

Finding a Suitable Partner for Marriage

One of many problems we face in this society is that we bring some of the cultural baggage with us from our homelands.

by Ashraf Zaghloul

Before we discuss what a suitable partner for marriage is and how to find or identify one, we have to first define and describe what marriage is in Islam. Once we know what marriage is, it will be easier to find the person we want to be our part-

ner in marriage.

In the Quran in Surah Albaqra (2:187), Allah describes the spouses saying that they are a dress, garment or clothing for each other. The scholars tell us that Allah used the word clothing to indicate closeness. It indicates that husbands and wives give each other warmth, security and protection, and make a person look good and cover each other's imperfections.

Allah also tells us in Surah Arrom 30:21: "And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between you". Once again, Allah is telling us that marriage is about peace, tranquility, love and mercy.

Now that we know Islam views marriage as a peaceful, comfortable and protective union, we move on to discuss how to find the right partner in marriage.

Often I attend events to introduce Muslims that are looking for a spouse and the first question I ask is "what are the qualities you are looking for?" The answer from both men and women is always the same — "I want a good practicing Muslim to share my life with". My re-

Continued on page 14

Family: The Neglected Foundation

Satan loves to destroy all kind of relationships including family relationships

by Imam Hamid Slimi

In the beginning of every khutbah on Fridays, the Imam follows the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) by reminding people of the foundations of Islam with three Ayahs from the Qur'an. They are as follows:

"O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam..." (3:102)

"O mankind! Be dutiful to Your Lord, who created you from a single person (Adam) and from him He created his wife (Hawwa or Eve) and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Him you demand your mutual rights and do not cut off the relations of the wombs —Kinship. Surely, Allah is ever an All-Watcher over you." (4:01)

"O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak always the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed achieved a great achievement." (33:70-1)

The first Ayah reminds us of the necessity of having taqwa — that is not only fear and love of Allah but also the awareness of the duties we have towards Him and the covenant we have with Him — in the best and most sincere way. Taqwa is the foundation of the pure heart. Then Allah stresses explicitly that when we die we should die as Muslims by living as true Muslims and avoid anything which can lead us to split and scatter into groups.

The second Ayah also stresses the necessity of Taqwa of our Lord Allah by reminding us of our origin and the creation of Adam and his wife Eve (Peace be upon them) — and how the continuation of mankind was assured by the leave of Allah through marriage and establishment of the first family. Then Allah orders us to have Taqwa by being conscious constantly of the "Arhaam" meaning the relationships of kith and kin that are through family ties. And this shows that family is the founda-

tion of life and the continuation of mankind, chosen by Allah to be the vicegerent on earth.

In the third Ayah we are reminded to always heed Allah by speaking straightforward and in a truthful and decent manner. Good speech — or words — is the foundation of good communication between people in a community and in a family.

The meanings of these verses clearly explain why the prophet (pbuh) specifically read and recommended them every Friday and in the beginning of every formal speech or during the marriage of someone and at a few other occasions.

These verses are very comprehensive; they remind us of who we are, to what category and kind of people should we belong, about which people we should care for the most, and what should we say all the time? In other words, there are priorities for the Muslim individual to be careful about. The Qur'an

teaches us to set our priorities, since a lot of the problems that people face are the result of the inability to set priorities and act accordingly.

The consciousness of duties means an individual's sense of accountability in front of Allah on the Day of Judgment. The word "responsibility" means to be able to respond to or answer the questions of an authority. That is why the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "each one of you is in charge of something and each one of you will have to respond later for questions about what he was in charge of. The ruler is in charge of his subjects and he will be asked about them. And the husband - leader of the household - is in charge of his family and he will be asked about it. And the wife is in charge of the household and the children and she will be asked about them. Therefore each one of you is in charge of something and each one of you will be asked

Continued on page 4

INSIDE

Forgiveness -----	3
Martyrs and Heroes -----	6
Voice of the voiceless -----	5
Kashmir -----	8
Chechnya, India, Hostilities against Muslims in EU ----	9
Remembering Death -----	12
Twenty Pence -----	12

Departments

Editorial

Summer is for family ----- 2

Letters / Opinion

Canada on Palestine, ATM

Fraud, Arafat to go ----- 2

Helpful hints

Readers' Questions ----- 6

Newsroom

----- 10-11

Kidz Korner

Lord Have Mercy upon them, Before the Badr, Sacrifice, A Cool Game ----- 15

Please treat this Islamic Journal with respect!

Islamic Psychology of the Self: "The Inner Struggle of the Self"

By Nosheen Mian,
University of Toronto
(From the lecture series by
Shaykh Mokhtar Maghraoui)

The mission of the beloved Messenger of Allah (pbuh), if it can be summarized, was to show us, and lead us in the path of "uboodiyyah" (servitude) to Allah — for Allah ascertains in a powerful statement about the very purpose of our creation, when He says, "And I created Jinns and Humans for the only purpose to fulfill 'uboodiyyah to Me". This can only be achieved when the intent and objective of the creature becomes subservient to the intent and objective of the Creator. Therefore, every action we commit or omit, every word we utter or harbor, every

thought we conceal or express — we must ask ourselves "does it or does it not fulfill the criterion of 'uboodiyyah?" We must ask ourselves, is it, as we design it in our hearts, consistent with what Allah intended? This question must be applied to our hearts, intentions and senses (actions) — to the point where every beat of our hearts is observed under this test.

Though we often unnecessarily complicate it, the equation of life is simple: in this dunya [this life, world] we act, and the outcome [based on these actions] is either Jannah [Paradise] or Naar [Hell]. It is beautifully simple, but we bring our excess of 'rationalizations' and 'sophistications' until we make the equation obscure. This journey of life must be taken by all of us, some will take it consciously and willfully, unfortunately others will not.

The Prophet (pbuh) described a path for 'uboodiyyah which is the path, fruit and consequence — that is excellence in akhlaaq. And Allah says to him in the Qur'an, "And you oh Muhammad are upon a great state of akhlaaq". Furthermore, the

Continued on page 13

Five Good Reasons to Advertise in The Ambition

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| 1. The Ambition goes to thousands of Muslims regardless of their ethnicity. | 2. Unlike most ethnic papers, it has fewer ads and yours catches more attention. | 3. It has Islamic knowledge so people don't throw it away after reading it once. | 4. Your ad has a long life of two months, not just one week or so. | 5. With The Ambition , your money goes a long way. |
|--|--|--|--|---|

Editorial

Summer is for the family

In the summer months of July and August when children are out of school, days are warm, and air is filled with the aroma of summer flowers, families are usually busy having picnics and barbecues. *The Ambition* has decided to set this time for reflecting on the family values, marriage and relationships. We were about to write an editorial appropriate for this special time when we came across this lovely article, by Abul A'la Morshed & Taha Ghaznavi, YMFN Staff Writer, expressing almost the same thoughts as ours. To share it with our readers, we are re-printing it instead of a column of our own.

Saving your family

For a believer one of the most hurtful feelings is when he or she watches their own family going astray from the path of Islam. Most of the time, we do not know how to react. Here are some points to keep in mind when we are in such situations:

1. Do Not Give Up on Your Family This should never be an option. The Prophets (*'alayhim salaatu was-salaam*) never gave up on their families because of the latter's disobedience to Allah. They did not consider the task of inviting one's family to Allah as an 'extra duty' performed by them, but as part of their own salvation. They kept reminding their families of dedication and obedience to One God, Allah till their natural death came or the punishment of Allah overtook them. And we ask Allah's protection from that.

2. Show them Your Love and Care Your family needs to realize that you care for them deeply and it hurts you seeing them going astray. They need to see that your concern for them stems from your genuine love and not a sense of superiority or self-righteousness. They don't need emotional black-mail or repeated nagging, but sincere advice in everyday matters and guidance in any doubts and questions they may have. Give gifts, help them in their day-to-day tasks, and be there in their times of distress and need, whether they be practising or not.

3. Take it One Step at a Time Do not expect your family to completely change overnight, just because you did! Some, in fact most, people take time to change. Think about the fact that the majority of the Makkan people during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) became Muslim after having been with him, the Prophet of God, for 13 years! **Do not jump into telling them what they have to do or what not.** Tell them why it is good or bad, your own reasoning process, and prepare their mind before mentioning what Allah wants them to do. For example, instead of lecturing or ordering them to wear *Hijab*, explain why it is such an important part of Islam and Muslim identity, its benefits and rewards. Whenever you say such-and-such is *Halal* or *Haram*, prepare to answer why!

And be careful about what you lay emphasis on. There is a wisdom in priorities. For example, it does little good to speak about watching too much TV when the person does not even pray. For every *Haram*, you must provide a better *Halal* alternative or it will be replaced with more *Haram* or idleness.

4. Have regular Family Gatherings How about one weeknight after dinner? Or spending a weekend morning together? You can use these opportunities to talk about your family issues, discuss Islamic teachings, and where you as a family should be headed, etc. This gathering will bring your family members close to each other, allow them to express their thoughts and feelings openly and realize that they are one mutually-supporting entity.

5. Do Not Coerce but Pray for them We should know that guidance comes from Allah alone, no matter how hard we try. Our duty is to present Allah's message in a loving and wise manner so they can help themselves make up their mind. But throughout all this, we turn to Allah alone for guidance, for ourselves and our loved ones, and put our trust in Him alone, lest we lost heart in our own efforts.

6. Be True to Yourself They know you too well and love you, so be yourself! **Your greatest duty is to be a shining example of a sincere, trying, albeit naturally imperfect, Muslim** not to give the impression of a 'super-Momin' who is never wrong. That natural and simple way of living and thinking will *insha-Allah* be an irresistible attraction that will draw you and your family closer to Allah.

Characteristics of a Believer

Ahmad bin Ja'far bin Ma'bad narrated that Ubai bin Ka'ab, God be pleased with him, said: "A believer is recognized by four characteristics: He is patient during trials; He is grateful when he receives a gift; He is truthful when he speaks; and He is equitable when he sits to judge.

Hence, a true believer revolves between five dimensions of radiant lights. [Such are the lights described by Allah, blessed be His Name, in His saying, (Light upon Light) (Qu'ran 24:35).] His words are full of light; His knowledge is full of light;

The avenues he embarks upon are radiant with light; The gates from where he emerges are radiant with light; and finally, On the Day of Resurrection, his destination is towards the most sublime heavenly light."

"As to the atheist, he revolves around five spheres of darkness: His speech is full of darkness; His deeds are made of darkness; His goals drive him from one avenue of darkness into another; The gates from where he emerges are mazes of darkness; and On the Day of Resurrection, his fate will carry him to the abysmal abode of darkness."

Letters / Opinion

Canada must take a much stronger stand on Palestine

Svend J. Robinson, MP
Burnaby-Douglas

I am angered at the failure of the federal Liberal government to take a strong, principled stand at the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva on the Middle East. Indeed, it was Canada's shameful vote to oppose the human rights mission of Mary Robinson, [one of only two countries on the 53 member Commission to do so, the other being Guatemala], and subsequent vote to oppose condemnation of Israel's military aggression that led me to travel to the region myself.

I have long spoken out for justice for the Palestinian people, as well as for a secure Israel in the pre-1967 borders. During the first intifada in the late 1980's I travelled to the West Bank and Gaza and stayed in a refugee camp in support of the Palestinians. In 1990, prior to the outbreak of the war in the Gulf, I travelled to Iraq and while there met with

Palestinian leader Arafat. I have long been appalled at the squalid conditions in the Palestinian refugee camps, and the humiliation and despair and hopelessness they must endure. Collective punishment, land expropriations, home demolitions, extra-judicial killings and the daily humiliation of the Palestinian people were brutally exacerbated by the recent Israeli military offensive. Far from making Israel a safer place, Sharon's policies have had the opposite effect. Israeli writer Gideon Levy spelled it out eloquently in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz: "What is the infrastructure of terrorism if not the occupation, the despair and the hatred?...The nation wanted war, and it got what it wanted. Within a few days we succeeded in sowing hate in the heart of every Palestinian and it will not soon fade. The tens of thousands of Palestinians who are imprisoned in their homes after an unbearable year and a half, who are frightened by the sounds of gunfire and the rumbling of the tanks; the bodies that continue to be brought to the hospitals without letup; the mass arrests and the general destruction - these are now generating fierce resentment against us. The world, with the exception of the United States in the meantime, is again treating us like lepers, and public opinion in the Arab states is threatening to push their leaders into an all-out war.

Arafat should step down

Your editorial dated May-June 2002, "where is the Ummah" and "Jenin - Remember this" by Ramzy Baroud are thought provoking and good.

Due to the division of Muslim countries with no unity in sight, the Palestinians are suffering greatly. Diplomacy demands that Yassar Arafat, the self-styled ruler, steps down and hand over power to new leadership like Hannan Ashrabi, more acceptable to the West, to bring peace and happiness to Palestinians from death and destruction at the hands of Israelis.

Syed Sadruddin Hussain

This is the balance of blood and terror of this operation, which has not a thing to be said to its credit, other than it satisfies the feelings of a public that is terrified by the terrorist attacks."

Canada must take a much stronger stand, including in the following areas:

*Supporting the call by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, and others for immediate deployment of an International Protection Force in the Occupied Territories, with Canadian participation

*Substantial Canadian development aid to assist the Palestinian people to rebuild their shattered infrastructure

*Demanding that Israel end its obstruction of the missions of Mary Robinson and the UN Inquiry into the violence and possible war crimes in Jenin; particularly look into the blocking of ambulances and medical supplies to civilians, including mothers in labour and those needing kidney dialysis

*Calling upon Israel to immediately fully respect the 4th Geneva Convention on the status of civilians in the territories illegally occupied by Israel since 1967; Canada has a legal obligation as a signatory to the Convention to ensure that it is honoured

*Speak out strongly against any extension of the "war against terrorism" to Iraq, whose people have already suffered terribly from the impact of economic sanctions

At the root of this conflict is the occupation. It must end. Israel must fully withdraw from all land seized in 1967, including the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. The Palestinian people must have their viable state, and it must peacefully co-exist with the state of Israel. The Israeli Barak proposal of 2000, described by Assaf Oron, one of the organisers of the Israeli military refusenik movement as "...pitiful, completely controlled

Bantustans in between our settlements and bypass roads..." was totally unacceptable. The illegal settlements must be disbanded and there must be an equitable response to the refugee issue. It is shameful that the number of settlers has doubled since the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993. Imagine the anguish of Palestinians who watch their homes being demolished as new settlements are built on their lands. This is why I confronted the

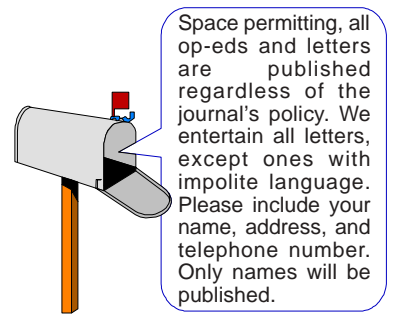
MashaAllah, your website is fantastic!

I now have another means of reading your most excellent publication, which makes it even easier to enjoy it more often.

I look forward to reading *The Ambition* every month, and have seen several Muslim sites advertise *The Ambition* recently.

Thank you for providing such interesting and informative insight into the issues us Western Muslims must face and experience.

Nabeel A. Siddiqi



letters@theambition.com

Israeli soldiers at the military checkpoint outside Ramallah, why I asserted that they had no legal authority to block me as they were on Palestinian land.

I was deeply moved by the courage, the anguish and the pain of the Palestinians I met, as well as the brave and eloquent Israeli peace activists. In addition to meeting with Palestinian activists such as Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, I met in Tel Aviv with Peace Now activists including Members of the Israeli Knesset, and leaders in the peace movement Gush Shalom, with whom I attended a large peace rally at Rabin Square.

The leadership of those military reservists who are refusing to serve in the Occupied Territories, in the movement Courage to Refuse "Ometz Lesarev" [www.seruv.org.il] is truly inspiring. As one of these "refuseniks" recently wrote before serving a 28 day prison term: "...I will not serve in your army. ..this army does not exist to bring security to the citizens of Israel; it exists to guarantee the continuation of the theft of Palestinian land. As a Jew, I am repelled by the crimes this militia commits against the Palestinian people."

Again, let me assure you that I will continue to speak out on these fundamental issues of principle, despite the vilification to which I have been subjected by many in the media and attacks from some of my own caucus colleagues. To those who accuse me of taking sides, I have said that I plead guilty. I do take the side of life over death, of peace over war, of justice over tyranny and dehumanisation, and of the oppressed over the oppressor.

ATM Fraud — Please be aware

The latest ATM scam involves thieves putting a thin, clear, rigid plastic 'sleeve' into the ATM card slot, warns Cliff A. Smith, Project Leader-Technical Support, SRF Systems, ECCO & RT-CIF.

When you insert your card, the machine can't read the strip, so it keeps asking you to re-enter your PIN number. Meanwhile, someone behind you watches as you tap in your number. Eventually you give up, thinking the machine has swallowed your card and you walk away.

The thieves then remove the plastic sleeve complete with card, and empty your account. The way to avoid this is to run your finger along the card slot before you put your card in. The sleeve has a couple of tiny prongs that the thieves need to get the sleeve out of the slot, and you'll be able to feel them. The police would like as many people as possible to be aware of this scam, so pass this on to your friends. For further info, email cliff.smith@rbc.com

Forgiveness: A virtue to strive for

by Ayub Hamid

In our day-to-day life, sometimes we come across ignorant behaviour shown by people around us. It may take the form of verbal abuse, accusations, disrespect, slander, backbiting, false assumptions, name-calling, ridicule, maligning comments, physical aggression, etc. because of their jealousy, misgivings, maliciousness, difference of opinion or dislike for whatever reason. When this happens we can: either retaliate, respond, avenge, seek redress and cry foul; or we can forbear, ignore and forgive.

Although justice demands that scores should be fairly settled for every wrong that takes place in the society, *Ihsaan* (best behaviour) suggests that people should be gracious and generous enough to forgive any wrong perpetrated against them personally.

Muslims are encouraged to practice *Ihsaan* by adopting the following: "Practise forgiveness, command what is good, but turn away from the ignorant." (7:199)

"Kind speech and forgiveness are better than charity followed by hurt." (2:263)

Those who care about attaining

Allah's forgiveness, they have been told that they should themselves demonstrate forgiveness for people: "And they should pardon and overlook. Do not you like that Allah forgive you?" (24:22) And because Allah Himself is forgiving, He loves those who forgive. "Those who restrain their anger and who pardon people, and Allah loves *Muhsineen*." (3:134)

The Prophet (pbuh) not only himself practised forgiveness in a way par excellence, he trained his companions to be the same way. It is indicated by the following example: Once, a person was verbally abusing Abu Bakr while the Prophet was curiously watching with a smile. After taking much abuse quietly, Abu Bakr responded to a few of his comments. At this, the Prophet exhibited his disapproval, got up and left. Abu Bakr caught up with the Prophet and wondered, "O Messenger of Allah, he was abusing me and you remained sitting. When I responded to him, you disapproved and got up." The Messenger of Allah responded, "There was an angel with you responding to him. When you responded to him, *Shaytaan* took his place." He then

said, "O Abu Bakr, there are three solid truths: If a person is wronged and he forbears it (without seeking revenge) just for the sake of Allah SWT, Allah will honour him and give him the upper hand with His help; if a person opens a door of giving gifts for cementing relationships with relatives, Allah will give him abundance; and, if a person opens a door of seeking charity for himself to increase his wealth, Allah will further reduce his wealth." (Mishkaah and Musnad Ahmad)

Forgiveness is also a comprehensive concept extending to all human encounters and dealings including those with family members, servants, employees and strangers.

A person came to the Prophet and asked him how many times he should forgive his servant. The Messenger of Allah responded, "Seventy times every day." ('Seventy' times is an Arabic expression to indicate countless times.) (At-Tirmidzee)

Sometimes, people take advantage of those who are forgiving, abuse their forgiving nature or even take it as a sign of their weakness. Observing such tendencies in people, a Muslim may think that he should deal with people according to their behaviour. This is not acceptable in Islam as it means living by the values of other people instead of sticking with one's own Islamic values. Thus, the Prophet warned: "Do not be 'reflection of society', keeping the attitude that if people behave well, we will behave well. However, if they behave badly, we will also be unfair. Rather, program yourselves so that if people behave well, you behave better; but if people behave badly, you must not be unfair." (Mishkah and At-Tirmidzee.)

Although forgiving by the aggrieved party is good in any circumstances, it is really meaningful and beneficial when the aggrieved party has an upper hand and

has full power, authority and opportunity to avenge or settle the score. It is the forgiveness in that situation that is really rewarding and that wins the hearts of people.

The Messenger of Allah said, "Moosa Ibn 'Imraan peace be upon him asked Allah: O Lord, who is the most honourable of your slaves? Allah responded: He who forgives when he has power to avenge." (Bayhiquee in *Shu'abul-eemaan* from Abou Hurairah)

Although Islam encourages Muslims to be forgiving and promises great rewards for those who forgive, it (the act of forgiving) is a very personal affair of an aggrieved party that he/she may want to do on his/her own discretion as an act of *Ihsaan* for the Pleasure of Allah. No one has the right to demand or expect it from the victim. If the victim does not forgive, no one has the right to regard it as an improper or impious act, nor should the refusal of a victim to let go the matter diminish the victim's respect in the eyes of those who think it should be forgiven. Third parties (those who are not parties to the case or are not adjudicators or arbitrators) can encourage the wronged party to forgive for the sake of Allah, but people in authority or those responsible to administer justice should not try to pressure the victim in any way shape or form. About a victim's right to raise the issue, to lodge a complaint and to seek redress, the Holy Qur'an says: "Allah does not like public mention of evil except by one who has been wronged. And Allah is all-hearing, all-knowing. Rather, if you publish something good, or conceal it, or pardon an offence, indeed Allah is forgiving and omnipotent." An-Nisaa 4:148-149

About every one's rights to justice, defend or avenge, it says: "The fair settlement for a wrong is equal retribution. However, whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is due on Allah, and Allah does not like the unjust. And whoever avenges himself after being wronged, they are not to be blamed. The blame is on those who oppress people and wrongfully rebel in the land. For them, there will be a painful punishment. And indeed whoever practices *Sabr* and forgives, that is a highly resolute, top-notch behaviour." (42:40)

Thus, a person will be within one's right to defend himself from any misbehaviour or avenge a wrongdoing. That is justice and everyone is entitled to it without being blamed for it. However, *Ihsaan* is that the believer takes all that in stride graciously and magnanimously without responding, fighting back, paying much attention or complaining. *Ihsaan* is the standard good Muslims are expected to strive

From the Qur'an

And Noah called upon his Lord and said: "O my Lord! surely my son is of my family! and Thy promise is true and Thou art the Justest of Judges!" He said: "O Noah! he is not of thy family: for his conduct is unrighteous. So ask not of Me that of which thou hast no knowledge! I give thee counsel lest thou act like the ignorant!"

(11:45-46)

From the Hadith

(Narrated Abu Masud) The Prophet said, "If a man spends on his family (with the intention of having a reward from Allah) sincerely for Allah's sake then it is a (kind of) alms-giving in reward for him."

(Sahih Al-Bukhari)

for. And this is the kind of behaviour that wins the hearts of people, converting them from adversaries into loving friends. The Holy Qur'an states: "Who can be better in stance than He who calls people towards Allah, performs good deeds and proudly declares to be a Muslim. Goodness and evil are not equal. Hence, respond in the most excellent way. Then

you will see your enemy turning into a close friend. And this

Continued on page 13

The Ambition is published bimonthly. It is a free, non-profit publication and does not have the financial support of any group or organisation, foreign or domestic. It is supported by Muslim businesses and individuals.

All submissions are subject to editing for the purpose of clarity or space.

The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editors or the publisher.

Articles may only be reproduced with the written consent of the publisher. *The Ambition* must be credited with our publication date and website address. A copy of your publication must also be submitted for our records.

The Ambition

7224 Harwick Drive
Mississauga, ON L4T 3A4

Tel & Fax: (905) 673-2181
editors@theambition.com
www.theambition.com

ISSN 1496-3175 (Print)
ISSN 1496-3183 (Online)

Publisher
Asma Warsi

Editors
Asma Warsi
Muhammad Basil Ahmad

Assistant Editor
Aasiya Amir

Department Editors
Aneesa Lakhi
Farheen Zehra

Coordinator & Staff Reporter
Sister Wilma

Webmaster
Muhammad Basil Ahmad

Committee Members
Munawar Merchant
Ahmed R. Mian
Abdullah Sabree
Muhammad Saleem Shaikh

This Journal is dedicated to:

Professor Syed Aley Ahmad Abdi, Former Principal, Government Education College, Multan, Pakistan

Family: The Neglected Foundation

Continued from page 1
about it.” (al-Bukhari.)

In the second verse, Allah addresses us with: “O mankind” instead of “O you who believe!” It is simply because the concept of family is universal. Family is an important fort of protection in every culture. It is like the corner stone of a building or the heart of the body in every society. A healthy family brings about a healthy society whereas a dis-functional family is destructive to the society.

Islam encourages us to even go beyond the religious affiliations and take care of the parents who may even be disbelievers. It is in fact a duty to take care of them even if they are not Muslims. For the sake of “*ar-Rahem*” – the womb of the mother – a son is obliged in the Islamic law to provide for his parents if they need his help and support. This is one area to show the seriousness and sanctity of family ties in Islam.

In Islam, the family includes not only the parents of the husband and the wife and the grand children, its ties are extended to uncles and aunts from both sides whether through marriage relationship or blood relationship. Allah (swt) says, “*And Allah has made for you spouses of your kind, and has made for you, from your spouses sons and daughters, and grandsons and granddaughters, and has bestowed on you good provision. Do they then believe in false deities and deny the favor of Allah.*” (16:72)

Amazingly, there is no family relationship that the Qur’an does not talk about and give examples of. It comes either as a story of a prophet, or a simple person, or as a legislation for inheritance, marriage, divorce, nursing or Hijaab. Whether talking about a relationship between a husband and a wife, parents and chil-

dren, sons and daughters with their parents, or brothers and sisters, the family structure is conserved by setting up the “*huqooq*” (or rights,) of one towards the other and the guidelines to preserve them. Allah gives examples of many people and shows clearly the proper behavior and conduct.

In the treatment of the parents, people have to know the duties upon themselves towards those who were a mean for them to exist in this world. In fact, the second commandment in Islam – if we may put it this way – is to be kind and beneficent to one’s parents. Before even ordering us to pray, give *zakaat*, fast and perform *Hajj*, the Qur’an made it explicit and clear that the parents are of the greatest priority after Tawheed (that is to worship Allah alone with no partners.) Allah says, “*And Your Lord has decreed that you should worship none but Him alone and that you should be kind, beneficent and dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honor. And lower for them the wing of humility through mercy and always repeat saying, ‘My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was young.’*” (17:23-4) And there are many similar verses in the Qur’an in the same content.

The relationship between the husband and wife is directed towards peace and mercy by explaining the goals and purpose of a marriage. Allah says, “*And among His signs is that He created for you your wives from among yourselves, that you may find tranquility in them, and he has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect.*” (30:21)

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) made the standards of goodness in a man in looking at the way he treats his wife. He said once: “*The best among you are those who are good to their wives and families, and I am good to my wives and my family.*”

Marriage is a threefold relationship or contract. It is between a man and a woman and vice versa, between a husband and Allah and between a wife and Allah. This relationship is so important that the Prophet (pbuh) declared it as half of the religion.

A husband and a wife in Islam have more than one relationship with one another. They are a brother and a sister in Islam, partners in the business of raising the children, and responsible in establishing a family as parents. Allah has equipped each one of them with special qualities that reflect in the child’s personality. Children take after their parents in faith, mercy, principles, morals, compassion, responsibility, respect, awareness, justice and also attitude...etc.

In the treatment of children, there are many chapters and verses as well as many authentic *Hadiths* where the guidelines for a sound and blessed upbringing of children are laid out. As mentioned previously, the parents are responsible for their children until they reach the age of maturity or they get married. Thus, it is a religious duty upon parents to nurture and educate their children in the best possible manner. To make it simple and easy for the parents, Islam categorizes for them the areas of upbringing they should focus on the most. Islam wants to produce strong individuals in a sane environment – at least in a sane and immune family atmosphere – in order to have a strong society. The strength is in the spiritual, the physical and the intellectual aspects. This means to implant in the children the Iman, or faith, to feed them and to look constantly after their health and to educate and instill in them the necessary tools and skills to allow them to think, to be productive, and to become independ-

ent to a certain extent.

However, the Qur’an emphasizes more on the spiritual aspect because the responsibility of teaching Islam and Iman extends to the Hereafter. One of the verses in the Qur’an reads as follows, “*O you who believe! Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire –Hell – whose fuel is people and stones, over which are appointed angels stern and severe, who disobey not the commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded.*” (66:6) This Aayah makes a concerned person shiver because of the double responsibility, which means the double reckoning on the Day of Judgment. Every parent who believes in Allah and the Hereafter should constantly do as Luqman did with his son (as mentioned in Chapter Luqman, 31). In that chapter, a person can find the basic principles of Iman that should nourish the soul of one’s child.

Family is not the goal to Akhiraah, but one of the good means to it. However, it could also be the opposite. Children, husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters are blessings for one another, but they can be of a great trial to one another. That is why knowing the rights and duties of each one of them is a must.

Allah (swt) says, “*O you who believe! Verily, among your spouses and your children are your enemies who may stop you from the obedience of Allah; therefore beware of them! But if you pardon them and overlook and forgive their faults, then verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful. Your wealth and your children are only a trial, whereas Allah with Him there is a great reward.*” (64:14-5)

He also says, “*Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world. But the good righteous deeds – such as the remembrance of Allah, the five daily prayers, and the good behavior – that last, are better with your Lord for rewards and better in respect of hope.*” (18:46)

Trials come in different forms and kinds, but one of the main shields is the awareness of the tricks of Satan and how he manifests himself and uses people against each other. Allah warned us as individuals, husbands, wives, children, parents and communities to take all the measures to weaken the devil and to vanquish his purpose.

When Adam (Peace be upon him) started his life on earth, it was with his family. And the major challenge of that family according to the Qur’an was the challenge of their enemy Iblis, or Satan. Jealousy and rebellion were the sins that took Satan out of Heaven and they were also the reason why one of Adam’s sons – Qaabeel, or Cain, killed his brother – Haabeel, or Abel. Jealousy between

the brothers or the sisters is heated by Satan; Mistrust and disrespect between the husbands and wives infiltrate through Satan; Mental and physical abuse of the children by the parents is also the work of Satan; Rebellion, disobedience and disrespect of the parents by the children is cheered by Satan.

Miscommunication and anger are shared problem in all the above examples and Satan uses them as bridges to cause Fitnah and destroy all kinds of relationship including Family relationship. Therefore, we recommend nipping the root of evil at the beginning of a quarrel or a misunderstanding, by clearing away miscommunication and cooling anger. The best way to do that is by remembering Allah and saying, “*A’udhu billahi mina as-Shaytaani ar-Rajeem!*”, which means, “*I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil*”. This will help us all, Insha Allah, to have the constant awareness of Allah, and lead us to join the rank of *Muttaqeen*, (people with Taqwa) of whom Allah described as His faithful happy servants. “*And those who say: ‘Our Lord! Bestow on us from our spouses and our offspring the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders of the Muttaqun.*” (19:74)

I AM YOUR CHILD

Born of blood, of pain, and dust
A child born a man
Forged by the hands of the
unjust - I am your child

Tanks and bombs cannot
shake me
Far more than a man
Your soldiers will never
break me - I am your child

Injustice makes me stronger
Stronger every day
Blood just increases my
hunger - I am your child

The song of justice will
appease me
A song you won't sing
In your prison, death just
frees me - I am your child

With Every mothers tears
My thirst increases
You have created your
worst fears - I am your child

A phoenix from the ashes
I will rise again
Pour the gas, I light the
matches- I am your child
Never did you understand
all my suffering
Now the child has become
a man - I am your child
I am——— INTIFADA
Indira Rai-Choudhury, Esq,
Attorney at Law

Radio Islam
Your communities' Voice
on the Air
Every Sunday 7-8 pm
AM 1540 / FM 101.3
Major Islamic personalities on
Air every week
www.RadiIslam.ca

Martyrs and Heroes

Some Reflections on Suicide Bombing

by Dr. Mohamed Elmasry

Suicide bombing was first practiced by Japanese kamikaze (meaning "divine wind") fighter plane pilots during World War II. Palestinians did not invent it.

In fact, they waited until 1995 — a full 28 years after Israel's illegal occupation of their land in 1967 — to use it as a means of armed resistance to end the occupation. Palestinians call suicide bombings "amaliyya istishhadiyya" (or "martyr operations") to give the actions a religious dimension. They consider the operatives, who pay with their lives as human bombs, heroes.

But the Palestinians are not unique in their methods. Throughout history, people who have resisted occupation and oppression through extreme means were, and are, called heroes and martyrs.

In his book *The Jews and the Crusaders* Shlomo Eidelberg tells us that in 1096 CE, "the Jews who fought the Crusaders reflect the typical fate of the self-defender." In a desperate move to free his people from Christian mistreatment, a young Jewish man named Simcha ha-Cohen (a highly revered priestly name in Hebrew) "drew a knife and murdered the nephew of the local bishop." He too was labelled a terrorist by his oppressors, but a resistance hero by Rabbi Eliezer bar Nathan, one of the foremost Jewish chroniclers of the time. Like other Jewish historians, he considered all Jews who were killed while fighting the advancing Crusaders as martyrs for their faith.

What else can Palestinians call those who choose to die for a free Palestine, except heroes and martyrs? And what else can Israelis call them, except terrorists, killers and murderers? Yet although such naming is important to both sides of the conflict in advancing their political agendas, it is hardly helpful to describe or change reality.

The Arab-Israeli war of 1973 is called by many in the West the October War. But it was given a religious dimension by both combatants: in Israel it is called the Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement war,) while in the Arab world it is called "harb ramadan," the War of Ramadan, after the Islamic month in which it was launched. But a larger reality now is the ongoing 34-year-old Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands in the West Bank and Gaza. It is a text-book occupation story, in which invading forces spread death, misery, and destruction, while the population under their power tries to resist.

The occupation forces use a greatly superior (and lethal) military machine, along with its propaganda, its political clout, and its economic power, to justify acts of terror and to pressure the subjected population to surrender their rights. This is called "terrorism from above." Its operatives are well-protected, flying thousands of feet above in F-16s, or concealed inside the cockpits of sophisticated killing machines like helicopter gunships and tanks.

As a result, the people under occupation strike back with any means available, against soldiers in uniform, soldiers on leave, and armed settlers.

They consider any civilian casualties on either side to be the full responsibility of the occupying government, whose aggression is the cause root of violence.

During World War II, Hitler's armies occupied most of Europe, using sheer military might to spread Nazism. Resistance movements, armed not only with scavenged weapons, but also with courage, hope, persistence and ingenuity, opposed Hitler and were instrumental in preparing the way for Allied forces to defeat the Third Reich. To accomplish this, resistance fighters — men, women, children, even the elderly — often had to resort to what we today would call terrorist acts in the absence of any other alternatives to regaining their peoples' freedom.

When German occupation forces retaliated by wiping out local resistance cells, they killed many innocent men, women and children, even destroying entire villages. Yet military reprisals did not crush that desire for freedom; resistance members were regarded as underground heroes.

Despite their own historical experience of being oppressed, Israel's leaders still seem not to have grasped that their 34-year occupation of Palestinian territories and the crude "finders-keepers" method of planting armed settlements on them, is wholly responsible for creating and sustaining the environment of terror in which several generations of young Palestinian have grown up.

Born as children of war, and now in their late teens, twenties and thirties, they exist as hopeless and helpless adults with no prospects of contributing to normal society. Many young Palestinians, like their peers anywhere in the world, yearn for meaning in life: if given the choice between death, and merely existing as virtual prisoners under armed occupation, death is often seen as the better alternative.

Military might cannot prevent resistance movements from arising among occupied peoples, nor can soldiers stamp them out unless virtually everyone dies in the process, as happened to the Jewish defenders of Masada when Roman armies attacked this landmark fortress in 70 CE.

History has shown over and over again that increasing the combat level of occupation only raises the resistance level. It is almost a scientific formula by now. The unwanted result for today's Israel is that all who die in the struggle for a free Palestine have become martyrs; and all who continue on in the face of death are hailed as freedom-fighters and heroes. It does not matter that their oppressors label them as killers or terrorists. It is another text book case, like the Irish resisting the British, the Algerians resisting the French, the French resisting the Germans, etc.

Yasser Arafat is the elected and internationally acknowledged leader of the Palestinian people in their struggle for a free and independent nation. To them and their freedom-supporters worldwide, he is a hero while alive (whether at large, imprisoned, or exiled) and — should the Israelis be obscenely foolish enough

to allow or orchestrate his death — a martyr. Thus, Israel's leaders have lost their moral credibility, despite retaining unbelievably strong American economic, political and military support.

This is a many-layered tragedy for Jews and Palestinians, for on the bottom line, both continue to pay the lessons of history with their own people's lives.

But this occupation will end — it is only a matter of when, not if. History is on the side of the Palestinians and the illegal occupiers of their land will end up like numerous oppressors before them.

[Dr. Mohamed Elmasry is a professor at the University of Waterloo and national president of the Canadian Islamic Congress. He can be reached at np@canadianislamiccongress.com]

Aug. 3rd, Muslim Family Day at Canada's Wonderland

As one of the largest minorities in Canada we are a people who are virtually unknown and mostly misunderstood. We have no one to blame except ourselves, and, of course, some elements of the media. Most minorities strive to make their presence felt so that the mainstream takes notice of them in a positive light.

"It is high time Muslims made their presence felt in Canada," says Asad Dean, the the Director of United Muslims and Host of the Radio Islam. "We at Radio Islam realized that there are over eleven days dedicated to minorities at Canada's Wonderland."

As it stands there are hundreds of Muslim youth working there and thousands more have season passes. In the Greater Toronto Area there are over 350,000 Muslims residing according to conservative estimates. As Muslims we have a limited amount of entertainment avenues open to us compared to our fellow citizens due to our religious restrictions. The youth especially feel this, as do families. Wonderland is a place families could enjoy and it could turn out to be a wonderful healthy social venue for us.

"We have made the arrangements for prayers for brothers and sisters with proper tents and washroom facilities. Halal food will be made available in the prayer area, which will also have benches for mothers and children to relax in the shade. In the evening we will have a performance

making a, Br. s told. Africa cting rmed uf Is- nilies their Asad. ward tend- p day

Helpful Hints

by Sister Shirin Patel

Q
A

I pray most of the time, and I'd say I'm a pretty good Muslim. My mom recently passed away, why is God trying to hurt me?

My sincere condolences about your mom, may the Almighty keep her in peace, Ameen. You have to try and understand something which is vital to understanding our purpose in life all together. We are put on this earth temporarily. During our unknown time on this earth, we're faced with trials and tested in many different ways. For some it's a great amount of wealth, for others it's poverty and in this case it's the loss of your mother. When the Almighty wants to favor someone He tries them with hardship but no more than they can bear. The reward for bearing whatever comes our way with patience is an eternity of happiness with those we love. Don't think of your mom as gone forever, because Insha'Allah you will be with those you love. But for the time being, try and keep your faith strong, and remember that this life is nothing but a trial. We will indeed all die one day, some sooner than later and it doesn't mean because we die Allah is trying to hurt us or our family. It's just a reality of life and a test for those who have to go through it. Continually pray so your mom is in peace, feeling the breeze of Jannah. Insha'Allah. Heaven is promised for those who bear the loss of a loved one with patience, so do yourself, your family and your mom a favor and look for a brighter day. It's natural to feel hurt, and angered but in the end you will truly wrong yourself if you let your hurt get the better of you/your faith in the Allah. May the Almighty make it easy for you and your family to bear this trial, and may He keep your mother in peace. Ameen

Q
A

I studied hard and made lots of dua for this big Math test I had, but I still did badly. Do you think Allah didn't hear my dua? Or maybe He's mad at me for something?

Allah hears and sees ALL, so don't ever think otherwise! Basically, all you can ever do is make an effort and pray to Allah for help. If your results are not what you'd had like don't be in despair. Trust that the Almighty knows what's best for you and is indeed the best of Planners. Perhaps this just means that math isn't your thing so don't make a living out of it. Or maybe you didn't do your homework? You know what they say: "practice makes you perfect". Don't be discouraged though, if you fail, try, and try again until you succeed. Believe it or not it is possible! Don't assume Allah isn't listening, or is "mad" at you. Take it as a test of your faith, and it was just meant to be. It's a math test, you'll have more of them, don't worry. Just keep making the effort and doing sincere supplication...Insha'Allah after that be very glad with whatever your results are. May Allah make it easy for you. Ameen.

Muslims, Christians join at World Youth Day

United Muslims along with the COMO (Coalition of Muslim Organizations), and the Council of Imams are also having a joint Muslim and Christian event on youth reconcil-

that are packed with Music concerts and do not enforce the Muslim identity.

Br. Abdul Hai Patel of the Council of Imams and Br. Abdul Haq Ingar of the Coalition of Muslim Organizations has been key elders in encouraging The United Muslims to provide this wonderful opportunity. Imam Abdul Hai Patel personally attended meeting with Wonderland management to emphasize the need of a prayer facility on this day and other days for the Muslim staff.

Many mosques and organizations are endorsing this event. For the purchase of tickets everyone can pre-register online at www.radioislam.ca or contact their local Masjids, all Popeye's outlets and some other outlets around the city.

For any questions or info, contact by email at info@radioislam.ca or call United Muslims at 416-916-1479. A minimum turnout of 3000 people is required to permanently get this day reserved for the Muslim community, inshallah.

ing with God on **July 25th at the CNE** during the World Youth day event. This will also be another opportunity to show our fellow Canadians how we as Muslims have so much in common with Christians who make up the majority of Canada. This will help to reduce the misunderstanding and ignorance of our faith and the prejudice many Muslim youths have faced after the events of September 11th.

We would also encourage those who wish to volunteer in our events to contact us at info@radioislam.ca or call United Muslims at 416-916-1479.

(Radio Islam can be listened to on Sundays 7-8 PM, Chin Radio AM1540.)

Pass this copy
of The Ambition
to a friend
after reading.
Help us bring
the message of
Islam to others

Around the World

Kashmir — Is It The End Of The Tunnel?

By Aasiya Amir

It was a heaven — turned into hell! And the world just watches as a bystander. There aren't many analogies in history to draw for Kashmir. In the recent weeks and months, the rising tension between India and Pakistan has brought both countries, their arch-rivalry, and Kashmir on headlines in the international media—and not for the first time. What most viewers however, are not being told is the real story beyond the diplomatic/political scuffle.

Kashmir — the fateful land is, for purpose of general understanding, divisible into Azad Kashmir [the province which has its own free-elected government] & Indian-occupied province of Jammu and Kashmir. Azad Kashmir has an elected government with strong ties to Pakistan. The State of Jammu/Kashmir has since 1947, via the territorial designs of the then-Maharajah (ruler) of Kashmir, fallen under the control of India.

Since then, there is no turning back. Indian military has never cleared out of Jammu and Kashmir, in spite of a series of local revolts, UN interventions and protests by Pakistan—which was logically a party to the dispute on question of the State's accession in 1947.

The root of the dispute was planted when in trade of military help by the government of India, "The Instrument of Accession" was signed by Maharajah Hari Singh in 1947 to suppress the local revolt against his rule. At this time, Lord Mountbatten, as the first governor General of India said: *it is my government's wish that as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil cleared of the invaders the question of state's accession should be settled by a reference to the people.* The Kashmir's population at that time was 90% Muslim and they were obviously expected to give a verdict in favor of joining Pakistan if given a chance. This was unacceptable to India.

Later, Jawahar Lal Nehru also reaffirmed the same wishes saying: "

We have declared that the fate of Kashmir is ultimately to be decided by the people. That pledge we have given, and the Maharajah has supported it, not only to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, but also to the world. We will not and cannot back out of it. We are prepared when peace and law have been established to have a referendum held under international auspices like the United Nations. We want it to be a fair and just reference to the people and we shall accept their verdict."

Contrary to the well-worded claims above — history stands witness — numerous UN resolutions and two wars later, India has always stalled any efforts made towards the progress of holding a plebiscite — the original and the most universally accepted solution. Unfortunately for the world and for the people of Kashmir, India's successive governments have all acted hypocritically on this issue. On one hand, India has signed two agreements (Tashkent in 1966, Shimla in 1972) with Pakistan in which she agreed to resolve the Kashmir dispute through bilateral and peaceful means. On the other hand, Indian constitution declares that "the state of Jammu and Kashmir is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India."

The current uprising of the people of Kashmir started out as a protest against inefficiency, electoral fraud, corruption and religious discrimination. The movement gained significant strength from 1987 to 1990 when the atrocities of Indian Army kept increasing and the threshold of the civilian's patience or submission broke violently. Major riots broke out in Srinagar and other key cities and India poured additional military reinforcements, now bringing the estimated number of army personnel to a 700,000.

Time and again, updates from the non-biased journalist reports, UN peace-keeping organizations, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch & other such international bodies suggest that this is an internal war — a war of the Kashmiri peo-

ple for their right to live freely in their native land and that it will not come to an end until they have a government of their own choice. The Kashmiri people have taken to arms because their trampled Muslim majority has never wanted to be a part of India, or accept any Indian presence on their soil.

India has always accused Pakistan for fuelling the fire of freedom movement in Kashmir. Pakistan's standpoint has always been clear and it has never once betrayed its intentions of accepting the Kashmiri peo-



ple's right of self-determination. If the world was brought witness in a court of history and sworn truthfulness, all countries will testify that India has often backed out of its words, has tried to add hurdles towards a reasonable solution of this issue, and even stopped UN and other such neutral organizations to even enter and get a first-hand knowledge or picture of the fateful land more than once.

It is a known fact that a large number of Kashmiris, who could no longer bear the abused burden of life in occupied Kashmir, have often tried and successfully entered Northern areas of Pakistan as refugees. Being a neighboring country, following and upholding the moral ideals of Islam, helping their brethren in the hour of difficulty, Pakistan has provided them shelter. Logically, most countries in the world, including Canada do not refuse refugees who flee their coun-

try for fear of life. The reason of Kashmiris flowing into Pakistan then is the oppressive rule of Indian regimes in Indian-Occupied Kashmir, and not any under-hand program on the side of Pakistan. Today, the Indian propagandists are busy telling the world that the Kashmir conflict is a religious war initiated by Muslim fundamentalists and they show the Pandit refugees as the evidence. Of course many Pandits are not happy with this state of affairs and do try to speak out, but their voices are usually silenced

More recently, India is turning horrific as an oppressor in Kashmir. Why their forces are still there and how in the face of such a large military task force does a freedom movement of meager means survive are the major leads into fact-finding of this horror story. There are about 700,000 Indian troops in the occupied Kashmir to silence the voices of the natives. There are horrendous stories of Indian occupation army's atrocities

such as gang rapes, burning of entire villages and crops, destruction of economic life of the whole communities and genocide of the Kashmiri people!

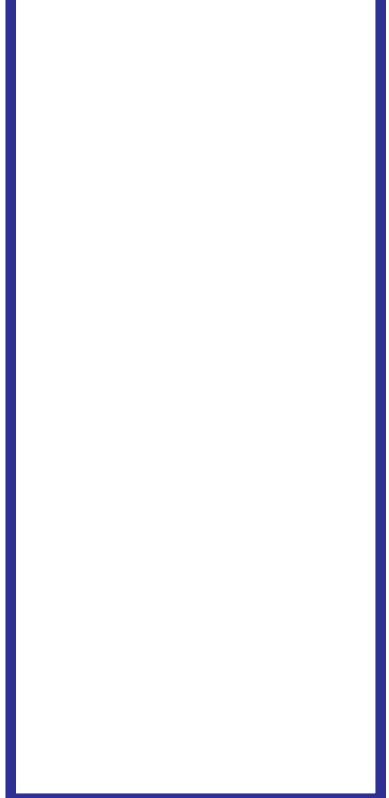
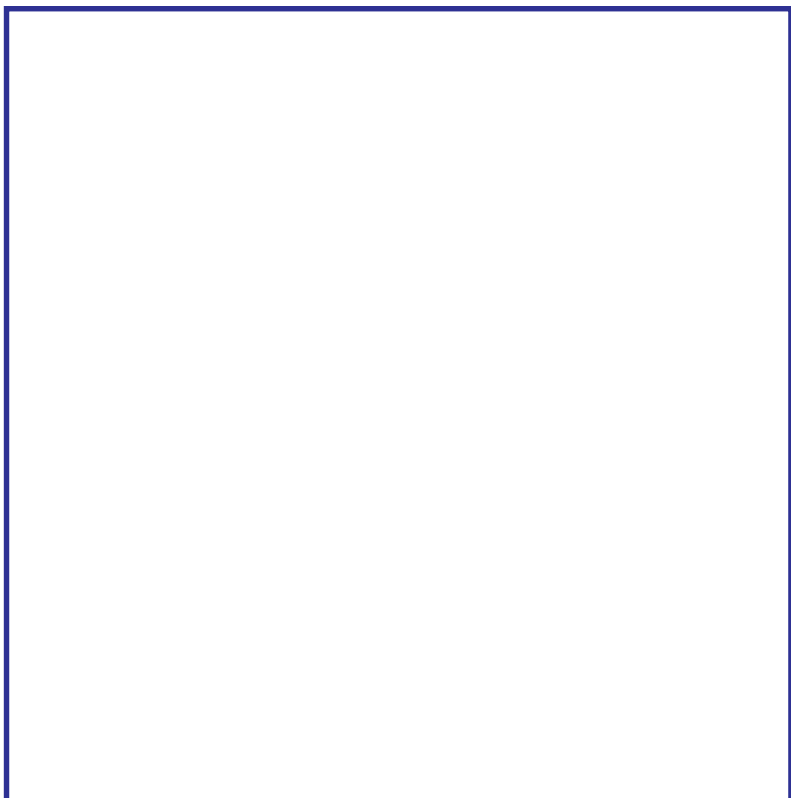
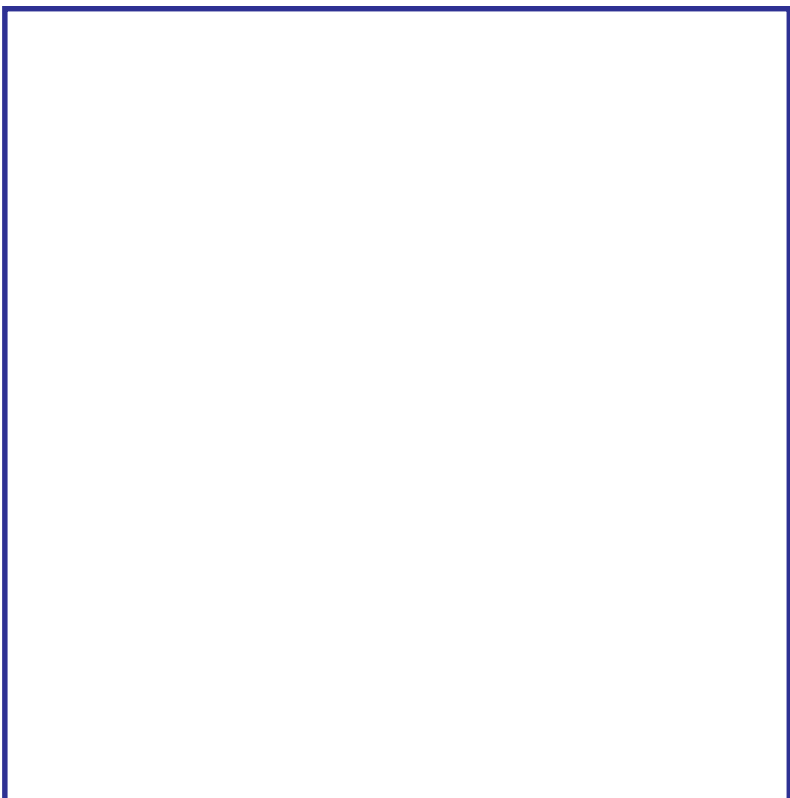
Amnesty international has also recorded gross accounts of political and extra judicial killings, torture and custodial abuse of the innocent-gone-to-arms under the cover of "militant terrorists", unspeakable crimes against women involving rapes and molestation carried out by agents of the state, including state police, central police force and military or paramilitary forces. An estimated one million women have either been bereaved, tortured or humiliated and beaten up or killed; many hundreds have been subjected to barbaric sexual assaults. Sexual harassment is used as a weapon to subvert people into submission. Victims in custody are treated as bodies of flesh and bones. The punishment starts at

the time of arrest; abusive language is used and rifle-butts are struck on their legs. In the interrogation centers they are tortured by methods only unique to the Indian army. Since 1989, the Indian forces stationed in Kashmir have killed an estimated 50,000 Kashmiris. The Indian Forces have been given a free hand to kill any person they choose under the Jammu And Kashmir Disputed Areas Act, which gives them the liberty of unlimited use of power against the "suspected" militants.

The Kashmiri sons and daughters are living a nation's worst nightmare, they have put their lives, their souls, and their integrity on the line of freedom and are persevering the most heinous crimes against humanity. But not for long now! What we all Must believe is that this ongoing war of heroism and insanity, of spirit of freedom vs. territorial lust will soon come to a justifiable end and it will NOT betray the history of mankind which has proven many times that, in the words of Napoleon Bonaparte, "There are only two powers in the world — the sword and the spirit. In the long run, the sword is always defeated by the spirit".

World leaders exploited War on Terrorism: Amnesty

After September 11th it seems that governments around the world took some serious actions. Amnesty International includes Britain and the United States among these. They rushed through repressive new laws, increased the role of the military and promoted a harmful climate of racism. They hurried through new legislations and laws, banning organisations and freezing their assets. They are curbing civil rights and reducing safeguards against violations. Amnesty International's annual report tells us that they defend their actions by exploiting the horror of the September 11 attacks to curb human rights in the name of security.



Chechnya, the forgotten genocide in the heart of Europe

On 1 October 1999, the Russian Federation invaded the Chechen Republic. It was the second time in the space of four years, and the umpteenth time since the first invasion in 1722. Many factors were used to justify this new neo-colonial undertaking in Chechnya to the eyes of the Russian people and of international public opinion: the tottering regime, a wave of bloody attacks (almost 300 deaths) immediately attributed to the Chechen terrorists although no proof has ever been found (quite the contrary!), a raid by Bashaev, the Chechen warlord, and the need to push the new Kremlin hard line.

1,000 days and 1,000 nights of occupation and devastation have gone by since then. The Chechen people have been the victims of rape, massacre, theft, rounding-up, torture, summary execution, and extortion. 1,000 days, 1,000 nights, 100,000 deaths, tens of thousands of people wounded, mutilated, and traumatised. 400,000 refugees. Grozny razed to the ground, children without schools and without teachers, workers without factories, farmers exiled from their mined land.

1,000 days and 1,000 nights in which this small corner of Europe, the size of Tuscany, has become an area without rights, an area in which all laws and all the international conventions are suspended. Where the only law is that of the death squads, of the Kontraktniks and the war profiteers in the Russian army and the Kremlin offices. 1,000 days and 1,000 nights in which the European Union

and its Member States have become the accomplices of this genocide.

In Canada, the "great" countries of the world are meeting to consider the future of the world, or so they tell us. Will they be capable, on the 1,000th day of genocide in the heart of Europe, to lend an ear and respond to the umpteenth appeal from Mr. Maskhadov, the legitimate President of Chechnya? Or will they prefer once again to pretend to believe the criminal claim that the Chechens were fighting in Afghanistan by the side of the Talebans? For the survivors in Chechnya and for Russian democracy this is nothing less than a question of life or death. Is it the same for us, the democrats of the West?"

An abridged statement by Olivier Dupuis, Member of the European Parliament.

Source: www.radicalparty.org

Stop Fascism in India, Now!

Much time has passed, and no international relief organisation has started any relief work in Gujarat despite requests made by Human Right Watch. Over six thousand Muslims in Gujarat, India, have been killed while thousands are missing. More than 210,000 are living in refugee camps, and property damage has been estimated at over 40 billion rupees. Although the killing, looting, and burning continue, Indian media does not cover these issues and the Indian government has failed to bring an end to the genocide.

The police are not helping in bringing justice into the lives of many who protested and gave information about killers and rapists. The Human Rights Organization (<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/india/>) confirm that Hindus, with full support from Indian police forces and the state and national governments, are destroying Gandhi's India and putting in peril its one billion inhabitants. It is the duty of all peace loving people to put pressure on India. What can you do?

The best thing to do at the moment is volunteer your time and money, and organize a long-term struggle against Hindu fascism. Along with that, establish a dialog with Hindu-Americans to develop a broader anti fascist alliance. See <http://www.ektaonline.org/cac/>. Start a dialog with NOW, www.now.org, regarding the campaign of rape of Muslim Indian women during the current ethnic cleansing. See also: <http://www.imannet.com/articles/survivorspeak.html> It is very important to educate Muslims of other backgrounds so they understand what is going on. Approach masjids that cater to various ethnic groups in the Muslim community, they can also help in this effort. Form an ImanNet group in your city or masjid

by Ayesha Ahmad

Washington, May 23 (IslamOnline) According to a report released Thursday, May 23, by a European racism-monitoring body, Islamic communities and other vulnerable groups have become targets of increased hostility since 11 September, said Bob Purkiss, the chair of the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC).

A greater sense of fear among the general population has exacerbated already existing prejudices and fuelled acts of aggression and harassment across Europe.

The new report, entitled Islamophobia in the EU, which was presented at the European Commission, reviews changes in attitudes and acts against Muslims from September 11 until the end of the year 2001, according to an EUMC press release.

"An atmosphere has been created where Muslims have to justify themselves that they are not terrorists," Beate Winkler, director of the Vienna-based EUMC, was quoted as saying in a report by Agence France-Presse (AFP).

"There have been verbal attacks widely reported in all [European Union] member states," she said during a press conference. "Especially, women and young people in schools have been victims and targets" of these attacks.

The EUMC began a program of monitoring racism against Muslims September 12, 2001, according to the report. National Focal Points (NFPs) in each of the 15 EU member states were asked to look at acts of violence and aggression, as well as changes in attitude, of the EU populations towards Muslims and any other group that might become a new target related to the events of September 11.

Racism and xenophobia against Muslims and others after 9/11 were more prominent in Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, Winkler said in the AFP report; in other states, notably Austria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal, little increase in xenophobic sentiment from before September 11 was noted. Denmark noted that much of what occurred post-September 11 drew heavily upon pre-exist-

that will participate in the following:

- Distributing ImanNet Action Alerts in print
- Adopting one international human rights or refugee organization for the next six months to begin a dialog on human rights in India.
- Organizing an exhibit to inform Muslims in your area.
- Donating for the ongoing efforts.
- Putting up flyers for ImanNet.com on the notice boards at masjids.

*He who kneels before Allah
...
... of life, the
... ma — but
... period.*

Increased Hostility Against EU Muslims Since Sept. 11

ent manifestations of widespread Islamophobic and xenophobic attitudes. In Denmark, Austria, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands, among others, the separate country reports noted that women who wore hijab (Islamic headcovering) were particularly vulnerable to attacks because they were visually identifiable as Muslims.

The hijab seems to have become the primary visual identifier as a target for hatred, the report said, with Muslim women being routinely abused and attacked across those countries in the EU where Muslim women could be identified in this way. This occurred even in Portugal,

although it was limited to verbal assaults in other countries, Muslim women were reported to have been spat at or had their hijabs ripped off. But in Portugal, the NFP related the extremely low levels of hostility to the historical relationship between Portugal and Islam [and] the integration of Portuguese Muslims into wider society.

Other acts of aggression included death threats, vandalism and destruction of mosques and other Muslim establishments, stereotyped media reports and a sharp increase in anti-Islam messages and postings on the Internet.

However, the report also took note of positive reactions and steps taken by EU populations, such as appeals from government officials and interfaith, intercultural dialogues.

In Sweden, a Swedish Committee Against Islamophobia was launched; the UK's NFP cited sensitive policing and co-operation in crime prevention between police forces and local Muslim communities as a factor in reducing attacks while Prime Minister Tony Blair condemned such attacks very strongly; and Austria's NFP found that dialogues between Muslim and Christian communities in Vienna opened a range of seminars and discussions. The report makes recommendations to the EU nations based on these examples of good practice in overcoming fears and tackling prejudice, calling on communities to host cultural events, universities to host lectures and discussions and other faith communities to get involved in interfaith programs.

Gujrat: The Rural Trauma

By Dionne Bunsha,

www.frontlineonnet.com

"CLEANSE the village of cow-eaters. Remove all Muslims. Chase them and kill them," the loudspeaker blared out this grim message in Pandharvada village in Panchmahal, where the Vishwa Hindu Parishad was holding a public meeting. Personnel of the local police and a district official, who were present there, sat on the sidelines, drinking tea or talking, soaking in the atmosphere. Pandharvada's Muslims stayed away, fearing the worst. Three weeks later, VHP supporters carried out their threat. Around 21 people were killed when the Muslim bastis in the village were burned. The survivors fled. The VHP had achieved its end.

Akhtar Husain Sayyed, who survived the Pandharvada attack, narrates this chilling tale in Godhra, 85 km from his village, where he has taken shelter in a relative's house. Two members of his family are missing. His mother and sister escaped being burned alive by a mob led by a local Bharatiya Janata Party activist.

The elderly Nathubhai Sheikh saw his two sons being hacked to death. When a mob attacked Muslims in Pandharvada, he ran into the fields where he saw his two sons being attacked with swords. His third son is missing. "I hid in the wilderness for a few days, until the military found me and took me to the Lunawada relief camp. From there, one of my relatives from Godhra brought me to his house," he said.

In the violence that followed the burning of a compartment of the Sabarmati Express, rural Gujarat witnessed heinous attacks on Muslims. It is for the first time that communal violence has spread to tribal districts such as Panchmahal and Sabarkantha. In the 1990 and 1992 communal riots, other areas in rural Gujarat were affected but not these districts. This time, however, since the attacks are apparently part of the Sangh Parivar's diabolic design, the 'cleansing' process has been extended to villages. Most cases of violence were well-orchestrated attacks. They did not involve a clash between two communities. Muslims were systematically hunted and attacked.

Refugees in India between a rock and a hard place

The Indian government is planning to shut down all refugee camps in Gujarat by the end of June. This despite the fact that many of the over 250,000 refugees in these camps have nowhere to go or are too frightened to leave. The government says it will stop all supply of food and water to these camps.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_2058000/2058725.stm

The government's compensation plan for lost lives and property is not compelling enough to motivate people to return to their homes. One man said it was not even enough to buy plastic sheeting to protect a family from the rain.

Some Muslims say they have chosen to stay on in relief camps because they have been warned by Hindu neighbours not to return. Muslims who have dared to return home say they have been shocked by the graffiti on the walls of their houses and mosques warning them of further attacks.

<http://indiaabroad.rediff.com/news/2002/jun/22train.htm>

Jenin, Jenin

Jenin, Jenin
I hear my sisters crying
Jenin, Jenin
I see my brothers falling.
Under rumble of their homes
They breathe their last prayer
In the soil of their land
They shed their final tear

Jenin, Jenin
I woke up in a sweat
Jenin, Jenin
I saw my sister dying.
In her nurses uniform
She went out on the road.
She'd heard his anguished
screams
But they shot her down so cold.

Jenin, Jenin
I see their bloodied hands.
Jenin, Jenin
On bills from western land.
It'll buy them the shells
That are buried in our hearts.
It'll take away our land
And rip our lives apart.

Jenin, Jenin
I feel a new day's rising
Jenin, Jenin
I know the justice coming

Joel Winter

Newsroom

CIC Organises Canadian Islam Awareness Week

The Canadian Islamic Congress is organizing a national "Canadian Islam Awareness (TM) Week", October 20 - 27, 2002.

In anticipation of national recognition for this country's 650,000 Muslims, the CIC has trademarked the name "Canadian Islam Awareness" and is already planning a national week of special events to "provide opportunities for Canadians to reflect on and learn more about all facets of Islam."

Canadian Islam Awareness Week would showcase the true diversity of this country's multicultural reality, since Muslims in Canada come not only from the Middle East, but can also trace their origins back to Europe, Africa, the Americas, Asia and Aboriginal nations.

The Congress has previously stated that "it is appropriate to establish Canadian Islam Awareness Week in October each year, the week following Canadian Thanksgiving, to mark the contributions of Canadian Muslims — their faith, culture, his-

tory and arts." It would also provide an ideal opportunity for Muslim countries, especially those represented through the diplomatic community, to share their heritage, culture, history, and arts.

In 2002, Canadian Islam Awareness Week is being planned for the week of October 20. A detailed calendar of events will be posted at the CIC web page:

<http://www.canadianislamiccongress.com> and registration of events can be done by logging on: <http://www.canadianislamiccongress.com/addevent.php>

Muslim communities from coast to coast are being invited to organize local activities to be added to the national calendar of events.

Among several first-ever events being planned for this year Canadian Islam Awareness Week, will be a series of public Qur'anic recitations hosted by the CIC in several major Canadian cities, featuring professional reciters from Canada and abroad.

In the Muslim world, leading Qur'anic reciters are celebrities and their beautiful vocal presentations of Islamic holy scripture draw large audiences of Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Mississauga youth take the lead

Reported by Ayesha Jawaid

A brilliant conference was presented by the Mississauga youth, which was unique in the sense that it was organized by a group of young, dedicated and hard working high school students.

An event unlike any other, it was attended by Muslims as well as non-Muslims from various backgrounds of knowledge with a goal to learn, acquire and apply. The great panelist of speakers consisted of Hussein Hamdani, Yonette Duarte, Asma Ali, Romineh Dawood, Mashelle Kaukab, Omar Rashid, Hasrat Ghafoor, Jeewan Chanicka and key-note speaker Abdul-Rehman Malik, who gave effective tips, taught basic and important skills and inspired the young audience.

The speakers addressed four main topics: "Public Speaking", "Time Management and Goal Setting", "Conflict Resolution" and "Inter-personal Skills".

The audience of approximately 150 were in awe and taken away by the amazing organization of this unique event. Sr. Maria, a participant, comments: "I have never been to an event like this before, I think it was really good, and I am so happy I decided to come!"

The event was organized strictly by dedicated youth who did everything from A to Z with the help of their advisor, Sumble Kaukab, a secondary school teacher. Starting with no funds they eventually managed to acquire a beautiful venue, lots of great food, and informational packages that gave the event a well-deserved professional look. Also present were several community organizations such as MYNA, Young Muslims, CAIR Canada and many MSA booths from high schools and universities alike.

The conference underlined an Islamic basis that emphasized the necessity of leadership amongst our community, and especially amongst the new generation as Canadian Muslims. Everyone left with a sense of confidence, strength and perseverance. A brother from Erindale S.S. commented: "This conference was GREAT...really! Can you give me some information on how to start an MSA at my high school?" If this young group of dedicated leaders were able to address the community with such a great accomplishment, then it is time for us all to get up, get active, and become the leaders of tomorrow!

National Muslim Group offers Islamic perspective on Stem Cell research

Group says new Bill 'does a reasonable job of balancing competing ethical interests'

(The Canadian office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-CAN) has offered an Islamic perspective on the stem cell research debate. It welcomed certain provisions of the government's proposed new human reproduction Bill and expressed reservations regarding others.

The Bill, tabled on Friday, May 10, 2002, forbids the creation of embryos expressly for research purposes and all forms of cloning. Under the new law, researchers will have to apply to a new agency for access to extra embryos that will be discarded at fertility clinics. Full consent must be given by the couple, and no money can be

exchanged for the creation or use of the embryos. The law would also ban all forms of commercial surrogacy, including the selling of human sperm or egg.

The Islamic perspective was articulated by the North American Fiqh Council which comprises Sunni Muslim scholars trained in Islamic jurisprudence. The Fiqh Council ruled last year that embryonic stem cell research was permissible under three conditions:

1) No in-vitro fertilization (IVF) may be performed for the purpose of supplying stem cells for research.

2) Whenever IVF is needed to deal with the problem of infertility, the sperm and ovum must be taken

from a married couple.

3) As fertility clinics fertilize more than one ovum to increase the chances of success, unused embryos that will be destroyed may be used for research provided that this is done in the first few days after fertilization and provided further that the unused embryos are donated without financial return.

The Fiqh Council ruling, which reflects the majority opinion of Islamic scholars worldwide, also emphasized that "whenever possible, research on stem cells taken from adults should be encouraged." Recent advances in adult stem cell research have shown promising results once thought to be possible only through embryonic stem cells.

CAIR-CAN expressed reservations regarding the proposed time limit of 14 days for the development of the embryo outside the uterus. The consensus among Islamic scholars is that the embryo should be used within the first few days of conception.

"Islam fully supports the finding of cures for illnesses such as cancer, Parkinson's disease and juvenile diabetes," stated CAIR-CAN Board member Dr. Wael Haddara.

"Stem cell use, however, must be balanced with the sanctity of life. The new Bill does a reasonable job of balancing competing ethical interests," he added.

Social Justice walk to end Racism, Repression and War

July 20-25th, 2002, from Hamilton to Toronto

The 2002 Amnesty International Report states: "In many parts of the world people have suffered racist attacks because of their appearance and/or their religion. In the name of fighting 'international terrorism', governments have rushed to introduce draconian new measures that threaten the human rights of their own citizens, immigrants and refugees... Such measures are likely to stifle dissent and curtail basic freedoms. For this reason, they must be resisted."

Organized by Homes not Bombs, Toronto Action for Social Change, and Hamilton Action for Social Change - all non-violent direct action groups. For information call 416-651-5800 or e-mail: tasc@web.ca

Pork Gelatin in Kellogg's

After the word spread over the internet that Kellogg's Cornflakes has pork products in it, the company was contacted.

Representative from Kellogg's Consumer Services, Emma Dobbin confirmed that the Kellogg's Brands which contain pork gelatin are Kellogg's Rice Krispies Squares, Kellogg's Rice Krispies Chocolate Squares and Kellogg's PopTarts. Kellogg's Frosted Wheats breakfast cereal contains beef gelatin.

Gelatin is listed on the ingredients panel.

Understanding after Hostility

Albany, NY - Muslims in Capital Region say atmosphere of suspicion after Sept. 11 has given way to acceptance. Last fall, Ahmed Nisar had words of fear and anger hurled at him. "You guys are bombing my country," the convenience store owner heard customers say after Sept 11...

The ugliness unleashed against Muslim convenience store workers in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks on New York and the Pentagon has given way to greater understanding. Shopkeepers who felt the sting of prejudice now say people treat them with more fairness. And police report a dramatic decline in recent months in the number of reports and arrests on charges of bias crimes against Muslims in the Capital Region.

U.S. bomb kills scores of Afghans

KABUL, Afghanistan, July 1 — A source from the Afghan Ministry of Defense told NBC News that a bomb dropped by a U.S. plane killed at least 250 members of an Afghan wedding party in an attack on a village in Uruzgan province southeast of Kabul on Monday. Pentagon officials confirmed that an errant bomb was dropped during a bombing run over a suspected enemy target in southern Afghanistan overnight. U.S. officials also acknowledged there have been reports of civilian casualties but said they have no details yet on the numbers of injured or dead.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.com/news/627086.asp>

All articles in The Ambition are well researched. Being human, we may overlook something. If this happens, please call us and correct our mistakes.

1. Give Allah what's right — not what's left.
2. Man's way leads to a hopeless end — Allah's way leads to an endless hope.
3. A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.

Churches called upon to reach out to Muslims

In response to recent well-publicized remarks by some religious leaders that have been highly critical of Islam, American Baptist Churches USA General Secretary A. Roy Medley is calling on American Baptists to reject such insensitive actions and to affirm their tradition of respect for people of other religions.

In a statement issued today, Medley said, "As General Secretary of the American Baptist Churches, USA, I am deeply saddened by remarks made by some Baptist leaders and other Christians that have maligned the Islamic faith and religion. Historically American Baptists, while deeply committed to the unique truth of the Christian Gospel, have stood for freedom of religious expression and practice. As Baptists we respect the faiths of others and have benefited from dialog and cooperative work with people of other faiths, especially on such issues of common concern as peace and justice."

Food Bazar At TARIC

On the 26th of May, Taric Islamic Centre had a very fun-filled afternoon at its International Food Fair. There was great food and great fun with a crowd of people. As everyone came together, they met old friends and made a couple new ones. With happy chatter and a friendly atmosphere, the event was one to remember!

...Mercy upon them

Continued from page 15

gotta be home by 4 pm sharp, or else!" He squeaks out the last sentence, imitating his mother, and the boys laugh. "But I'll drop you guys over anyway," he adds.

As Ibrahim steps through the front door, the clock strikes five. The house is blanketed with an eerie silence – something Ibrahim is not used to. He wonders where everyone is, feeling a bit lonesome, as he had expected to be greeted with his mother's shouts and angry words. This is usually what happened when he came home late. Instead, he notices a note on the fridge reading, 'We've gone without you after waiting for an hour. There's food in the fridge – some chicken and noodles. Help yourself. We should be home at around ten. Love, Mom.' He looks at the clock – 5:05. Guilt shoots up through Ibrahim's heart, as this is the first time his mother has ever done this. She would always wait for him no matter how late he would come home. Ibrahim decides to meet them up at the mosque instead, and heads back out the door.

It is 5:40 pm by the time Ibrahim parks his car out-

side the Masjid and enters through its front gates. He tries to recall the Du'a said when entering a mosque that his mother had taught him as a child, but his memory fails him. Feeling ashamed, Ibrahim takes off his shoes wearily and places them on the rack beside thirty other pairs.

As he enters the hall, recitations of the Qur'an filter through to his ears. They are beautiful, he thinks, in comparison to the loud noises he has been exposing his ears to all day – peaceful, melodious, and soothing. Ibrahim sits down beside an old man – 'must be in his seventies,' he thinks to himself. The recitation has ended and the boy, a young lad about ten years old, begins to read the translation:

"And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon hardship, and his weaning is in two years – give thanks to Me and to your parents, – unto Me is the final destination." (31:14)

These Words of Allah slap Ibrahim in the face – as though the boy is directing them to him. Ibrahim's heart

softens with the Mercy of Allah, and cries out at him. This is only the beginning of what Ibrahim will find as a "cleansing experience".

The Sheikh, a tall and sturdy man, with greying hairs on his head and beard, rises to thank the boy for his beautiful recitation, and then stands before the crowd of both young and old. He is a powerful, strong and wise man in Ibrahim's eyes, whom Ibrahim has had great respect for since his childhood. The first words that the Sheikh speaks are through a Hadith:

Narrated Abu Hurairah (RA): A man came to Allah's Messenger (SAW) and said, "O Allah's Messenger! Who is more entitled to be treated with the best companionship by me?" The Prophet (SAW) said, "Your mother." The man said, "Who is next?" The Prophet (SAW) said, "Your mother." The man further said, "Who is next?" The Prophet (SAW) said, "Your mother." The man asked (for the fourth time), "Who is next?" The Prophet (SAW) said, "Your father." (Bukhari)

Ibrahim suddenly wakes with a startle – his legs are bare and cold, and he realizes that it was just a dream

– but one that was true, for everything he had seen that day was what had happened the previous day. Getting up, he pulls shut the window and pulls the blanket over himself, and shuts his eyes again, this time begging Allah for His Mercy and Forgiveness:

(The Prophet (pbuh), on the authority of Shaddad bin Aus (RA) has said that the following is the most superior way of asking for forgiveness from Allah. If somebody recites this during the day with **firm faith** in it, and dies on the same day before the evening, he will be from the people of Paradise; and if somebody recites it at night with **firm faith** in it, and dies before the morning, he will be from the people of Paradise.) *O Allah, You are my Lord! None has the right to be worshipped but You. You created me and I am Your slave, and I am faithful to my covenant and my promise (to You) as much as I can. I seek refuge with You from all the evil I have done. I acknowledge before You all the blessings You have bestowed upon me, and I confess to You all my sins. So I entreat You to forgive my sins, for nobody can forgive sins except You. (Bukhari)*

Remembering Death and the Afterlife

Said 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz (*radhi Allahu 'anh*), the pious caliph, in one of his sermons: "For every voyage there must be provisions, therefore adopt the fear of God (*taqwa*) as provisions for your voyage from this World (*dunya*) into the Afterlife (*akhirah*). Be as though you had seen the reward and punishment which God has prepared: harbour longing and fear! Do not suffer your time to grow long for you lest your hearts become hard and you grow submissive before your enemy (the devil), for by God, the person who does not know whether he will awaken at the end of the night, or live through the morning to the evening, can have no high hopes, for it may be that between these times lie the hooks of fate.

How many men have I seen, and have you all seen, who were beguiled by this world; yet contentment is the lot only of he who is certain of deliverance from the punishment of God (exalted is He!). Only the man who is safe from the terrors of the Day of

Arising can be content. As for the person who dresses his or her wound only to be afflicted by another coming from a different direction, how can he be cheerful?

I ask God's protection from enjoining upon you something which I forbid myself, for then my transaction (with God) would be in loss, and my fault would stand revealed, and my indigence would be plain on that Day when wealth and poverty shall stand forth, and when the Scales are erected.

You have been burdened with something which would cause the very stars to fall were they to be charged likewise, and the mountains to melt down and the earth to be riven asunder.

"Know you not that there exists no degree between Heaven and Hell, and that you are voyaging either to one or the other?"

[from "Kitab Dhikr al-Mawt wa ma Ba'dahu" by Imam al-Ghazzali, translated by T.J. Winter, Islamic Texts Society, Cambridge, 1995]

5,000 copies of **The Ambition** are printed and distributed every two months in and around Toronto, including Burlington, Oakville, Erinmills in the West and Oshawa, Markham and Richmond Hill. You can pick up your free copy at many mosques and Muslim grocery stores.

Twenty Pence!!

Several years ago an Imam moved to London, United Kingdom. He often took the bus from his home to the downtown area. Some weeks after he arrived, he had occasion to ride the same bus. When he sat down, he discovered that the driver had accidentally given him a twenty pence (aka 'tuppence') too much change. As he considered what to do, he thought to himself, you better give the twenty pence back. It would be wrong to keep it. Then he thought, "Oh, forget it, it's only tuppence. Who would worry about this little amount? Anyway the bus company already gets

too much fare; they will never miss it. Accept it as a gift from Allah (swt) and keep quiet." When his stop came, the Imam paused momentarily at the door, and then he handed the twenty pence back to the driver and said, "Here, you gave me too much change". The driver with a smile, replied,

"Aren't you the new Imam in this area? I have been thinking lately about going to worship at your Mosque. I just wanted to see what you would do, if I gave you too much change." When the Imam stepped off the bus, his knees be-

Muslims may return under terms

Muslims are under siege in India. After seeing horrific acts committed against their loved ones, they are being forced to sign a document with pre-conditioned terms, if they want to return to whatever is left of their homes.

"They told us we can go back to the village only if we change our religion and become Hindus," said Noor Mohammed, a farmer from the village of Raichha in western Gujarat state.

"We will give up our lives but we will never give up our religion."

Many have been raped and slaughtered by Hindus in small villages. One 19 year old who was raped by three Hindu men in her village, grieves over her family of 14, who were murdered in a forest in Randhikpur village, 160 km (100 miles) north of Gujarat's main city, Ahmedabad.

The Hindus of Kadwal, a village 250 km north of Ahmedabad, have dictated their own terms that Muslims, if return to their home must not kill cows (considered sacred by Hindus) or eat beef and do not allow new Muslims to settle in the village, among others.

came weak and soft, he had to grab the nearest light pole and held on for support, and looked up to the heavens and cried: "Oh Allah, I almost sold You and Islam for twenty pence!"

The Prophet said: "Do not consider even the smallest good deed as unimportant, even if it's only meeting your brother with a cheerful face." - (reported by Abu Dharr.)

Answers to the Quiz

- 1 - A
- 2 - B
- 3 - A
- 4 - C
- 5 - B
- 6 - C

Voice of a destitute and paraplegic person.

Please help J. Iqbal, a legal Canadian entrant on a **Minister's permit** who became completely paraplegic in a car accident. By the Grace of God he survived after long hospitalization. The insurance company has exhausted all the specified fund on his treatment.

Now he totally depends on the community for help. He does not have any access to the OHIP or assistance until 2004.

Please generously spare even a dollar for him. May God help you, bless you and reward you in this world and in the Hereafter. My heartfelt thanks to those who have donated.

Please make cheques payable to:

Javed Iqbal
900 Dufferin St., P.O. Box 24147
Toronto, Ont. Canada M6H 4H6
Tel: 416-516-6686

You may send it **directly** to his bank account no. 3140340, transit no. 16042-004, TD Bank, 948 St. Clair Ave. W., Toronto, Ont. M6C 1C8



FORUM FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

Registered Charity No. 1244390

Invites you to the

**14th Annual Islamic Dawah Conference
in Canada**

The conference followed by a workshop will be held from 13 to 14 July and conducted by Br. Daud Musa Pidcock. This workshop is one you wouldn't want to miss. It's open to brothers and sisters and the admission is free.

Venue: OISE Auditorium

252 Bloor St. W., Toronto (St. George Subway)

2PM-8.30PM (Saturday)

1PM-8.30PM (Sunday)

SPEAKERS: *DR. JAMAL BADAWI * IMAM SIRAJ WAHHAJ *DR. ABDULLAH HAKIM QUICK *DR. AHMAD SAKR * BR. DAUD MUSA PIDCOCK *SR. TASNEEM ZAMAN * BR. FAISAL A. RAZAK AND OTHERS

For further details please call: Br. Faisal: 905-790-6734 or Br. Tanweer on 416-319-5059 (After 8th July) Or Visit the website www.ffss.org

Forgiveness

Continued from page

level cannot be attained except by those who practice Sabr, nor it can be attained except by those who possess a great share of (magnanimity)." (41:35)

Our Prophet was the most excellent example of winning the hearts of people by forgiving them when he had power and by responding in the most unexpectedly better manner when wronged. In addition to our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Prophet Yousuf was another excellent example of forgiving behaviour. In response to all the wrongs done by his brothers, when he had power to settle the scores, he forgave them with the following words: "No blame will there be upon you today." (12:92)

At the conquest of Makkah when our Prophet had power of life and death over his persecutors, he forgave them with the same words: "No blame will there be upon you today. Go. You are free."

However, the following points must be clearly understood before one assumes that Islamic encouragement of forgiveness applies carte blanche to every situation on the earth:

* A person can forgive only a

crime, wrongdoing, excess or transgression against one's own person, not for another adult Muslim.

* Forgiveness must be voluntary, without any pressure. Often, while settling disputes, people pressure the victim to forgive and forget. This specially happens when the victim is a weak member of the society while the perpetrator is an influential or powerful person, and people tend to pressure the victim to let the matter go, without seeking justice, apology, retribution or compensation. In such situations, a victim may do so under pressure, but it will keep bothering him inside that justice was not done for him. It also encourages the perpetrator to violate rights of other weaker persons because he can get away with it. Hence, for ensuring justice for everyone, for peace of the society and for discouraging exploitive behaviour on the part of the strong and influential, Islam stands forcefully with the victim in such situation. This principle was clearly communicated by Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, when he delivered his opening address as the chief of the believers: "The weakest among you is the strongest to me until I have ensured that his rights have been fulfilled; while the strongest of you is the weakest to me until I have made him appropriately deliver his obligations."

Even a government, court, head of a state/country, arbitrator, conciliator, etc. has no authority to forgive a punishment or retribution against a crime unless the victim forgives it without any pressure or coercion. The duty of a political, judicial or an arbitration authority is to deliver justice, not to make compromises or pressure people into making compromises. That is against justice because a compromise favours the perpetrator at the expense of the victim. This right of the victim, regardless of how insignificant the violation is, is so sacred that even Allah will honour it on the Day of Judgment. He will not forgive even the most minute viola-

"The Inner Struggle of the Self"

Continued from page 1

Prophet (pbuh) summarizes his mission in an authentic Hadith in which he says, "I have been surely sent only to complete the most excellent ways of *akhlaaq*". The meaning of the term *akhlaaq* is something we shall come to soon.

It is important that we always keep in mind that the day we were born, we born to die! We were brought into this world to go on a journey back home to *Jannah* where we originated, and Allah has put within us all, the instinct to want to go home – safely. The only way to go home safely is to attain a level of *akhlaaq* that will enable us to change our *nafs* (self), that has lowered itself, rebelled, and left home. Yet in His Infinite Mercy, Allah tells us, rectify that *nafs*, and you can come back home safely – this time forever, and this is why the Prophet (pbuh) came to help us.

Akhlaaq is the plural of *khuluq* and *khalq*. *Al-khalq* means your external physical appearance/image, whereas *khuluq* refers to your internal image. We must beautify and rectify our *khuluq*, yet often times in this consumerist, materialistic, individualistic society of appearances, and sometimes deception – we beautify ourselves only physically. Furthermore, these days we are 'health conscious' and so we go to doctors, do as they say, endure pain, and so forth in order to take care of our physical bodies. We have plenty of water in this country, Masha'Allah, and take showers every morning, and every evening, and people that do not are considered unclean – and we joke to such people who say they haven't bathed, telling them they 'stink'. This stink can be discerned by the physical olfactory properties...the Nose, and can be perceived by the physical eye.

Yet many of us do not take a spiritual '*nafs*' shower to cleanse the *nafs* every morning and every evening. No, we don't do this everyday, many of us don't do it every week, month, or year – and many of us have never taken a spiritual shower, and forgive me, but frankly,

we stink! The Prophet (pbuh) and the 'ulamaa' (scholars) speak of this smell that emanates from the filth of the *nafs*, and this filth is *hawaa'* (desire). When we follow the *nafs*, when we give it what it wants, we are consequently led to commit sins against Allah, the Prophet (pbuh), and ourselves. These sins are the contaminants, impurities, and pollutants of our *nafs* and of our *qalb* [spiritual heart] – and as long as they remain therein, we shall never make it back home safely – we will have had a very unsuccessful trip.

This is why the Prophet (pbuh) came to help us rectify that *nafs*, in order that it comes back to Allah in peace, serenity, balance, stability, and is thus in a state of *tuma'niinah* [serenity]. Allah says, "Oh satisfied, peaceful *nafs*, return to your Rabb, satisfied, and made satisfied – enter among my servants into My *Jannah*".

Our *nafs* will never reach this state until we are aware of the impurities that cover it and veil it so that we are able to remove them as we remove filth from our physical bodies. We must attain a balance because our concern for the physical is far greater than our concern for the inner *nafs*. Yet Allah says that it is only the heart that is in a state of *inaabah* (repentance) when it reaches Allah that will be satisfied by His presence.

In our current state we are going on a seriously downhill journey during which we are losing the energies needed to help us in the heavenly journey upwards to Allah. To understand this factual statement, we have been given Allah's physical laws of the universe, but many of us look at the physical world detached from its Creator and the 'other' world until we die, and therefore we will never taste the greatness of the pleasures of this world. As one early scholar has said, "the people of this *dunya* whose objectives were more of the happiness of this *dunya*, never attained the greatest happiness of this *dunya*: what is it? – Longing for Allah. There is a *Jannah* in this *dunya* said two other scholars (whosoever does not know of it, and has not

A case of fornication was brought to the knowledge of the Prophet after the parties had agreed to accept a financial penalty from the perpetrator. The prophet overruled the settlement and implemented the punishment on both parties involved in the fornication. (Bukhari and Muslim)

'Aaiyshah reported, "The Messenger of Allah never ever avenged for himself. However, if Allah's sanctities were violated (important rules of Islam broken), then he will avenge (implement punishment) for Allah." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Hence, Islam properly balances the needs of law, order and justice in the society and the need of developing graciousness in its adherents. On the one hand, it encourages the aggrieved party to forgive to create a more loving and caring environment in the society, and, on the other hand, ensures peace and security of the society and integrity of the system through proper provision of justice to the wronged party/victim and through strict enforcement of justice.

we stink! The Prophet (pbuh) and the 'ulamaa' (scholars) speak of this smell that emanates from the filth of the *nafs*, and this filth is *hawaa'* (desire). When we follow the *nafs*, when we give it what it wants, we are consequently led to commit sins against Allah, the Prophet (pbuh), and ourselves. These sins are the contaminants, impurities, and pollutants of our *nafs* and of our *qalb* [spiritual heart] – and as long as they remain therein, we shall never make it back home safely – we will have had a very unsuccessful trip.

This is why the Prophet (pbuh) came to help us rectify that *nafs*, in order that it comes back to Allah in peace, serenity, balance, stability, and is thus in a state of *tuma'niinah* [serenity]. Allah says, "Oh satisfied, peaceful *nafs*, return to your Rabb, satisfied, and made satisfied – enter among my servants into My *Jannah*".

Our *nafs* will never reach this state until we are aware of the impurities that cover it and veil it so that we are able to remove them as we remove filth from our physical bodies. We must attain a balance because our concern for the physical is far greater than our concern for the inner *nafs*. Yet Allah says that it is only the heart that is in a state of *inaabah* (repentance) when it reaches Allah that will be satisfied by His presence.

In our current state we are going on a seriously downhill journey during which we are losing the energies needed to help us in the heavenly journey upwards to Allah. To understand this factual statement, we have been given Allah's physical laws of the universe, but many of us look at the physical world detached from its Creator and the 'other' world until we die, and therefore we will never taste the greatness of the pleasures of this world. As one early scholar has said, "the people of this *dunya* whose objectives were more of the happiness of this *dunya*, never attained the greatest happiness of this *dunya*: what is it? – Longing for Allah. There is a *Jannah* in this *dunya* said two other scholars (whosoever does not know of it, and has not

tasted of it shall never taste the *Jannah* of the Hereafter: what is it? – The sweetness and happiness that comes in the *qalb* by longing for Allah (Mighty and Majestic). It is said that those who are spiritually blind in this world will be even more blind in the life to come.

Basic science tells us that when something goes downhill it loses potential energy, and the lower it goes the more potential energy it loses. We also know that when we go uphill we build potential energy – but many of us lose it going downhill.

The *Ruuh* [soul] is not in this physical world of space/time so it doesn't walk downhill, it goes downhill by feeding our desires – by giving the *nafs* what it wants, indulging it in desires, and the more, the steeper. It loses spiritual potential energy, and it is difficult to recover. This is why sometimes we find it difficult to stand up against something we don't want to do. It is like the person who has no energy and his mind tells him to walk, but the body cannot. This is a *nafs* that is *qabiih* (ugly), and the ugliness continues as we feed the desires of our *nafs*, and never return through *tawbah* (repentance) to rectify and remedy that *nafs*, and so we have developed an ugly *nafs*, and ugly *khuluq*. Therefore the actions of such a person are merely a manifestation of this ugly *nafs* and are thus also ugly.

So we must go uphill and build potential energy by going against the *nafs* and its endless desires. This is why the actions of the prophets were so beautiful and effortless. They stemmed from a *nafs* in a state of beauty, balance, and serenity, and from a polished heart. Therefore the build up of potential energy makes good actions easier.

Allah says in Surah al-Layl, that for the one going downhill, going in Allah's way will be difficult, whereas for the one going uphill (by good actions), We will make his path to Allah easier.

Khuluq is the state of the *nafs* which is rooted (not transient), and external actions are engendered by that state with ease – whether good, or ugly. So people who become angry easily, their *khuluq* is anger. People who are miserly find it easy to say "no I don't have". People who are arrogant find it easy to become proud, to the extent that such *kibr* (pride) is observable on their face! The golden characteristic of Islam is *hayaa'*, for as the Prophet (pbuh) said "every religion has a defining characteristic, and the defining characteristic of Islam is *hayaa'* (modesty, humbleness, humility.) A person whose *khuluq* is *hayaa'*, in contrast to those mentioned above, will find it easy to exhibit *hayaa'* with ease in all aspects of life. A person who is generous is constantly generous, not by giving once or twice, but by always giving and doing so with ease. Therefore the *khuluq* may be *hasan* (beautiful) or *qabiih* (ugly), as defined by the *Shari'ah*, and we must work to bring our *nafs* into a state that is *hasan*!

[Insha'Allah the second part of this 4-part series appearing in the September - October issue of The Ambition, will look at "The Various States of the Self and Cultivating its Good."]

Third Annual Islamic Summer School for Children

From Monday July 8th to Thursday August 8th, 2002, Courses offered are Memorization of the Quraan, Hadith, Seerah, Aqeedah, Du'ah & Athkaar, etc....

Morning Session: 9:30 am to 2:00 pm, afternoon Session: 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Children age 7 to 15 years old are welcome.

Fee is only \$100.00 per child.

Location: Masjid Khalid Bin walid, 16 Bethridge Road, Toronto. For info, call (416) 745-2888 or

e-mail: www.khalidmosque.com, or youth@khalidmosque.com,

Finding a Suitable Marriage Partner

Continued from page 1

sponse to them is always the same – “So why are not you married yet because there are a lot of good practicing Muslims around”. When I ask them to clarify, the men say that “she should be beautiful” and the women say that “he should be secure financially and have a good job such as a doctor or a lawyer”. Both sexes always want to know about the chemistry and about love.

I have an engineering background and by the nature of my job, I work with a lot of engineers. I find from these comments that all these wonderful young eligible Muslim men are second class when it comes to marriage because somehow our young ladies are under the misguided impression that you have to be a doctor or a lawyer to be a good provider or a good husband. I wonder what extra courses they teach them in law or medical school to prepare them to be a good spouse? As for young men, I always ask them what beautiful means to them, for beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Allah created us different with different tastes and outlook. Hollywood might want us to believe that a woman has to be like a toothpick to be beautiful or to be accepted, but it is the inner beauty that lasts a lifetime. Once you have lived with someone for a short time, you no longer see the outer beauty. You live and share your life with the inner beauty.

Another sad comment I hear from both men and women is that they have met some good people ready to get married, but those people are waiting for someone better. What makes someone better than another person? The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) tells us that there is no difference between one person and another except, with Taqwaa (the consciousness of God.) another issue that always comes up in discussions about finding a spouse is the age of the prospective partner. You always find an age range attached to the wish list. To find this relevance, we should look at the life of prophet Mohammed (pbuh). His first wife, Khadija, was 15 years older than him, yet he loved her and cared for her. When people asked him why he did not take a second, younger wife (it was customary at the time for a man to have

multiple wives), he replied that he loved her and cared for her and would not hurt her feelings by taking another wife. As we follow his footsteps, we find he married Aaisha, who was at least 30 years younger than him. From the two examples, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) is telling us that age should not be a factor in choosing a spouse. The right spouse for you could be a lot older, a lot younger, or may be the same age.

A man came to Al-Hassan (Allah be pleased with him) and asked him what he should look for in a husband for his daughter. Al-Hassan told him, “Seek one who observes and fears Allah. If he loves her, he would honor her, and if he does not love her, he would not be unfair or unjust to her”.

An expression I have always liked goes as follows “She spent a long time looking for Mr. Right and when she finally found him, he was looking for Ms. Right (that was not her)”. This means that no one is perfect, so we should not look for perfection. We should compromise and focus on the important things such as observing and fearing Allah.

I would like now to move to a point that I heard from a Muslim sister that really surprised me, and later I heard again from a few others. This sister said that she would advise her daughter not to marry a so-called good Muslim. When I asked her why, she said that when she got married, she married a so-called good Muslim and he abused her and beat her. When I asked her how she knew he was a good Muslim, she said that he never missed a prayer and he fasted and paid Zakat.

Omar Bin Alkhatib (Allah be pleased with him) advised us not to judge people by their prayers and their charity deeds, for only knows their intentions. We should judge people by their words (do they speak the truth) and their honour (do they fulfill promises). I then asked these ladies if they looked for these qualities in future spouses. I also asked the men, who claim to be good Muslims where they learn that Islam allows wife beating. Our Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) never beat or hurt his wife, so this cannot be an acceptable thing to do.

In the Quran in Surah Al-nisaa

(4:34) it says: “As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance): for Allah is most high, great (above you all).”

The scholars tell us that “beating” is only allowed in extreme circumstances and that it should be very lightly, not on the face, should not hurt and should not leave any marks. A man asked Allah's Messenger (pbuh) “What do you say about our women?” Allah's Messenger (pbuh) answered, “Feed them, cloth them, do not beat them and do not tell them they are ugly.”

Some Muslims are uncomfortable discussing the topic of wife beating and say it is a social disease that is in all cultures and societies and not just in the Muslim society. It is clear that from the footsteps of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) that we should not lay a hand on women. He tells us that “the best of you is the best to his family and I'm the best to my family”. Allah tell us in Surah Al-Imran 3:110: “You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind.” Since we are meant to be the best people, we cannot hide behind the excuse that since others do it, we can do it too.

I am always asked the question “how would we be able to judge if this person is the right one for me if I do not spend a lot of time with them and get to know them and understand them.” On the surface, this seems a fair question,

however, we already have our answer from the society around us. We see couples spending years trying to know each other. There is no limitation on their relationships and discovery process, yet the divorce rate is over 50%. If spending time together were a guarantee for finding the right spouse, we would not have so many divorces or infidelity in marriage. The best way to find about the person is by asking his friends and co-workers. Ask them if he/she always says the truth and if he/she keeps promises. And most important thing is to

pray to Allah to give you the right person for you.

A man went to Omar bin Alkhatib (Allah be pleased with him), to complain about his wife. As he approached Omar's house, he heard Omar's wife telling him off, so he waited. After a while, Omar asked the man what brought him, and he replied that he came to complain about his wife chastising him, but he found Omar's wife chastising Omar. Omar told the man, “They take care of our children and us, so we have to be patient with them and let them express themselves and their opinions.”

Another problem we face in this society is that we bring some of the cultural things with us from our homelands. We put a lot of financial pressure on the groom, the bride and their families. The young couple starts their life together deeply in debt due to the financial demands of one of the families (or both). We want our children to start their married life where we have finished off. Their house or apartment should have all the necessities of life from day one, rather than encourage them to work together to get and achieve what they need.

If we go back to see what Fatima, the daughter of Allah's Messenger (pbuh) had in her matrimonial home to start with, we find that she had a mattress, a jug and a cup for the water. She did not have Persian rugs, appliances, or silk clothing. She only had the basics. Why do we spoil our children and deprive them from working hard and from the satisfaction of achieving things on their own.

I would like to conclude my article with the ayah from Surah Al-noor 24:26 which says “Vile women are for vile men, and vile men for vile women. Good women are for good men, and good men for good women.” This means if you are looking for a good spouse you have to start by changing yourself. Be good and Allah will guide you to a good spouse.

[Ashraf Zaghloul can be reached at: ashraf@spiritofislam.com]

Scholars from the Muslim world in Washington for goodwill tour

A delegation of internationally recognized Muslim leaders, scholars and jurists representing a cross-section of the Muslim world is planning a goodwill tour of the United States under the auspices of the Muslim World League (MWL). The delegation is headed by Dr. Abdullah al-Turki, Secretary General of the Muslim World League, and former minister of Islamic Affairs in Saudi Arabia.

This delegation will be visiting New York City, Chicago, Washington D.C., and Los Angeles from June 25th thru July 15th, 2002. The objective is to meet with and offer briefings to prominent leaders and officials of the media, interfaith communities, academia, and government, based on global perspectives about critical post 9-11 issues pertaining to Muslims and Islam. On July 8, the delegation will be holding a press conference to discuss their trip, and what they hope to achieve by it.

The Ambition

Subscription Rates

Canada Individual: \$15.00 Institution: \$25.00

USA and Overseas \$20.00 \$30.00

Subscription: \$ _____ Date : _____

Donation: \$ _____ Renewal : _____

I pledge to donate \$ _____ per month starting _____

Please include your cheque, payable to **The Ambition**

Name: _____

Address : _____

Postal Code: _____ Tel: _____

Mail to : **The Ambition**

7224 Harwick Drive

Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L4T 3A4

Kidz Korner

My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy

By Marium F. Ahmad,
OAC, Western-Technical
Commercial School

He lay there, in the dark, wistfully thinking about how he had passed the day. Beside him, he could hear the drops of water trickling down the rooftop through his open window. His city had been blessed with rain that had not appeared for many weeks. There was a cold chill in the room, and an occasional draft that would send shivers up his spine. Slowly, tears slid down his own face, as he recalled the sins he had committed that day, feeling their burden upon his shoulders overbearing. Crying softly like a baby, his eyelids slowly become heavy, and his snores could be heard over his silent sobs.

"Ibrahim! How many times do I have to tell you to clean up after yourself – it's not that difficult to put two dishes into the dishwasher!" Ibrahim slowly runs off, up the stairs, not being mindful of his mother's words and pleas that are repeated to him everyday. He runs up to his room, slams the door shut, and falls into bed. As he puts his head on the pillow, Ibrahim is fast asleep. An hour later, he awakes as he hears his fa-

ther's footsteps on the stairs. An angry face appears in his doorway, "You're still sleeping?! – at ten in the morning, the whole house is awake but you! Stop wasting your life like this Ibrahim – you will regret it," his father's words pass like air through Ibrahim's ears – in one side and out the other, as his father heads back downstairs. Ibrahim changes into his clothing – baggy jeans and an oversized sweater topped off with a Nike cap, and heads off to meet some friends at the mall. He walks out the front door without acknowledging his parents.

He heads over to the driveway, where his convertible is parked. Glistening and sparkling in the sun from last night's rain shower, the red sports car was a gift to him from his uncle. Ibrahim's parents were never happy about it, as they knew that Ibrahim would never be seen at home anymore (whereas in the past he would still occasionally stay home), and their fears turned into reality, as Ibrahim's "home" became his car.

With the music blaring, Ibrahim turns into the mall parking lot, which is slowly filling up, and waits by the entrance for his friends. He has only two hours to hang out, as his parents had sternly warned him to be home by four that afternoon – they had planned to attend a function at the mosque.

His head moving to the beat of the music, and eyes closed, Ibrahim doesn't notice his friends waiting outside his car until they begin banging on his windows. After letting them in, the five boys, including Ibrahim, hit the road, driving around the

A page from the Life of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

Before the Battle of Badr

The Prophet (pbuh) and his followers had migrated from Makkah to Madinah in hopes of finding peace. In Makkah the Muslims were persecuted and tortured every day. By migrating to Madinah, the Muslims had hoped to live peacefully with the Ansars and be able to go on with their lives and worship Allah without any problems. However, this was not the case.

The Kuffar were angry that the Muslims had been able to escape from Makkah. The Kuffar did not want the Muslims to live in peace nor did they want Islam to spread any further. The Jews in Madinah believed that they were the "chosen people" and could not accept that any other group of people could have a Prophet; because of this they would not accept Islam. When some of the Jews actually accepted Islam, the Jewish leaders became very angry because they now saw Islam as a threat to their powers. The Jews became hostile towards Islam and friendly with the Kuffars. And finally the Munafiqun would cause trouble by pretending to be

good Muslims while in actuality they were really secretly plotting against the Muslims with the Jews and Kuffar. Once again, the Muslims could not find peace.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) knew that in order to defend Islam, the Muslims would have to fight against their enemies. Although the Muslims had been prohibited from fighting while in Makkah, now Allah had sent a revelation to the Prophet ordering Muslims to defend their religion. Allah ordered the Muslims to perform jihad – strive for the sake of Allah. The Muslims were ready to fight for the truth, and so were the Ansar. They did not fear getting hurt nor did they fear death, for they knew that they would be rewarded by Allah for protecting Islam.

Thus, on the 12th day of Ramadan, in second year of the Hijra, the Prophet (pbuh) and his followers marched out of the city towards Badr, a village about 80 miles from Madinah in preparation of battle, to meet the Makkans' army. About a mile into the journey, the Prophet (pbuh) stepped back to view his

convoy. Those who were too young or too old were sent back home as this was a dangerous situation. Umair Ibn Abi Waqqas, a young boy was also told to return home because he was too young, however, upon being told this, burst into tears and thus got the Prophet's (pbuh) permission to stay.

Because the Jews and hypocrites could not be trusted in the absence of the Prophet (pbuh), Abu Lubaba Ibn 'Abd al-Mundhir was appointed Governor of the city and order to stay back. After making all necessary arrangements to protect their homeland, the Prophet (pbuh) viewed his army once again. He was left with 313 soldiers ready to fight in the name of Allah. Of his army, only 60 people were Muhajirs and the other 253 people were Ansars.

Although their army was not large, the Muslims had no fear. They knew Allah would protect them. They knew that Allah would not let the Kuffar destroy Islam. They knew that in the end, the one true faith would prevail.

Smile!

My kids love going to the Web, and they keep track of their passwords by writing them on Post-it notes.

I was surprised by their rather Disney password "MickeyMinnieGoofyPluto," and so I asked why it was so long.

"Because," my son explained, "they say it has to have at least four characters."

Sacrifice

O, Land of Muslims

I can give you nothing but a few lines and tears that come out of my eyes
But most of all my prayers, that will never be minimized.

May Allah give us all the strength of Sacrifice
Let our deeds be the key to Paradise.

Wajeeda, Grade 3

This poem is dedicated to the people who sacrificed for Allah:

A Cool Game!

A pretty cool game to help memorize Allah (swt)'s names and their meanings. I find if you play it for a while around twice a day, it can really help....inshaAllah you'll see what I mean. It's fun too, because it's kind of like the game "hangman" that I think many of us spent a lot of time playing when we were kids.

<http://www.islamic school.net/AllahNames.htm>

city aimlessly. The sky greets them with drops of water once again, and soon is pouring buckets of water over the city. "Let's go see a movie," Javaid, one of his closest friends, wearily says, looking out the window, "At least by the time its over, the rain will have stopped, and we can enjoy the ride." "Yeah, I'd want to do that," Ibrahim shouts over the music, "but you know how the folks are –

Continued on page 11

HEY KIDZ...WANT TO BE FAMOUS??

We'll send us your stories, poems, jokes and pictures to be published in an upcoming issue of *The Ambition*.

Write to kidzkorner@theambition.com and share the **EXCITEMENT!!**

(Please include your name, address, grade and school. You can even send a picture if you would like!)

A Quiz about the story

- In the second year of Hijra, what happened on the 12th day of Ramadan?
 - The Muslims marched out to battle
 - Masjid Al-Nabi was built
 - A peace treaty with the Jews was signed
- Why did the Jews not want to accept Islam?
 - They believed they should follow the Kuffar
 - They believed that they were the chosen people
 - They didn't like to co-operate with others
- Performing jihad is to:
 - Strive for the sake of Allah
 - Strive for the sake of anybody
 - Strive for yourself to be the best you can be
- How many Muslims were ready to fight to defend Islam?
 - five hundred and eighty six
 - three thousand and thirteen
 - three hundred and thirteen
- Why was Abu Lubaba Ibn 'Abd al-Mundhir sent back to Madinah?
 - He was too young to fight
 - He was sent to protect Madinah in the Prophet's absence
 - He was tired and needed to rest
- Which of the following is true about the Munafiqun:
 - They secretly practiced Islam
 - The openly plotted against the Muslims
 - The pretended to be good Muslims but secretly plotted against Islam

(Check answers in the paper elsewhere)

