



The world, at present, is progressing more rapidly than ever before. What is hailed as the breakthrough of today is already obsolete and 'old news' by tomorrow. If a person buys the latest phone, it is replaced by a newer model in just a few months.

Likewise, if a woman buys the latest style of cloak, shoe or handbag, a new style is released soon thereafter.

If we eat the latest dish in the latest restaurant today, a new dish or restaurant will enter the scene in a few weeks' time.

In essence, people find themselves racing to keep up with the changes so that they can remain relevant and up to date with the latest trends.

Naturally, this lifestyle is finance intensive, and if the husband's salary is insufficient to service the material aspirations of the couple, the wife seeks to supplement the income by also earning a livelihood. However, the sole motivation behind this elaborate initiative is to raise the standard of living, and this is in stark contrast to the mindset and values of the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum).

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) had once informed his respected wives that the first of them to join him after his demise (i.e. the first of them to pass away) would be the wife with the longest arms. The respected wives of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) initially understood this statement literally and thus began to measure and compare the length of their arms, determining that Sayyidah Saudah (radhiyallahu 'anha) had the longest arms. However, when Sayyidah Zainab bintu Jahsh (radhiyallahu 'anha) passed away first, they realized that 'longest arms' was actually a metaphorical reference to the one who gave the most sadaqah. Sayyidah Zainab (radhiyallahu 'anha) loved to give sadaqah, and would earn a living (from home) by tanning skins and sewing them into leather products which she would sell, using the income to spend on the poor and needy.

(Saheeh Bukhaari #1420, Saheeh Muslim #6316, Fat-hul Baari vol. 3, pg. 367 and Mirqaat vol. 4, pg. 377)

Hence, she earned a living with the mindset and intention of assisting others and earning

Jannah – not to race after the latest luxuries.

Similarly, in the third century of Islam, there was a woman named Ummul Baneen Al-Fihriyyah. She had inherited a large estate from her father. Using this wealth, she purchased a plot of land and further financed the construction of a masjid and the digging of a well for the use of the public on it. Her hope for Allah Ta'ala's acceptance was such that she fasted for the entire duration of the masjid's construction.
(Aa'laamun Nisaa vol. 1, pg. 70)

Wealth that is spent on luxuries, comforts and other indulgences is not going to help us acquire Jannah in any way. Hence, these people used their money wisely – by preparing for the Hereafter. If Allah Ta'ala has blessed us with excess wealth, we should try our best to invest it in our Jannah.

From digging a well in a water-scarce area to constructing a masjid or madrasah, and from donating blankets in winter to assisting the widows, orphans and destitute – the avenues are countless. If we do not have sufficient money to sponsor an entire project, as will be the case with most people, we should contribute whatever is within our means – even if it be just a few rands – as Allah Ta'ala does not view the amount given but rather the heart with which it is given.

With the occasion of qurbaani fast approaching, we have another unique opportunity to spend our money profitably. During the days of qurbaani, there is no action more beloved to Allah Ta'ala than the sacrifice of qurbaani animals. We should thus strive to spend liberally in this avenue by slaughtering the best of animals and as many animals as we can manage. If we do not require the meat from all the animals, we can give it to those in need due to which we will receive even greater rewards.

May Allah Ta'ala bless us to spend our wealth in avenues pleasing to Him.