us knew, until he sat down close to the Prophet, may Allah bless with him and grant him peace, so that he rested his knees upon his knees and placed his two hands upon his thighs and said, 'Muhammad, tell me about **Islam**.' The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless with him and grant him peace, said, 'Islam is that you witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and you establish the prayer, and you give the Zakat, and you fast Ramadan, and you perform the hajj of the House if you are able to take a way to it.' He said, 'You have told the truth,' and we were amazed at him asking him and [then] telling him that he told the truth. He said, 'Tell me about **iman**.' He said, 'That you affirm Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and that you affirm the Decree, the good of it and the bad of it.' He said, 'You have told the truth.' He said, 'Tell me about **ihsan**.' He said, 'That you worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you don't see Him then truly He sees you.' He said, 'Tell me about the Hour.' He said, 'The one asked about it knows no more than the one asking.' He said, 'Then tell me about its tokens.' He said, 'That the female slave should give birth to her mistress, and you see poor, naked, barefoot shepherds of sheep and goats competing in making tall buildings.' He went away, and I remained some time. Then he asked, 'Umar, do you know who the questioner was?' I said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'He was Jibril who came to you to teach you your deen'." Muslim (8) narrated it.