



ramadhaan  
mubarak

To Our Readers and Advertisers  
May the blessings extend to all.

## Globalization Impact on the Muslim youth in the West – an Identity challenge

by Imam Abdul Hai Patel

Concept of globalization is nothing new to Islam as it believes in One Ummah (nation) and it exhorts Muslims to strive for the economic, social and spiritual needs of the people. The Qur'an says: "Lo, this one religion is your religion and I am your Lord" (21:92) and also, "As for those who strive in Our Cause, We will surely guide them to Our Paths" (29:69).

Through globalization Muslim youth in the West feel connected

with the Ummah, e.g. mass communication, Satellite TV, Internet etc. This has reinforced Islamic identity and cultural belonging in some respect. However, youth are also disheartened and disillusioned by the growing unrest in some Muslim countries and suppression of Muslim minorities in other parts of the World, not to mention the poverty and illiteracy becoming more and more visible among the Muslims of the World.

The majority of Muslim youth in the West suffer from religious and cultural schizophrenia. They are caught between culture and religion, inherited from their parents. They are Mohamed and Mariam at home, but Mo and Mary outside their home.

This duality always remains hidden at home, in the mosque and in the Muslim community, but comes out very openly in schools and among their friends.

Among Muslim families living in the west, depending on the country of origin and ethnicity, certain cultural values are blended with their Islamic way of life. The youths do not question them until adolescence, when the cultural traditions and practices are challenged, whether it is the question of marriage or favoritism for boys over girls

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## Ramadhan – the Month of Blessings and Forgiveness

Compiled by Aasyia Amir

We all are soon entering the blessed month of Ramadhan. I have tried to bring together some references from the Qur'an and Hadith and the Sunnah (traditions) of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) regarding the fundamental aspects of Fasting in Ramadhan. I hope they will be useful, even though just as a reminder

### Ramadhan fasting is obligatory – References from the Qur'an

"O ye who believe! fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you that ye may (learn)self-restraint" (2.183)

"Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an as a guide to mankind also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting but if anyone is ill or on a journey the prescribed period (should be made up) by days later. Allah intends every facility for you He does not want to put you to difficulties. (He wants you) to complete the prescribed period and to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perchance ye shall be grateful." (2.185)

"(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to Allah), those who serve (Him), those who praise (Him), those who fast, these who bow down, those who fall prostrate (in worship), those who enjoin the right and who forbid the wrong and those who keep the limits (ordained) of Allah And give glad tidings to believers." (9.112)

### References from the Hadith

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said in a sermon which he delivered on the last day of Sha'ban, "A great month, a blessed month, a month containing a night which is better than a thousand months has approached you people. Allah has appointed the observance of fasting during it as an obligatory duty, and the passing of its night in prayer as a voluntary practice...." (Bayhaqi)

Statements of the Prophet: "Islam is built upon [the following] five pillars: testifying that there is no God except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, the establishment of the prayer, the giving of zakah, the fast of Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Makkah." (Fiqh Sunnah 3.108 A)

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet,(pbuh), said: "The blessed month has come to you. Allah has made fasting during it obligatory upon you. During it, the gates to Paradise are opened and the gates to hellfire are locked, and the devils are chained. There is a night [during this month] which is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its good is really deprived [of something great]" (AnNasai,Al Baihaqi,)

Talhah ibn 'Ubaidullah reported that a man came to the Prophet and said: "O Messenger of Allah, tell me what Allah requires of me as regards fasting." He answered, "The month of Ramadan." The man asked: "Is

there any other [fast]?" The Prophet answered: "No, unless you do so voluntarily." (Nasai, Baihaqi.)

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in his last sermon also emphasized: "...O People, listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers (Salah), fast during the month of Ramadhan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to..." (Bukhari.)

### Rewards of Fasting – References from the Qur'an

"For Muslim men and women for believing men and women for devout men and women for true men and women for men and women who are patient and constant for men and women who humble themselves for men and women who give in charity for men and women who fast (and deny themselves) for men and women who guard their chastity and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward." (33.35)

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## The Design in Nature

Set mechanisms will be found anywhere from the wings of a bird to inside a bat's skull.

by Harun Yahya

Let's think of an aspirin pill for a moment; you will immediately recall the mark in the middle of it. This mark is designed in order to help those who intake half a dose. Every product that we see around us is of a certain design even though not as simple as the



aspirin pill. Everything from vehicles we use to go to work, to TV remotes.

"Design", briefly, means a harmonious assembling of various parts into an orderly form towards a common goal. Going by this definition, one would have no difficulty in guessing that a car is a design. This is because there is a certain goal, which is to transport people and cargo. In realization of this goal various parts such as the engine, tires and body are planned

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## Editorial

# Testing Tolerance

Muslims are facing a test in tolerance.

In a recent appearance on Fox News Channel's *Hannity & Colmes* program, Pat Robertson smeared both Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. About the Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, Robertson said: "This man was an absolute wild-eyed fanatic. He was a robber and a brigand. And to say that these terrorists distort Islam, they're carrying out Islam. I mean, this man [Muhammad] was a killer. And to think that this is a peaceful religion is fraudulent." Robertson also called Islam "a monumental scam" and claimed the Qur'an, Islam's revealed text, "is strictly a theft of Jewish theology."

On October 6, 2002 on CBS' *60 Minutes*, American evangelist, Reverend Jerry Falwell said, "I think Muhammad was a terrorist... a violent man, a man of war."

Franklin Graham, Billy Graham's evangelist son, has repeatedly described Islam as a "wicked, violent" religion in the last year.

Call the Pope, or label the Bible, with the same adjectives and you'll call upon the wrath of angry Christians all over the world. And rightfully so. Or call a rabbi a terrorist and the Jewish community would cry "anti-Semitism" and you'd be scrounging for a place to hide. Put a smear on the most revered personality of Islam and you would be rewarded with a sum of \$500,000 from faith-based initiatives under the President of the United States!

There is a whole crew of so-called "experts" on Islam with a hate agenda against our religion. The popular reaction of the broad-based faith community to all this has been silence, except for a very handful people of conscience, who spoke out and defended Islam.

Is it an open season on Islam? Are we fighting a war against terrorism or against Islam and Muslims? Was the President's first slip-of-tongue — calling the war in Afghanistan a Crusade — not a slip after all?

It is very unfortunate that people who have a Muslim name have carried out some terrorist activities, but they certainly have acted in their own capacity. However, to negatively brand the religion is the biggest bigotry that one can come up with. After all, nobody called Christ a killer after the Vancouver killing of 19 women, the Columbine school shooting, the massacre in Montréal or even the bombing by Timothy McVeigh. Hindu fanatics have killed over 3,000 Muslims in Gujarat and it is still burning, but no one even thinks that Mr. Gandhi was a violent man or that lord Krishna was a terrorist. Why this distinction when it comes to Muslims?

Racial profiling and singling out people from Arab and South Asian countries was bad enough, but it was made palatable in the name of national security. Does making repulsive statements about our religion also come under security measures? Don't these people, who claim to be "experts and enlightened" even think for a moment that out of millions of Muslims in North America, and over a billion around the globe, someone may get angry enough to lose his mind and do something horrible? God forbid, if someone did that, then there will be another cycle of name-calling and hatemongering against us. And then they will again ask innocently, "Why do they hate us?" These people must realise that they are not strengthening our society by spreading hate. Do they really believe that roses grow on cactus plants?

It seems that Muslims are the only community that supposedly carries the responsibility of keeping peace at every cost. They are supposed to smile at each blow. They are expected to salute every Tom and Jerry that throws a religious slur on them. They are obliged to take every insult graciously.

However, let me tell you that non-Muslims face a tolerance-test too: A test to see how long they would be a silent accomplice to all this and how low these televangelists can go in spewing venom on the religion that is dear to over one billion people.

It is time Muslims and non-Muslims start a dialogue and true understanding of the religion of Islam as well as other religions. We must look for the common grounds and mutual respect. Only then will we be able to bring the real peace and harmony to our society and make it a role model for the whole world.

Asma Warsi

## Letters / Opinion

### This year has One Month

The Islamic calendar, like most other calendars, has twelve months. Months come and go and little attention is paid to their start or their ends. Ramadan is the ninth month of the calendar, but its coming seems to have a significant effect on Muslims.

While no one is bothered about the moon that marks the beginning and the end of the other months, the crescent marking the start and finish of Ramadan is somehow all-important. Both the start and the end are always uncertain resulting in sharp divisions within the Muslim community.

The month of Ramadan also brings out all the piety a Muslim can muster. He fasts, he reads the Qur'an in its entirety during the month and joins in congregational prayers on Fridays and also every night for salat-ul taraweeh.

The mosques are crowded to capacity and there is indeed such a feeling of brotherhood that you do not see the rest of the year. The managements of the various mosques see this as an excellent opportunity to solicit funds for larger facilities to accommodate the faithful. The worshipers are in a charitable frame of mind and are ready to contribute voluntarily. Facilities are purchased at prices that take years to pay off.

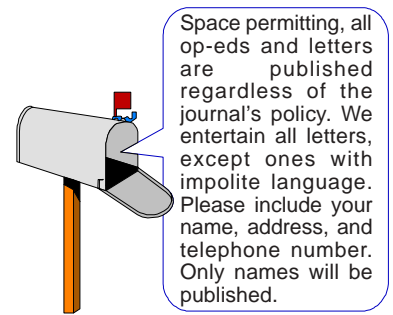
The result is that there is very little money to go around for anything other than the purchase price. That too is collected with great difficulty

because those who so generously contributed towards the down payment no longer flock to the place of worship for the remaining eleven months. The mosque, therefore, does not have the means to conduct such Islamic activities as Dawa for instance.

The mosque is supposed to be the nucleus or focal point of the Muslim community of the city or the area where Muslims live. It is the center from which Muslims are to gather the strength as a people. Islamic education and Islamic solidarity must emanate from such centers. But, none of that happens and that is the root of our problem. The people who run most mosques offer very little in the way of constructive programs that would benefit the community at large.

What happens is that individuals who have separated or distanced themselves from the mosque or center which they previously patronized, due to differences of opinion, want to start a new mosque and a new center over which they can have undisputed sway and control. This starts the circle of yet another mosque with funding problems

It is, therefore, high time that those who call themselves the leaders of our community admit that the dissatisfaction is in existence and do something about it. They can begin with consolidating Islamic activities and services within the existing mosques and centers instead of pro-



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letters@theambition.com

liferating new prayer places and/or mosques that remain poorly attended and generally uncared for.

What this will do is, attract the community, which is so starved of viable programs. People will flock to the worship centers throughout the year instead of only during Ramadan. They will develop confidence in our centers and their management. This in turn, will lead to their putting their money where their faith is, thus solving the funding and financial problems. Once they start co-operating, they can create and maintain a Baitul Maal (a Muslim Treasury) which will not only make our community a self sufficient one, but also make it an example setting one as well.

Just imagine then, Muslims will be seen heading to the mosques in peaceful groups throughout the year. The mosques will be always full at each congregational prayer time throughout the year instead of only during Ramadan. What a great thought! Is it not? And people like me will have their faith restored in there actually being twelve months in the Islamic calendar.

Munawar Merchant

### Reader upset about article ran in The Ambition

I usually find *The Ambition* informative and balanced. However, I think that you made a serious error of judgement in running the article, "The Kosher Tax" (Sept-Oct. 2002). Why on earth should Muslims feel "shocked and angered" that Jewish groups have approached various companies and asked for kosher certification of their products? Muslims also benefit from being able to tell at a glance that products like yoghurt or cottage cheese are pork-free. Why don't Muslims get together with other groups that have religious or health concerns about food ingredients and show these companies that there is a growing market for products that are free from pork derivatives?

Describing kosher certification as a "scam" and comparing it to extortion because the (undisclosed) cost is passed on to the consumer is offensive and hypocritical. Should

Muslim organizations that certify meat as halal also be considered guilty of the same?

Aisha Geissinger

[*The Ambition* does not share the language or the "shock and anger" expressed by the non-Muslim writer of that article. Muslims should do exactly what you have suggested. The purpose of running the article was to let it be known to Muslims that products marked with certain letters ARE kosher and hence are usable by Muslims. We just wish it had been more publicised, in which case, Jews would have had the support of their Muslim brothers and sisters too. We regret that it hurt your feelings.

Readers can also consult this webpage at Eat-Halal.com for more information on Kosher products: <http://www.eat-halal.com/kosher.shtml> - Editors.]

## Ramadan Begins Tentatively November 6

The Muslim holy month of Ramadan is tentatively set to begin November 6, 2002, when Muslims worldwide begin a month of fasting.

During this month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Muslims abstain from food, drink, and sexual relations from dawn to sunset. The purpose of the fast is to learn discipline, self-restraint and generosity, while obeying the commandments of God.

Fasting, as well as the declaration of faith, five daily prayers, charity and pilgrimage to Mecca constitutes the five pillars of Islam.

Since Ramadan is a lunar month, it begins about eleven days earlier each year. The end of Ramadan is marked by communal prayers on the day of Eid ul-Fitr, or Feast of the Fast-Breaking, tentatively set for December 6, 2002, depending on the sighting of the moon.

*The Ambition* is published monthly. 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.

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## 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 Editors  
Aasiya Amir  
Noorjahan Ali

Department Editors  
Farheen Wilson

Committee Members  
Munawar Merchant  
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Professor Syed Aley Ahmad Abdi, Former Principal, Government Education College, Multan, Pakistan

## From the Qur'an

And their Lord responded to them: "Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another. So those who emigrated or were evicted from their homes or were harmed in My cause or fought or were killed — I will surely remove from them their misdeeds, and I will surely admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow as reward from Allah, and Allah has with Him the best reward." (3:195)

## From the Hadith

Narrated Ibn 'Umar (ra): The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever takes a piece of land of others unjustly, he will sink down the seven Earths on the Day of Resurrection."

Related by  
Al-Bukhari  
(3:634)

By Ayub Hamid

To derive the maximum benefit from the Holy Qur'an, the first prerequisite is that the reader must have the right attitude and mindset. The following are the important ingredients of the right attitude with which to approach the Quran:

### Sincerity of intention

People may read the Qur'an to seek blessings, to find arguments in favour of a certain point of view, to search for support in legitimizing some heretical behaviour, etc. But, to understand the message of the Qur'an in its pure form, a reader must approach it

with a sincere intention of seeking guidance from it. Otherwise, one will end up finding what he is looking for, but not the guidance. As mentioned earlier, it delivers to people what they want: 'He misleads many thereby, and guides many thereby'.

### Clearing the Mind From Clutter

An essential prerequisite for seeking guidance is to clear your mind from the clutter when you sit down for its study. Set aside all preconceived ideas and notions you have developed over time, baggage you have acquired from the friends and society you have been moving about with, the values of right and wrong that you may have been conditioned to and ideologies you have been impressed with. The Qur'an must be

approached with open mind and willingness to start from base zero, intending to learn everything anew.

### Resolve To Change Accordingly

The seeker of the truth must also be determined to change his ideas, adjust his lifestyle, shift his paradigm and fine-tune his outlook according to the guidance he discovers from the Qur'an. A person has to get out of

# Approaching the Qur'an

his ruts to find the guidance. If this adjustment does not take place as he studies the Qur'an, he will end up having a mirage-like experience. He will see it shining at a distance, but will never reach it.

### Reflection

Although the need for reflecting on the message of the Qur'an has been described in details earlier, its need and importance cannot be over-emphasized. The beauty of the Qur'an become evident to those who reflect on it seriously. A cursory reading or a casual study is not going to be of much benefit. It should not be read like a book of fiction, but should be studied with the presence of one's heart and mind, engaging the best of one's intellect and reflecting profoundly on the points it makes. However, an appropriate level of reflection will perhaps not be possible in the first reading. The whole Qur'an should initially be read with the help of an authentic translation and Tafseer to get an overview of the guidance; then it must be studied once again slowly and reflectively; and then the process of study and reflection should continue on an ongoing basis.

### Following In The Footstep Of The Prophet

The guidance of the Qur'an was intricately related to the phases and stages of the Islamic movement launched by the Prophet with the start of the revelation of the

Qur'an. It provided timely and effective instructions to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in completing the mission he was sent for. The same mission has been prescribed for the followers of Is-

lam. The real impact of those teachings is fully perceived and absorbed only by those people who undertake the mission of Islam in the same manner and for the same purpose as was done by the first recipient of the revelations. Those who do so, the verse of the Qur'an reveal themselves to that person in their proper spirit and impact.

### Duaa or Supplication

With all the positive attempts to understand the Qur'an, one should also

continue to pray to Allah for his guidance. A sincere Duaa to Allah adds Allah's help and blessings to one's sincere personal efforts to produce the best possible results.

May Allaah help us seek guidance from the Qur'an and act upon it.

[This is the first of a 2-part series. The next part will be published in the December issue, insha Allaah.]

## Let's study and live by what we understand!

While Islam encourages intellectual debates and orders Muslims to use their mind and wisdom, in order to gain insights and enriching interpretations of the message of the Quran, it does not give people a free licence to have trivial arguments with one another using seemingly contradictory verses from the Quran, without resorting to interpretations offered by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), his sincere companions, or the pious and learned scholars.

A man reported to have said, "Once I visited the Prophet (pbuh) at his house. I found some people sitting near his door. They were talking among themselves. Someone quoted a verse. But they disagreed over its meaning and began to argue. Voices rose high. At that, the Prophet (pbuh) emerged

and his face turned red with anger. He threw a handful of dust at them (as a sign of disapproval) and said, '*Take it easy, my people, for this is what destroyed the nations before you: it was by (unnecessary) disagreeing with their prophets and misquoting parts of their books to counter other parts of it. The Quran has not been revealed for some parts of it to be refuted with the others, rather, its parts testify (support and explain) each other. Therefore, live by what you understand. And what you cannot, leave it to the learned.*'" [Ahmad and Ibn Kathir]

[Clips from the Friday Nasiha bulletin by Young Muslims.]

## “Ramadhan Book Project” gains speed

Just ten months after the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) launched their Ramadhan Book Project, the fundraiser reached nearly one-third (\$30,000) of their \$100,000 target. Organizers are hopeful to reach or exceed their financial goal during this upcoming Ramadhan (November 7 – December 4, 2002).

During last Ramadhan, the CIC announced their plan to donate a package of Islamic Books (including the Holy Quran) to 1,000 libraries across Canada in an educational outreach program, with each set of books is said to have a value of about \$100. The project will continue throughout this Ramadhan in order to complete the fundraising. “We are focusing especially on public libraries in smaller Canadian towns, because we found that most have no books on Islam at all and do not have the budget to buy any,” said CIC President, Professor Mohamed Elmasry.

Donations are welcome at any time, even though the CIC is focusing mainly around the month of Ramadhan, as it is a time of spirituality, and charity giving. This project has since inspired many other Muslim organizations to indulge in similar programs. To donate, contact Dr. Mohamed Elmasry at:

(519) 888-4567 Ext 3753 (office)  
(519) 746-7928 (home)

## TARIC Tae Kwon Do secure Canadian Black Belt



Congratulations are due to Br. Abdullah Sabree at TARIC where they have an all black belt team at different age groups. The students of Br. Sabree did very well at The Canadian Golden Belt Karate Championship where many got their belts. We congratulate the instructor and the winners. Here are the results:

- 1—**Yusuf Abdullah Ahmed**: 2pl.(pattern)12 and under jr. black belt
- 2—**Yasdaan Khan**: 3pl.(pattern)12 and under jr. black belt
- 3—**Deen Khan**: 2pl.(fighting)14-15yr. jr. black belt
- 4—**Delair Khan**: 2pl.(pattern)16-17yr. jr. black belt & 2pl. (fighting)
- 5—**Nabeel Hack**: 2pl. men’s light weight black belt fighting
- 6—**Omar McKnight**: 3pl. men’s middle weight black belt fighting
- 7—**Amir Sabree**: 1pl. men’s middle weight black belt fighting.

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## Animals do talk to one another

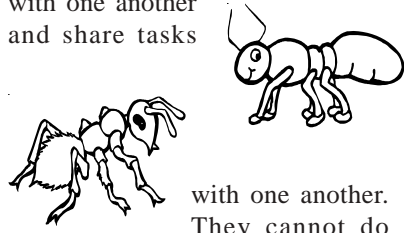
By A.I Makki

The scientists working on animals are convinced that animals indeed talk to one another. However, there is no creature in the animal world that enjoys the advanced speech facilities of human beings. We have seen animals around us make sounds by which they communicate with each other and human beings. For instance, a dog may bark to express joy, to warn people of danger, or to express growl to express its anger and howl when it is lonely. We may have also noticed birds chattering unceasingly in their nests uttering sounds understood by its younger one's and when teaching them to fly. It has also been noticed that monkeys can make different sounds in different situations that express different feelings. A calf can make known to its mother, when it is hungry.

Likewise, the neigh of a horse, the braying of a donkey, the moo of a cow, and the trumpeting of an elephant carry with them different feelings, meanings and emotions. Some of these can be understood by human beings, whereas most of the other language of the animals remains unknown to us. Nevertheless, studies reveal that animals can clearly communicate with each other, and make themselves understood to other animals of their own kind. In a jungle, animals can also communicate with other animals of the forest to warn them of an approaching danger. The other animals at least appear to understand their cries and take measures to safeguard their well-being.

Scientists studying insects have proved beyond doubt that even in-

sects can communicate wonderfully with each other in their own special way. Insects like ants, bees, and wasps live in groups are called as social insects. They live in harmony with one another and share tasks



with one another. They cannot do this unless they have a way of communicating or talking with one another. These insects possess long feelers by which they can touch others in a way and make certain things understood to others in their community.

These studies on animals have been carried out extensively by scientists in recent times. The Holy Qur'an had foretold that animals do talk to each other, as it is obvious from the following verses:

In the Chapter 27:18 of the Holy Qur'an reads as follows, "At length, when they came to a valley of ants. One of the ants said: "O ye ants get into your habitations, lest Solomon and his hosts crush you under foot without knowing it."

Allah in his wisdom gives us the example of a lowly insect like an ant and the following conclusions can be drawn from the verse quoted above.

The verse of the Holy Qur'an gives valuable insight into the world of ants. The verse tells that one of the ants "said" addressing an assembly of other ants to get into their habitations, if not Prophet Sulayman's army would crush them to death.

The verse does not say that the ant communicated by other bodily gestures like signaling, waving, nodding, gesturing for them to hide. On the contrary, the words are "spoken out" in a way, in which it was audible to the other ants on a frequency by which they can speak to one another.

The verse also betrays the 'anxiety' of the ant to save itself and others of its kind from a certain death. This clearly shows the ant is afraid of death by "crushing," and it not only wants to ward of the approaching danger on itself, but at this critical juncture it wants to do good to the others of its community by warning them of this danger.

Here the charitable qualities of this tiny insect and the community feeling of the ant clearly stand out to show that most of the animals as a rule are not selfish as they are made out to be by humans.

Another conclusion that can be drawn is that ant loves its life, as we all do. It is for this reason it wants to ward of a certain death on itself and save others also.

The verse also tells us that the ant knew that there was a retinue of soldiers accompanying Prophet Sulayman. It also understood that they might kill the ants unwittingly by crushing them to death.

The ant here appears to be well informed about its surroundings. For instance, it knew for certain, from a distance the army coming its way belonged to Prophet Sulayman [Solomon] and not anybody else. By these verses, Allah Ta'ala makes His signs clear that the Holy Qur'an as it was revealed 1400 years ago is indeed the Word of God.

## US Religious Leaders Issues Statement Against US War on Iraq

A Statement of Conscience against the war against Iraq was recently signed by Christian leaders as well as representatives from the Jewish and Muslim faiths in the US, and was released at rallies in cities countrywide.

Sacred Islamic, Jewish and Christian scriptures were quoted, and religious leaders warn their government to take necessary action against Iraq only via the United Nations if there is no other alternative. The signers of the Statement calls on the US government to become a "moral superpower" rather than the world's dominant military power.

Considering the threat to civilian lives in Iraq, the statement says, "to believe that an American family is more precious and sacred than an Iraqi family is to turn one's back on God and God's beloved community..."

The leaders are calling on President Bush to meet his moral obligation as leader of the nation under God, as "actions resulting in the death and suffering of thousands of innocent people and fueling further terrorist acts at a cost of billions and billions of dollars" without exhausting all other means of reconciliation is an "offense to the ethical foundation upon which our country is founded."

"I have never seen the broad-based religious community so united," said Joseph Fahey, professor of religious studies at Manhattan College in Riverdale, N.Y.

However, not all religious communities disagree with President Bush's viewpoint, in fact, some Jewish groups and Christian evangelists support the effort to war.

"We want to be sure we do not take action that imperils all of these millions of innocent lives," said Kareem Irfan, chairman of the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago.

## Canadian Christians Oppose War

In a letter to Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, representatives of almost 20 Christian denominations denounced war against Iraq.

Vice-president of the Canadian Islamic Congress, Wahida Valiante said, "It shows

that mainstream Canadians agree with us. It's great to see that our position at this point seems to concur with the churches and basically any human beings with a good conscience." She hopes the Prime Minister will listen to the allied Canadian Christian and Muslim groups. Valiante claims that Canada needs to find out the clear motives of the US as "they have not established a connection between Al-Qaeda and the Iraqi government, or that the Iraqi government is actually developing (weapons) of mass destruction."

St. Catharines anti-racism consultant Susan Howard-Azzeh said, "Canada is known to be a peacekeeper, and with these frequent invitations from the U.S. to become more militarized [Canadians] risk jeopardizing our society's peaceful reputation."

## Students of Georgetown U of Washington, Stage "Die-in"

On October 23, a band of Georgetown University student groups that oppose the war on Iraq staged a "die-in" in Georgetown's Red Square for almost one hour. The stages to be involved in the "die-in" included the mingling of participants in the Red Square, after which a drum roll would start. After the drumming, the participants were to suddenly fall down, lying lifelessly on the ground for about half of an hour. The idea is that this would surprise passing students, sparking their interest, and they would then be given a fact sheet explaining the reasons behind the "die-in".

The purpose was to educate students of the dangers of the US war against Iraq, and spark the students' interest in the anti-war movement on campus, encouraging them to become more proactive in speaking out against injustice.

Groups that participated in the "die-in" included the Muslim Students Association, the Georgetown Solidarity Committee, Young Arab Leadership Alliance, and the Campus Greens.

## 100,000 March in Protest of Military Strike Against Iraq

A march on October 26 by some 100,000 people, in antiwar demonstration may have been Washington's largest since the Vietnam era. The demonstration was coordinated by organizers of International ANSWER, a coalition of antiwar groups.

"We think this was just extremely, extremely successful," said Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, a D.C. organizer with International ANSWER, Act Now to Stop War and End Racism.

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## Helpful Hints

by Sister Shirin Patel

**Q** *I am under a lot of pressure from my peers to start smoking, even if only to socialize. Most of my friends smoke. What should I do?*

**A** Well you don't need to be told this because I'm sure you already know, but let me tell you anyway. Smoking is bad for your health, even if you're not actually smoking but by inhaling second hand smoke your health can still be affected. You have options here: one, get a new bunch of friends (which can be difficult), two join them (this is an option but I wouldn't consider it if I were you) or three you could just explain to them that just because they want to have lung problems when they are older it doesn't mean you do too. See, at a young age you tend to think smoking is cool, and so do your friends. But in time you gain something called 'wisdom' which will make you regret ever starting to smoke. In a year or two, smoking will no longer appear to be "cool" but rather just be a big expense. Trust me, when you're saving up to buy a car or go pay for university expenses you'd wish you never got started in the first place. Friends may pressure you into things, but they can never make you do it. Try just telling your friends straight up that you aren't into that. If they can't respect that then I don't think they're worth your friendship. Be yourself, and believe in your values, if the people around you can't accept then, then they better "getz da steppin' " J. May the Almighty give you the strength to be yourself. Ameen.

**Q** *I'm engaged to this girl, whom my parents think is good, but I'm beginning to think she isn't right for me. I'm scared to tell my parents because it may upset them. Any help you can give?*

**A** Don't ever forget that marriage is a lifetime commitment. Some people are scared to tell their parents they don't want to get married to a certain person, especially if the parents chose the girl/guy. So what do they do? They either marry the person with the intention of divorce, or, they try and convince themselves that the person will change to their liking. In some cases, that person may change. However, when you get married you should marry a person for what they are and not who they MIGHT become. Divorce is not a first resort in Islam, so if that's what you're thinking, better change that thought. It is the LAST resort, and should not be taken lightly. Your parents want you to be happy, hence the reason you're engaged to a girl they THINK is "good". It would hurt them more to see you in a rough marriage than to just tell them straight up now. Sit down with them, and explain to them what you see in this sister and why you don't think it will work. They love you, and want the best for you. Insha'Allah, they'll understand. If they can't, confide in an aunt or uncle and ask them to try. If not that, then ask your Imaam to help. May the Almighty make it easy for you. Ameen.

## Ancient Quran on the Internet

The British Library has made available a 700-year-old Quran on the Internet for users to see and read its highlights at [www.bl.uk/collections/treasures/treasures.html](http://www.bl.uk/collections/treasures/treasures.html). This ancient holy scripture, known as Sultan Baybars' Quran is among a compilation of texts from Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism in its project known as "Turning the Pages", which is an attempt to broaden the accessibility to major

religious volumes in its collection.

Users would be able to view highlights from the full seven volumes of the work by touching a computer monitor, either at the library, or at the website. There is also audio commentary to explain important parts of the book. The work is written in gold, and dates back from anywhere around 1304 to 1306 and was made for the Mamluk ruler of Egypt, Rukn al-Din Baybars al-Jashnagir.

## Exhibition of Islamic Arts and Sciences

The 8th annual exhibition of Islamic Arts and Sciences took place from October 5th to 27th. The title of the Ex was "Artists on the mission of peace." The event was excellently organised and the theme was greatly appreciated by the participants. It was a good attempt to create a greater awareness of the Islamic culture and also foster the understanding among the diverse Canadian culture.

The evening was enriched by Muslim and non-Muslim dignitaries and politicians. Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi, the Chair of the exhibition, quoted from the Qur'an, "Certainly

We have sent Our messengers with clear guidance; and We sent down with them the Book and the Scale so that mankind may conduct themselves with justice."

Some of the prominent people were Hon. Keith Norton, who was the chief guest for the occasion; Chief Commissioner Ontario Human Rights Commission; Hon. Muhammad A. Musavi, the Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran; Hon. Nazem-el-Kadri, Counsel General Labanan; Mr. Derek Lee, MP; Ms. Coleen Beaumier, MP; Ms. Marilyn Mushinski, MMP; Ms. B. Hogg, Deputy Mayor, Town of Richmond Hill.

The program was conclude with the final message of brotherhood, peace and harmony by Hujjatul Islam Syed R. Naqvi, Imam Islamic Jafery Centre, Washington D.C.

## Your Voice, Your Future

CAIR Canada's fundraising dinner

From our Staff Reporter

Put your money where your mouth is. That was the message conveyed at the CAIR fundraising dinner on the chilly night of October 2002. It seems that people took the message to their hearts.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations in the United States is an advocacy group to further and protect the political and religious rights of Muslims living in that country. "The Canadian chapter of CAIR was opened in a Montréal base-ment by Sr. Sheema Khan, its Canadian founder, who was helped by CAIR in the States. Last year, her unrelenting hard work and belief that

each act of establishing justice is Ibadah (worship), earned an official branch of CAIR Canada in Ottawa," Riad Saloojee, the Executive Director of CAIR CAN told the audience. It's a national organisation to promote an accurate image of Islam and Muslims in Canada and distinct from the Washington based CAIR.

Dedicated to presenting an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the Canadian public, CAIR CAN believes that a lack of knowledge and not ill will is at the heart of misrepresentation of Islam in the Canadian media. "There is a lot of good will in the other communities," according to Shaikh Mohamed Zahid, one of the speakers at the dinner. "Why did we have to wait until 9/11 to reach out to other communities? We have a lot to share with and express our concerns about issue that are important to other communities, for example poverty, divorce, homelessness, etc.

"Canadian Muslims are facing a

challenge. We were slowly making progress but then suddenly we found ourselves under microscope. But we aren't alone facing hardship. Other communities like Jews, Sikhs and Japanese went through a lot too," he said. Hence, CAIR CAN has taken to task educating the print and broadcast media, monitoring and correcting the inaccuracies and

and has used action alerts to mobilize grassroots support to get the voices of Muslims heard.

The message of CAIR CAN was taken very well and with a lot of appreciation from the audience. So, when Br. Abdulla Idris appealed for donations, it was not before too long that the organizers were smiling and thanking Allah for putting the good-



dispelling the stereotypes and biases. It is also busy dealing with anti-discrimination at work or harassment at individual level.

Muslims are behind in the legal and political process. We don't know the language of the media. The people who have no knowledge about our practices are representing us. We are immobilized by our laziness and self-pity. We will have to come out of our shell and be an active part of the Canadian mosaic. Not only that, we'll have to open our wallets to fund the organisation that is committed to be our voice.

CAIR CAN has set up media relation workshops, developed "Know your Rights" literature, promoted media activism, done political lobbying, contributed op-eds to leading national newspapers, challenged discrimination at work and police harassment, developed info kits for educators, journalists, employers, and healthcare workers,

ness in the hearts of Muslims, that they realised the importance of CAIR CAN, put their trust in it, open their hearts and wallets and declared that "You are our voice, our future!"



by Our Staff Reporter

On the bright warm afternoon of Sept. 11, 2002 we gathered at the International Muslims' Organization of Toronto to sow seeds of peace and plant a tree of understanding. The event was co-sponsored with the Toronto Conference of The United Church of Canada, the IMO and the Coalition of Muslim Organizations of Toronto, in remembrance of the last year's horrendous terrorist attack on the WTC in the United States.

The gathering consisted of Muslims and Christians. It was ecstatic to see that some Christian sisters had covered their heads with a scarf in solidarity with their Muslim sisters.

Those among the speakers were Br. Omar Farouk, the President of IMO; Reverend Jim Cairney of the

greatly enhance the pleasure of such a meeting. The joy of seeing your beloved ones will be vividly remembered for many years every time your gift is seen or used! That is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) strongly recommended us to "Exchange gifts, exchange love". (Bukhari)

## Lantern of Hearts II

Reported by Shaheena Ya'qubi

On October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002 the Burton Auditorium of York University was host to a gathering that was truly ground-breaking and spiritually uplifting. The Muslim community was treated to a breath of fresh air on this fall evening. Community notables, local scholars, and Muslims from all organizations in the city were in attendance and families crowded the foyer to purchase tickets. The air was cool, spirits were high, skin tones and languages were different, and the refreshments were free! The faces were all smiling both familiar and unfamiliar. I felt welcomed the minute I entered.

The aim of the evening was to highlight the differences of other Muslims by showcasing their native style of praise. Through various Qur'anic recitations discussing themes of countless blessings, heavenly wisdom, past examples, and gratitude the atmosphere was grounded by the words of Allah. The *nasheeds*, *qasidas*, and *na'ats* all shared in the two major themes for the evening, sadness (*ishtiyyaq*) and joy (*shawq*) for the sake of Almighty Allah.

As the lights dimmed and the whispering came to a halt the host for the evening took the microphone. His address (in the form of a poem)

welcomed and commended everyone for being there. He made it clear from the beginning that all egos should be checked at the door and that only smiles and cheers of praise were welcomed. The audience was given programs which included introductions to each performer and group.

The evening began with the pinnacle of unity and togetherness, directly from the Qur'an, whereby all souls, who then were without race, culture, or class were asked from the Creator "am I not your Lord?" to which our souls responded in the affirmative. The story being told was not the history of Muslims, but the historical journey of humanity. United on a belief and common conviction, mankind was then sent down to earth to gain the pleasure of Allah through repentance, longing, and reflection. Upon developing a relationship with the Qur'an and increasing his love for the Messenger of Allah, man is then brought into a state of complete joy and delight. As the performers graced the stage with their melodious voices and cheerful dispositions they exemplified these themes as the evening unfolded.

The performers and their songs ranged from the Syria, Jerusalem, India, Pakistan, Morocco, Turkey, Trinidad and Guyana among others. The languages were diverse, the clothing was unique, the instruments were beautiful and one could not help but have a smile chiseled in their face as you could feel that you were truly in a gathering of Divine grace.

The night was culminated with a beautiful rendition of the 99 attributes of Allah, marking the final goal of mankind's journey – back to the Creator. Even though I did not understand the Arabic I still felt a tremble as each beautiful and majestic name of Allah was recited. As the host for the evening pointed out in the beginning, the audience was not just an audience but was invited to join in and share in the praising of the Praised. The sizeable crowd of over 450 people surely took him up on that offer throughout the evening.

Many of the recitations and performances struck different chords in people as it took them back many years ago to their native homes reminding many of a time much simpler. "I think all of the performers did an excellent job and tonight's event was truly a very genuine and successful attempt to unite the hearts in this community," said Modasser Chaudhry, former Chair of the Atkinson Council, York University.

I truly felt honoured to be part of this gathering and walked away with a deeper appreciation for the Islamic tradition and its many forms of expression. It was indeed a learning experience whereby I was educated on how Muslims from different parts of the world show and articulate their love for Almighty Allah and the Prophet (peace be upon him). It wasn't just a night of performance but a blessed gathering of the remembrance of Allah and this time it was our differences that brought us together. It reminded me of the earlier 80's in this city when the Muslims were few, differences were still many, but the priorities of the Muslims was unity. I eagerly look forward to Lantern of Hearts III.

## Islamic Manners – Visiting and Receiving Guests

If you are travelling to visit someone, or if you are about to receive guests, make sure that your hands, feet, and socks are clean and that your appearance and clothing are neat. Even if those are your parents, relatives, peers, or friends of a different age. Never neglect or underestimate the importance of your looks, for that could certainly dull the pleasure of the meeting, marring the enjoyment of those you meet. To look neat while visiting or being visited is an instinctive trait in addition to being an Islamic manner! Do not ignore this aspect just because you think the person visiting you is too close to you to be offended or repelled by your dirty attire or unpleasant smell.

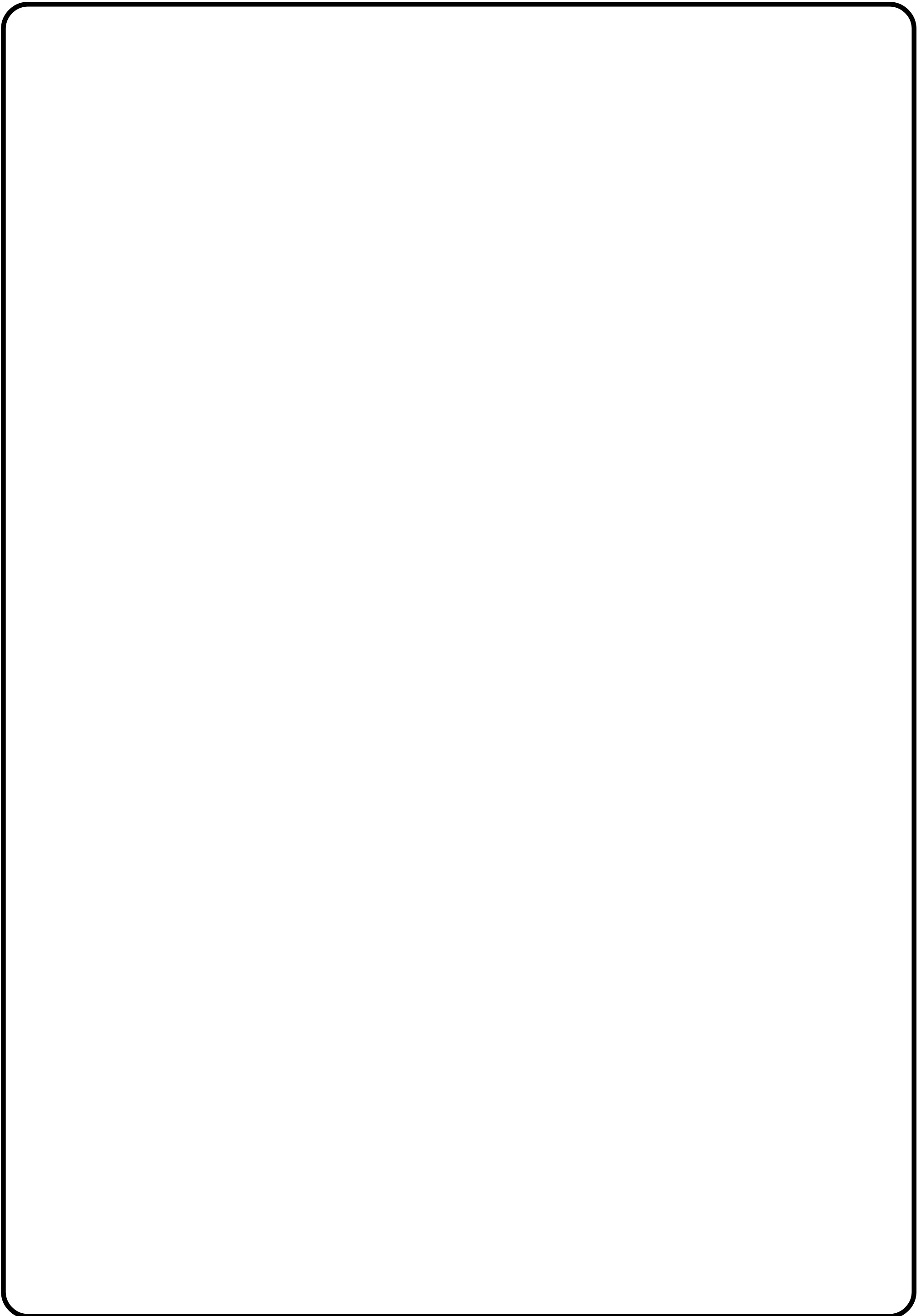
In this regard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) directed his companions upon returning from a journey: "You are on your way to meet your brothers, so put on a nice dress and fix your saddles, so that you ap-

pear distinct among people as a mole (on a face). Allah likes neither roughness nor rough manners". (Muslim)

Imam al-Bukhari reports a Muslim from the best generations, Abul Alia al-Basri, saying, "Muslims wore their best when visiting each other". Similarly Thabit al-Barani, the student of Imam Anas bin Malik, once said, "When I used to visit Anas, he would call for a perfume and run it along his cheeks". Accordingly, if you are visited at home while in casual clothing, as it sometimes happens, you should change for your visitors. This will enhance their respect for you and they will appreciate your hospitality. It is, after all, the *Adab* (manner) of the early Muslims!

Moreover, do your best to bring gifts to those receiving you, and likewise present your guest with gifts. A gift, however symbolic, will

After reading this copy of *The Ambition*, pass it on to someone else. Help us bring the message of Islam to all!



# Islamic Psychology of the Self: "Seven Keys to Safeguarding the Self"

By Nosheen Mian,  
U of T (St. George),  
3<sup>rd</sup> Year – Islamic Studies

(The third of a 4-part series from the lecture by Shaykh Mokhtar Maghraoui)

We previously established through the Qur'an and the teachings of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) that the purpose of our creation is servitude to Allah, and that the Prophet (pbuh) came to show and teach us the most beautiful character [inner state of being that is reflected outwardly] so that we may have such a character reside in our hearts when we return to Allah Most High.

We spoke last time of the four states of the self: the cattle like, predatory, Satanic, and finally the Angelic self – the one that we are to most cultivate, for if we do not, then we will cultivate the three lower states of the self and thereby have an ugly character. The scholars of Islam have established that the gates Satan uses to break into this most prized fortress of ours (our hearts) are the very attributes we *choose* to have. Having established that one would say that those gates have keys, and those keys are our senses. Islam, through the Qur'an, the words of the Prophet (pbuh), the early teachers and practising people of Islam (not only externally, but internally as well), have established that those senses/instincts, are basically seven: eyes, ears, tongue, stomach, sexual organs, hands, and legs. Who should hold these keys? Shall we, or shall we make them available to Satan? – The obvious answer by any sane Muslim is that we must keep these keys.

Before briefly discussing each of them, let us first set a legal principal or definition: A bounty is something bestowed upon us by Allah. Every time we use a bounty of Allah in a way not intended by Him (the maker/giver of that bounty), then we have been in a state of ungratefulness and not in one of thankfulness. The practical aspect of gratefulness for a bounty is to use it in accordance to its Maker/Giver.

## 1. The Eyes

Every time we use our eyesight where we should not have, in a way Allah did not create it for — gender relationships being the most common in a world secular culture where this has become very, very dangerous ground, then we are in a state of ungratefulness to this Most Loving, Most Generous, Most Giving, Most Forgiving Allah, Who gives and gives, and never says "enough!" and we use what He gives us in a way He does not like. May Allah be exalted from analogy, but if there was a person who was very kind, compassionate, and loving to me, and he gave and gave and gave to me, and instead, I cursed at him, betrayed his trust, and backbited him, then what would I be? – And this is Allah! How much has He given us?! How do we use these eyes? Do we use them to uncover the deficiencies/faults of others? What are we reading? What pictures are we looking at? What television programs are we indulging in? That is abuse and ungratefulness to Allah for the bounty of eyes and of light! Be watchful of your eyes

everyday my dear brothers and sisters, there are so many ways we can use our eyesight in a negative way, and so many ways we can use it in a positive way.

## 2. The Ears

The hearing, how do we use our ears? To hear what? Songs of birds and waterfalls or rap and rock, or even Pakistani music, Arab music, or Persian music because some of us have the mentality that if it's in the native language of our 'Muslim' countries then it's okay, but it's not! How are we using our ears? Are we listening to what people say in private and then exposing it? Are we sitting in conversations where there is so much idle talk and we stay there and enjoy it? Do we turn on the television and watch 'talk' shows where there is talk filled with ridicule and lies. Or do we use this bounty of hearing to listen to knowledge and remembrance of Allah so as to nourish our Angelic self and help it attain sincere, deep love of Allah? Are we keeping the company of the people of remembrance of Allah or do we disdain them for people whose sounds are but harmful noise. Ask yourself how you are using this bounty of hearing.

## 3. The Tongue

When Mu'adh asked Muhammad (pbuh) "will we be held accountable even for the words we utter here and there?" he (pbuh) replied, "Oh Mu'adh may your mother mourn you! (i.e. something bad is coming, if you don't understand this...you're dead!) – What else, but the harvest of the tongue causes most people to be dragged on their faces into the Fire of Hell!", and Allah tells us, "every word uttered is recorded by the angels". Yet what is the bounty we use most? – It is the tongue, and one scholar said that if we used our other senses as much as we use our tongue, they would collapse with fatigue! Abu Dardah is related to have said "do justice to your ears, for you were given two ears and one tongue in order that you listen/hear more than you speak". Every word we utter is most likely a poisonous bite that we'll have to reckon with on the Day of Judgment. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) with his exalted state of being used to have prolonged intervals of silence, and when he spoke, he spoke gems, diamonds, and pearls. He (pbuh) said, "whosoever has faith in Allah and the Day of Judgment let him speak a word of good or remain silent" – what is good is that which helps us in our journey to Allah and the purpose for which we were created. Anything that does not help us fulfill the purpose for which we were created, is logically not beneficial. The tongue is the most used key by Satan to enter the heart and occupy it – backbiting, sewing the seeds of hatred, ridiculing, making fun of people, lying, conspiring with words, ridicule others and it's called *civilized entertainment*. By Allah! - We will be asked for every word we utter!

## 4. The Stomach

This is yet another key, the more we indulge in eating and drinking, the more it shall negatively effect the state of the heart. The more we give the stomach what it wants, the less

the heart gets of what it needs. This is why the Prophet (pbuh) is authentically reported to have said, "the worst of vessels to be filled by the child of Adam is the stomach". The Prophet (pbuh) instructed the beautiful character of eating: one third permissible solids, one third permissible liquids, one third for air, yet many of us eat until we cannot eat anymore. One early sage was told, 'a person eats once a day' - he said "that's the habit of a someone very close to Allah", then he was told 'a person eats twice a day' – he said "that's the habit of a believer", then he was told 'a person eats three times a day' – he said "well then just buy him a feeder and hang it around his neck!" Beware, Islam is about balance, and each person at certain levels of exaltation of their self has certain needs, and the more this self is cultivated, the less the felicity of this person is dependent on eating three meals a day. The strength of this person is no longer dependent on three meals a day, but on some other food, yet if we remain at the cattle-predator like levels, then three meals a day become most important to us.

## 5. Sexual Organs

This key is one whose fulfillment is rampant these days. Beware! There are steps and stages before we get to the most naked expression of 'sexual violence' and disobey Allah through relations outside of marriage – this also has levels. Even in non-Muslim secular parts of the Western World a century or two ago, people were often dressed humbly and modestly, but it was gradual to the point where today there is nudity and shamelessness. So the sexual craze of feeding the cattle-like self is another key, and precursors to that is the way one dresses and talks, the way people behave with each other, and so on and so forth. The Prophet (pbuh) spoke of two parts that would lead most people to the Hell: that which is between our jaws (tongue) and that which is between our legs [sexual organ], "He/she who guarantees me that which is between their jaws and that which is between their legs, I shall guarantee them Paradise".

## 6. Our Hands

Our hands were not created to break the bounty of Allah, such as to break the branch of a tree, to kill someone, to strike someone, to initiate harm to others. So we shall watch our hands, how they are used, and every time we use our hands in a way that Allah did not intend, we are showing ungratefulness to the bounty of the use of the hand.

## 7. The Legs

How do we use our legs? Do we use our legs to go to places where there is impermissible, and there are all types of things displeasing to Allah - bars, clubs, and music concerts, gatherings/meetings to conspire and to cheat? Do we expose them to show how sexually attractive we are? All of that is to use the bounty of Allah in ways that He did not intend.

To use the bounty of Allah in ways pleasing to Him, and to refrain from ways displeasing to Him, is what it means to show gratefulness through action! To use every bounty and therefore every sense organ of

ours, the way He, the Creator of it, intended for it to be used is what it means to be grateful. May Allah be exalted from analogy, but if you rent a car from a car company, then you are to use that car in accordance with what is in the contract. If you use it in violation of that contract, you are a criminal, and quite simply, disobeying Allah is using our senses (that emanate from the state of our self) in ways that were not intended by Al-

lah.

So let's watch for those seven keys, lock those doors, those attributes that make us susceptible to Satan, and learn hopefully through the proper processes and practices, how to keep those doors shut.

(Insha'Allah Ta'ala the final part of this 4-part series appearing in the next issue of *The Ambition*, will look at "The Balanced Nature of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).")

## Home alone with a heart attack

What to do during a heart attack when alone: A cardiologist advises...

Let's say it's 6.15 pm and you're driving home (alone of course), after an unusually hard day on the job. You're really tired, upset and frustrated.

Suddenly you start experiencing severe pain in your chest that starts to radiate out into your arm and up into your jaw. You are only about five miles from the hospital nearest your home. Unfortunately you don't know if you'll be able to make it that far.

You have been trained in CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary-Resuscitation), but the person who had taught the course did not tell you how to perform it on yourself.

Many people are alone and without help when they suffer a heart attack. The person whose heart is beating improperly and who begins to feel faint, has only about 10 seconds left before losing consciousness.

However, these victims can help themselves by coughing repeatedly and very vigorously. A deep breath should be taken before each cough, and the cough must be deep and prolonged, as when producing sputum from deep inside the chest.

A breath and a cough must be repeated about every two seconds without let-up until help arrives, or until the heart is felt to be beating normally again. Deep breaths get oxygen into the lungs and coughing movements squeeze the heart and keep the blood circulating. The squeezing pressure on the heart also helps it regain normal rhythm. In this way,

heart attack victims can get to a hospital.

[Source: From Health Cares, Rochester General Hospital via Chapter 240's newsletter, "AND THE BEAT GOES ON..." (reprint from The Mended Hearts, Inc. Publication, Heart Response)]

## First Muslim to Commission Human Rights Named by NYC Mayor

Among the new appointees to the City's Commission on Human Rights named by Mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, was the first Muslim – Omar T. Mohammedi. Mohammedi is a lawyer who specialises in employment discrimination and real estate law. He currently serves as president of the 9/11 Coalition for Constitutional and Human Rights, as well as the New York Muslim Bar Association, and is general counsel for the New York area's Council on American-Islamic Relations.

## Life as a Cab Driver Suits Many New Muslim Immigrants

On a typical day, Toronto cab driver Adris Abdulcadar has his lunch that adheres to Islamic dietary laws, before walking from the Hot Plate eatery to the Umar-bin-Al-Khattab Mosque just a few doors away to engage in his prayer. In this area of downtown east Toronto, prayer times each day are marked by a line-up of taxis outside the mosque. Officials of the mosque say that more than half of the members of the mosque are taxi drivers.

Many immigrants of large Canadian cities are drawn to the taxi in-

dustry, especially Muslims, mainly because it allows them the freedom and flexibility that allows them to pray five times daily, in accordance to Islam.

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## Around the World

# Islam Blooms in Rwanda

Rwandans jump to faith they view as tolerant

By Laurie Goering

Long before the call to prayer begins each Friday at noon, Rwanda's Muslim faithful jam the main mosque in Kigali's Nyamirambo neighbourhood, the overflow crowd spreading prayer rugs on the mosque steps, over the red earth parking lot and out the front gate.

Almost a decade after a horrific genocide left 800,000 Rwandans dead and shook the faith of this predominantly Christian nation, Islam, once seen as a fringe religion, has surged in popularity.

Women in bright tangerine, scarlet and blue headscarves stroll the bustling streets of the capital beside men in long white tunics and embroidered caps. Mosques and Islamic schools are overflowing with students. Today about 14 percent of Rwandans consider themselves Muslim, up from about 7 percent before the genocide.

"We're everywhere," says Sheikh Saleh Habimana, the leader of Rwanda's burgeoning Muslim community, which has mosques in nearly all of the country's cities and towns.

Countries around Rwanda – Su-

dan, Tanzania, Uganda – have large Muslim communities. But the religion never was particularly popular in Rwanda until the 1994 genocide, which spurred a rush of conversions.

From April to June 1994, militias and mobs from the country's ethnic Hutu majority hunted and murdered hundreds of thousands of ethnic Tutsis at the government's urging. Within a few months, three of four Tutsis in the country had been hacked to death, often with machetes or hoes. More than 100,000 suspected killers eventually were jailed.

The genocide stunned Rwanda's Christian community. While clergy in many communities struggled to protect their congregations and died with them, some prominent Catholic and Protestant leaders joined in the killing spree and are facing prosecution.

Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, the head of Rwanda's Seventh-day Adventist Church, is on trial, charged

with luring Tutsi parishioners to his church in western Kibuye province, then turning them over to Hutu militias that slaughtered 2,000 to 6,000 in a single day.

The day before the massacre,



Tutsi Adventist clergy inside the church sent Ntakirutimana a now-famous letter, informing him that "tomorrow we will be killed with our families" and seeking his help. Survivors report that he replied: "You must be eliminated. God doesn't want you anymore."

At the same time, Rwanda's Muslims – many of them intermarried Tutsi-Hutu couples – were opening their homes to thousands of desperate Tutsis. Muslim families for the most part succeeded in hiding Tutsis from the Hutu mobs, who feared entering the country's insular Muslim communities.

Yahya Kayiranga, a young Tutsi who fled Kigali with his mother at the start of the genocide, was taken into the home of a Muslim family in the central city of Gitarama, where he hid until the killing was over. His father and uncle who stayed behind in Kigali were murdered. "We were helped by people we didn't even know," the 27-year-old remembers, still impressed.

Unable to return to what he considered a sullied Roman Catholic Church, he converted to Islam in 1996. Today he is studying Arabic and the Qur'an at a local madrasa

and most mornings awakens for the dawn prayer, the first of five each day.

His job as a money changer in downtown Kigali conflicts with Islam's prohibitions on profiting from financial transactions, but he thinks he has mostly adapted well to his new faith. "I thought at first Islam would be hard, but that fear went away," he said. "It's not easy at the beginning, but as you practice it becomes better, normal."

Rwanda's Muslim leaders have struggled to impart the importance of unity and tolerance to their converts, who number as many Hutus as Tutsis.

Habimana is one of the leaders of the country's new interfaith commission, created to promote acceptance, and in a country still seething with barely masked anger and fear after the mass killings, Rwanda's mosques are one of the few places where reconciliation appears to have genuinely taken hold. "In the Islamic faith, Hutu and Tutsi are the same," Kayiranga said. "Islam teaches us about brotherhood."

While Rwanda's ethnic Tutsis mostly have come to Islam seeking protection from purges and to honour and emulate the people who saved them, Hutus also have come, seeking to leave behind their violent past. "They all felt the blood on their hands and they embraced Islam to purify themselves," Habimana said.

Becoming Muslim has not been an easy process for many Rwandans, who chafe at the religion's dress and lifestyle restrictions.

Despite Islam's new status, Rwandan Muslims traditionally have been second-class citizens, working as taxi drivers and traders in a society that reveres farmers. "Because we were Muslim we weren't considered Rwandanese," Habimana said. Now, as the religion's popularity grows, that is changing.

Today "we see Muslims as very kind people," said Salamah Ingabire, 20, who converted to Islam in 1995 after losing two brothers in the killing spree. "What we saw in the genocide changed our minds."

[www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chic-0208050150aug05.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chic-0208050150aug05.story)

## CIC Honours Canadians

At the annual dinner held by the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) in Ottawa on October 21, 2002, nine Canadians shared seven awards as follows:

\* The Canadian Islamic Congress 2002 Peace Award was granted to the Hon. Alexa McDonough, MP and leader of the New Democratic Party, for her "effort to promote social justice in Canada and peace with justice worldwide."

\* The Canadian Islamic Congress 2002 Media Excellence Award was earned by Thomas Walkom of the Toronto Star as a reward for his "journalistic excellence in covering Canadian civil liberty issues."

\* The Canadian Islamic Congress 2002 Heroism Award was accepted by Mohamed Chelali of Vancouver, in honour of his "bravery" after he was credited for saving

French President Jacques Chirac's life last summer in a "foiled assassination attempt."

\* The Canadian Islamic Congress 2002 Community Media Award was given to Ahmad Bilal Chami of Montreal in recognition of "his effort in establishing the Montreal Muslim community's first trilingual newspaper, Al Hijrah."

\* The Canadian Islamic Congress 2002 Special Community Service Award was granted to Dr. Ahmet Fuad Sahin, MD, of Niagara-on-the-Lake, in recognition of him being one of the country's most senior medical professionals, and one of the longest-serving leaders of the Muslim community. He is the founder of the Council of Muslim Communities of Canada (CMCC).

\* The Canadian Islamic Congress 2002 Youth Community Serv-

ice Award was presented to Muhammad Ahmed Khan, of St. John's Newfoundland for his service to the Muslim Student's Association of Memorial University as well as the St. John's Muslim Community.

\* The Canadian Islamic Congress 2002 Community Service Award was granted to:

- Mrs. Pat Flemming of Toronto in honour of her dedication in helping establish the Toronto Islamic Social Services.

- Mrs. Naizara Tareen of Ottawa as a reward for her service to the Ottawa Muslim Community which lasted over 30 years.

Dr. Abdul Fatah, MD of Waterloo, Ontario, was recognised for his valued service to the Kitchener-Waterloo Muslim Community for over 30 years.

## The CIC Files Complaint Against Canadian Television Stations

In response to an interview aired on October 6, 2002 on CBS' 60 Minutes, in which American evangelist, Reverend Jerry Falwell's said, "I think Muhammad was a terrorist", the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) issued a strong statement condemning the Reverend.

The CIC's legal counsel, Faisal Joseph said, "Falwell's statement constitutes hate-speech against an identifiable religious minority group. It is both slanderous and provocative and totally irresponsible for any religious leader, especially at this sensitive time." The CIC has thus filed a formal complaint with the CRTC against all Canadian television stations that broadcast this interview. The CIC is also considering further legal action under Canada's hate crime laws.





## Newsroom

### Imam gets a new hat

Imam Abdul Hai Patel of the Council of Imams, Toronto, has been appointed to the newly formed Provincial Minister's Round table (advisory Council), on Cultural affairs at Queens Park. This will be chaired by the Minister of Culture and Chair of the Management Board of the Cabinet Mr. David Tshubouchi. The role will be to advise the Government on Cultural policy matters. It is a part time position.

This is an honour to the Muslim community in Toronto.

### Islamic scholar passes away

The translator of the Quran entitled "The Quran: First American Version" (1985), Dr. T. B. Irving, 88, passed away on September 24, 2002 at his Mississippi home after a battle with Alzheimer's disease. A Canadian by birth, Dr. Irving, also known as Talim Ali, accepted Islam over 50 years ago and had since, penned many books in an attempt to make the Quran and its teachings easily accessible to Muslim youths in North America. He aimed at a modern, English-speaking audience as he translated the Quran in modern English and wrote such books as "Had You Been Born Muslim", "Islam in Its Essence", "Religion and Social Responsibility", and the well known "The Quran: Basic Teachings", which he co-authored with Dr. Kurshid Ahmad. He was buried on September 28 in his hometown.

### Muslims and Christians see eye to eye on Iraq

A letter sent to western government leaders from the World Council of Churches (WCC) in September, concerning the US war against Iraq received strong support from the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC). The WCC is a group that represents churches in the USA, Britain and Canada, which, after their Central Committee meeting issued their letter saying in part that "...we have heard and share the concern of those of other nations about the apparent drift towards military confrontation in Iraq..." The letter went on to state the concern of the WCC that the US has "failed to heed the advice and counsel of friends and allies."

The WCC letter voiced that Muslim-Christian relations would suffer a strain if such a war was to be carried out and the fact that it might trigger "direct military confrontation in Israel cannot be ignored...the forces of extremism and terrorism would be strengthened rather than diminished." They urged their governments to seek out means for active cooperation with the United Nations in an attempt to "stop the apparent rush to war."

In a comment by president of the CIC, Prof. Mohamed Elmasry, concerning the WCC letter, he stated that the CIC agrees totally with their views.

### Canadian Muslim doctors to be honoured

The Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) held its annual dinner in Ottawa on October 21, 2002 in honour of the contributions made by Canadian Muslim Doctors to society. Over 6% of doctors in Canada are Muslim and among those honoured for their service are Dr. Fuad Sahin. Dr. Sahin, 80, founded the Council of Muslim Communities of Canada (CMCC) in 1971 and is known to be one of the longest serving Muslim community leaders.

In continuing with tradition, special invitees to the CIC dinner include members of the Canadian government, political leaders, Canadian Muslim leaders and members of the media and faith groups. President of the CIC, Professor Mohamed Elmasry noted that this event "provides an excellent opportunity for intercultural, interfaith, and international networking."

### In T.O. Dial 211 for help

Residents of Toronto with area codes 416 and 647 now have a new telephone service, 211, that was launched on July 13, 2002. The purpose of the 211 service is to help callers get easy connection to the community, social, health, and government services that they might need. It is a free, multilingual, confidential service that is available 24 hours a day. In addition to this telephone service, 211 can also be accessed on the Internet at [www.211Toronto.ca](http://www.211Toronto.ca). Both the telephone and online service offer the same service to the public. The online version is even equipped with detailed data and maps to further help the user with the information they require.

In the few months since the existence of this service, records have shown that Torontonians have caught on very quickly and have been readily accessing this service in large numbers.

The 211 service may be used for such things, as searching for home

### Canada issues advisory to Canadians: Be careful in the US

Canada has advised its citizens of Arab origin to exercise extreme caution when they visit the US, in a sharp protest at a lack of neighbourly treatment by American immigration officials.

The advice is a measure of frustration at the failure of the US authorities to spare Canadian passport holders the embarrassment and delays of a new security regime which singles out visitors from Arab countries for photographing and fingerprinting...

care, childcare, language training, legal aid, and addiction problems, among numerous other things. Residents are reminded to use 911 for emergencies, and 411 for general consumer questions, such as the name or number of a store.

Canadians are angry at the treatment of several citizens, most notably an Ottawa engineer, Maher Arar. Mr Arar, who was born in Syria, was detained in September during a transit stop in the US on his way home from a family holiday. American authorities refused to divulge any information on his whereabouts for days. He was held without access to a lawyer, then deported to Jordan. From there he made his way to Syria, where he was jailed.

"Essentially what the government has done is recognise a very serious problem between the US and Canada," said Riad Saloojee, the director in Canada of Cair, the Council on American Islamic Relations. "It was a really strong diplomatic message."

"Many people in Canada are caught in a Catch 22 situation. They do not want to be subjected to this harassment, but they do not want to lose their livelihood (by not being able to travel to the US)."

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## Muslims Attacked in Australia in Wake of Bali Bombings

Following the bombings in Bali, Muslims have been on the receiving end of many anti-Islamic attacks. Islamic clerics have been spat on, mosques vandalised, girls have had

their head scarves ripped off, only to name a few.

Over 40 anti-Islamic attacks have been reported in Sydney alone since the bombings in Bali that killed many Australians. Police Commissioner of New South Wales, Ken Moroney said that there are more attacks that may have gone unreported, mostly on Muslim women who feared retribution if they told authorities.

Recently, vandals attacked the King Abdul-Aziz Islamic School in western Sydney, as well as the adjoining mosque and Muslim leader's home.

Police have made no arrests in any of the attacks.

Australian Muslims also faced abuse and attacks for the period immediately following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the US. Mosques were torched, veiled Muslim girls were abused and a bus carrying children to an Islamic School was stoned.

## Torture Plague Chechen Streets

Documenting Russia's 'anti-terrorism campaign' on Chechnya, the reporter claims that the latest tactic used by the federal army involves blowing people up, dead or alive. It may have been most effectively used on July 3, when 21 men, women and children, bound together, were blown up in the village of Meskyer, Yurt. Their remains were thrown in a ditch.

From the army's perspective, this method of execution is highly practical, as it prevents the number of bodies from being counted or ever being found. However, since spring, dogs have been unearthing body parts in various areas of Chechnya almost daily.

More traditional methods continue though, as the bodies of six men were found on September 9. They were naked, with plastic bags wrapped around their heads. In June, a ditch of 50 mutilated bodies were found near an army post in Chankala. Mass graves have also been found near Grozny, Chechen Yurt, Alkhan-Kala and Argun.

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## A Canadian Recounts His Experience with US Customs

The treatment of Canadians by US Customs has truly suffered a tremendous change for the worse.

As a Canadian traveller recounts his trip from Toronto to Chicago by train, he claims that the Americans required that everyone moved to one end of the train, carrying all their luggage on the trip back. At one stop in Port Huron, American soldiers in army fatigues patrolled outside while some boarded the train, one standing behind each person being questioned. Many travellers, including senior citizens, were clearly terrified by this treatment.

Every Canadian who was not of Caucasian origin was removed from the train to undergo "further questioning", held in a drab trailer near the tracks. Those who had to go for this questioning had to struggle on and off the train with all those travelling with them, along with their luggage, assisted.

It is understandable that the American Customs officers are just doing their job, but they should truly use their discretion when it comes to situations involving seniors, and women with young children.

## Somalis Welcome in Lewiston

On October 13, 2002, some 300 people in Lewiston participated in a one-mile long march as a means of showing their support for Somali immigrants. The march, originally planned as a Sunday school activity, was opened to the public after the mayor of Lewiston expressed his concerns that if more Somali immigrants arrived, it would place a strain on local services.

Those who participated in the march, mostly residents of Lewiston and Auburn, stated that they wanted the Somalis to feel welcome.

An elder representative of the Somali community, Mohamed Abdi, in a speech made to the participants of the march, thanked the residents for showing support to them and for being willing to accept them as part of their community.

## History made in Sudan

History was made in Sudan on October 15, 2002 as the Sudanese government signed a cease-fire with rebels for the duration of their most recent peace talks. The truce was scheduled to take effect on October 17. It is the first time that such a truce has been reached throughout the 19-year history of civil war in Sudan.

## Hindu hardliners call strike in Gujarat

On September 26, numerous Muslim families fled their homes in Ahmedabad for fear of an eruption of violence as Hindu hardliners called a one-day strike in a protest action against a deadly attack on a temple that left 31 dead.

Many families sought refuge in mosques and community halls in the city that was affected the worst during sectarian violence that hit Gujarat earlier in the year. Others fled to areas that served as relief camps after the riots in March that killed almost 1000 Muslims after the attack of a train that carried Hindu activists and left about 2000 dead. On September 26, no violence was reported to have occurred in the city, where members of the right wing Vishwa Hindu Parishad enforced a general strike. They claimed that Pakistan was responsible for the attack on the temple.

Even though there was heavy police and army presence in the city, Muslims still feared for their lives, as they were afraid that a similar event that occurred after the train incident would happen again.

## All India Christian Council Condemns Anti-Islam Remarks

The All India Christian Council, on October 11, condemned the remarks made by Rev. Jerry Falwell and called for amity and harmony between Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and other communities. In the statement released by the council, it states that the views aired by Falwell opposed the nature of Christianity.

"The leaders of the council have been horrified by the recent statements against Islam made by the Rev. Falwell in a public broadcast," said the statement issued by the president and general-secretary of the Council, "the statements are not only opposed to the spirit and words of Christ but also to the nature of Christianity, which is a religion of love and grace. The diatribe of Rev Falwell reveals a shallow understanding of the religion... Rev Falwell's outburst is in poor taste and does not reflect the feelings of the Christian community..."

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# Community Bulletin

International Muslims  
Organisation, 65  
Rexdale Blvd.  
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**Every Friday (between Maghrib and Isha):**  
*Tajweed & Qur'an Tafseer in English (By Imam Hamid Slimi) (In Ramadan Tafseer every day half an hour before Isha)*  
**Sundays before and after Dhuhr** Arabic Classes for Adults (In Ramadan)  
**Ramadan Contest:** Visit IMO Center or visit website: [www.imoofortoronto.com](http://www.imoofortoronto.com) for more information (As last year, the prizes will be distributed during the last 10 days of Ramadan).

**Saturdays & Sundays:**  
Speeches by Eminent Speakers and Imams after Iftar.  
**Ramadan Islamic Book Day:** Saturday, November 23, 2002 at IMO Center beginning at 01:00 PM followed by Iftar and a speech  
**Speaker: Dawood Frost** (Formerly Rev. David Frost)  
Lecture: "Read to Lead"  
**Isha Prayers and Taraaweeh:** 07:30 PM  
**Eid Salaat** (1st Salaat: 08:15 AM - 2nd Salaat: 09:30 AM)

TARIC Islamic Centre  
99 Beverly Hill Drive,  
North York

**First Taraweeh (Tentative)**  
Tuesday, November 5  
Taraweeh Salat will begin right after Isha Salaat  
**Ramadan Starts**  
Wednesday, November 6  
(Tentative)  
**Laila-Tul-Qadr:** Sunday, Dec 1 (Tentative)  
**Eid-ul-Fitr:** Friday, December 6 /02 (Tentative)

What is up at your mosque?

## UK Charity Coast to Coast Food Drive

Since September 11, 2001 Muslims charities have been subjected to intense scrutiny from governments around the world. Their assets have been frozen and some have been forced to shut down completely. A deep mistrust has developed even within the Muslim community towards groups raising funds for seemingly worthy causes across the globe.

Islamic charities have been forced to undertake serious efforts to regain the confidence of donors and ease the paranoia surrounding their activities. One such group that has undertaken this daunting task is the UK-based charity Islamic Relief. Formed in 1984 to help alleviate the suffering of impoverished regions in the world, Islamic Relief has developed into a worldwide organization with offices in twenty-two countries across the globe.

Islamic Relief is a recognized non-governmental organization with the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the British government. They have consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council, and are also signatories to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Although most of Islamic Relief's work takes place in countries with large Muslim populations, Islamic Relief helps those in need regardless of race, religion or gender. Their relief efforts have spanned the globe from Congo to China, from El Salvador to Chechnya and other regions torn by war, famine, poverty and political unrest. The organization has also established an emergency response unit to deal with regions struck by natural disasters, such as the volcanic eruptions in the Congo where a team from Islamic Relief carried out a needs-assessment mission, and delivered over \$110,000 in aid.

Although the organization has not established a Canadian chapter, they have recently embarked upon a project that concerns the Canadian population at large. Beginning October 26<sup>th</sup> in Scarborough, 2002 Islamic Relief will conduct information sessions and initiate a massive food drive to benefit the poor and homeless in and around major Canadian cities. The information sessions will be geared towards raising awareness about Islamic Relief's work in war-torn areas of the world and will include video footage from Afghanistan, Palestine, Chechnya and elsewhere.

Working with local non-profit organizations such as the Muslim Welfare Centre in Scarborough, Islamic Relief will be focusing on empowering the poor and needy – helping them to help themselves. After touring western Canada, Islamic Relief will make its way back to Montreal for the last stop on the tour on November 24<sup>th</sup>. Organizers of the event will be appearing on local media outlets such as Radio Islam and Visions of Pakistan. Please tune in to these programs to learn more about the details of the tour. More details about the organization can be found on their website [www.islamic-relief.com](http://www.islamic-relief.com).

### 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:

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Tel: 416-516-6686



## The Most Beautiful Names of Allah

"And (all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah, so call on Him by them and leave the company of those who belie or deny (or utter impious speech against) His Names. They will be required for what they used to do." Surat Al-A'raf (8:180)

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (RA) that The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said "Verily Allah has 99 Names - one hundred less one - whoever (Ahsaha) learns, understands and believes in them will enter paradise".

The first Name in the text refers to the Attribute of Allah. The repetition preceded by 'Ya' refers to the appeal to that Attribute.

The information given is an introduction to the meanings and effects of the Names. It is advisable to follow guidance of a shaikh.

### AL-JABBAR

The Compeller: He who repairs all broken things, who completes that which is incomplete, and who has the ability, with force, to make people do whatever He wants.

### YA-JABBAR

It is said that he who repeats this Name will not be compelled to do anything against his wishes, and will not be exposed to violence, severity, or hardness.

### AL-MUTAKABBIR

The Majestic: He who shows His greatness in all things and in all ways.

### YA-MUTAKABBIR

It is said that he who repeats this Name will be blessed with righteous child.

### AL-KHALIQ

The Creator: He who creates everything from nothing and creates all things with the knowledge of what will happen to them.

### YA-KHALIQ

It is said that he who repeats this Name, Allah (SWT) will create an angel whose duty is to act righteously for this person until the day of judgement. The reward for this angel's actions will be given to that person.

### AL-MUSAWWIR

The Fashioner: He who designs all things.

### YA-MUSAWWIR

It is said that if a pregnant woman repeats this Name, Allah will ease her delivery and bless her with a child.



# Blessings of Ramadhan

Continued from page 1

## References from the Hadith

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Allah said: 'The Fast is for Me and I will give the reward for it, as he (the one who observes the fast) leaves his sexual desire, food and drink for My Sake. Fasting is a screen (from Hell) and there are two pleasures for a fasting person, one at the time of breaking his fast, and the other at the time when he will meet his Lord. And the smell of the mouth of a fasting person is better in Allah's Sight than the smell of musk.'" (Bukhari and Muslim)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said in a sermon which he delivered to them on the last day of Sha'ban, "A great month, a blessed month, a month containing a night which is better than a thousand months has approached you people. If someone draws near to Allah during it with some good act he will be like one who fulfils an obligatory duty in another month, and he who fulfils an obligatory duty in it will be like one who fulfils seventy obligatory duties in another month. It is the month of endurance and the reward of endurance is Paradise. It is the month of sharing with others, and a month in which the believer's provision is increased. If someone gives one who has been fasting something with which to break his fast it will provide forgiveness of his sins and save him from Hell, and he will have a reward equal to his without his reward being diminished in any respect." We remarked to Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) that not all of us have the means to give one who had been fasting something with which to break his fast. He replied, "Allah gives this reward to him who gives one who has been fasting some milk mixed with water, or a date, or a drink of water with which to break his fast. Anyone who gives a full meal to one who has been fasting will be given a drink from my tank (Hawd) by Allah and will not thirst till he enters Paradise. It is a month whose beginning is mercy, whose middle is forgiveness, and whose end is freedom from Hell. If anyone makes things easy for his slave during it, Allah will forgive him and free him from Hell." (Bayhaqi)

Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet saying: "The time between the five prayers, two consecutive Friday prayers, and two consecutive Ramadans are expiations for all that has happened during that period, provided that one has avoided the grave sins." (Muslim)

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported that the Prophet (pbuh), said: "Whoever fasts the month of Ramadan, obeying all of its limitations and guarding himself against what is forbidden, has in fact atoned for any sins he committed before it." (Bayhaqi, Ahmed)

M'uaadh Ibn Jabal related: I asked the Prophet (pbuh): Messenger of Allah, tell me of something, which should cause me to be admitted to Paradise, and will keep me away from the Fire. He answered: "You have asked about a matter of great importance but it is easy for one for whom Allah makes it easy. Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him. Observe Prayer, pay the Zakat,

observe the Fast of Ramadan and perform the Pilgrimage if you can afford the journey. Then he added: Shall I inform you of the gates of goodness? The fast is a shield. Charity puts out sins as water puts out fire and also the Prayer in the middle of the night. (Tirmidhi)

The prophet stated: "In paradise there are eight gates among which is a gate called Al Rayyan from which only those who fast will enter." (Bukhari and Muslim)

All scholars agree that fasting is obligatory upon every sane, adult, healthy Muslim male and female who is not traveling at that time, from sunrise to sunset for 29 or 30 days of Ramadhan, which is the 9<sup>th</sup> month of Islamic Lunar calendar. As for a woman, she must not be menstruating or having post-childbirth bleeding.

## Exemptions from obligatory fasting – References from the Qur'an and Hadith

"(Fasting) for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill or on a journey the prescribed number (should be made up) from days later. For those who can do it (with hardship) is a ransom the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give more of his own free will it is better for him and it is better for you that ye fast if ye only knew." (2.184)

People who are insane or minors are exempt from obligatory fasting. Also women when menstruating, or going through post-childbirth bleeding are exempt from this obligatory fast. There is a unique exemption given to travelers, elderly who because of age or illness are too weak to fast, and breast feeding or pregnant women. Muslims under these specifications are encouraged, if possible, to fast during Ramadhan but it is not obligatory for them to do so, they must however, pay Fidyah (compensation) for each missed fast and are supposed to make up for the missed fasts later when their health permits. There are detailed specifications in Fiqh, it is better to investigate thoroughly or ask a scholar before making generalization.

Narrated by Aisha: "Hamzah ibn Amr al-Aslami asked the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) about fasting on a journey, and he (the Prophet) said: Fast if you like and break it if you like." (Bukhari)

According to a Hadith: "Allah has relieved the travelers of fasting and half of the prayer, and the pregnant and the breast-feeding women of the fast." (Bukhari) This means that they are exempted of doing so if it's hard for them to. It may be noted that travel in these times is not much difficult or physically challenging as it was in those days, hence those who can do it its better for them to do it.

Aishah said: "When we would have our menses during the lifetime of the Prophet, we were ordered to make up the days of fasting that we had missed but were not ordered to make up the prayers that we had missed." (Al Bukhari)

**Approaching the wife:** "Permitted to you on the night of the fasts is the approach to your wives. They are your garments. And ye are their

garments. Allah knoweth what ye used to do secretly among yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you; so now associate with them and seek what Allah hath ordained for you and eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appear to you distinct from its black thread; then complete your fast till the night appears." (2.187)

Yahya related through references from Ayesha that she overheard a man standing at the door saying to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Messenger of Allah, I get up in the morning with junub, (in a state of major ritual impurity), and want to fast," and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "I too get up in the morning with junub and want to fast, so I do ghusl (ritual bath) and fast." The man said to him, "You are not the same as us. Allah has forgiven you all your wrong actions that have gone before and those that have come after." The Messenger of Allah (pbuh), got angry and said, "By Allah, I hope that I am the most fearful of you with respect to Allah and the most knowledgeable of you in how I have taqwa." (Bukhari)

Narrated by Aisha: The Prophet used to kiss and embrace (his wives) while he was fasting, and he had more power to control his desires than any of you (Al Bukhari, Al Muwatta.)

**Eating or drinking in forgetfulness:** Narrated by Abu Hurayrah: The Prophet said, "If somebody eats or drinks forgetfully then he should complete his fast, for what he has eaten or drunk, has been given to him by Allah."

**Use of tooth stick or siwak:** Narrated 'Amir bin Rabi'a, "I saw the Prophet cleaning his teeth with Siwak while he was fasting so many times as I can't count." (Bukhari) Note that the above are only a few of the permissible acts during fast. More references for deeper perspectives to common queries may be sought into with the help of Al Bukhari, Muslim and other confirmed sources of Hadith and Sunnah.

## Recommended act in Ramadhan – References from the Hadith

**Providing for the Breaking of Fast for Others:** Narrated by Zaid Ibn Khalid Jubaini, The Prophet (pbuh) said: "He who provides for the breaking of the fast of another earns the same merit as the one who was observing the fast, without diminishing in any way the reward of the latter." (Tirmidhi)

**Being Generous and Studying the Qur'an:** Ibn 'Abbas said: "The Prophet was the most generous of people, but he would be his most generous during Ramadan when he would meet with [the angel] Jibraeel (Gabriel.) He would meet with him every night and recite the Qur'an. When Gabriel met him, he used to be more generous than a fast wind." Al Bukhari

It is recorded from Aishah that during the last ten days of Ramadan, the Messenger of Allah would wake his wives up during the night and then remain apart from them (that is, being busy in acts of worship). A version in Muslim states: "He would strive [to do acts of worship] during the last ten days of Ramadan more

than he would at any other time." (Bukhari and Muslim)

**Uphold Good Morals:** Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet said: "Fasting is not [abstaining] from eating and drinking only, but also from vain speech and foul language. If one of you is being cursed or annoyed, he should say: 'I am fasting, I am fasting.'" (Bukhari, Muslim)

## FIDYA (compensation) For not fasting – References from the Hadith

Fidyah is the compensation that a Muslim must give if he/she is unable to fast or breaks an incomplete fast in Ramadhan due to weakness or other reasons.

Elderly men and women are permitted to break their fasts, as are the chronically ill, and those who have to perform difficult jobs under harsh circumstances and who could not find any other way to support themselves. All of these people are allowed to break their fast, because such a practice would place too much hardship on them during any part of the year. They are obliged to feed one poor person [miskin] a day (for every day of fasting that they do not perform). The scholars differ over how much food is to be supplied, for example. There is nothing in the Sunnah that mentions exactly how much is to be given. (Fiqh Sunnah 3.115)

## KAFFARA (Expiation) for breaking the fast without a valid excuse

Malik related that a man broke the fast in Ramadan and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) ordered him to make Kaffara by freeing a slave, or fasting two consecutive months, or feeding sixty poor people, and he said, "I can't do it." Someone brought a large basket of dates to the Messenger of Allah, (may Allah bless him and grant him peace,) and he said, "Take this and give it away as sadaqa." (Muwatta 18.28)

## SUHOOR or Pre-dawn meal – References from the Hadith

Muslims agree that it is preferred to eat a pre-dawn meal and that there is no sin upon one who does not do so. Anas reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "Eat a pre-dawn meal, for there are blessings in it." Miqdam ibn Madyakrib reported that the Prophet, (pbuh), said: "You should eat this pre-dawn meal for it is a blessed nourishment." (Bukhari and Muslim) The Sunnah would be fulfilled by eating a small or large quantity of food, or even just by drinking a sip of water. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "The pre-dawn meal is blessed, so do not neglect it even if you only take a sip of water. Verily, Allah and the angels pray for those who have pre-dawn meals." (Ahmad)

**Time for a pre-dawn meal:** The time for the pre-dawn meal is between the middle of the night and dawn. It is considered best to delay it (that is, as close to dawn as possible). Zaid ibn Thabit reported: "We ate the pre-dawn meal with the Messenger of Allah and then we got up for the prayer". He was asked: "What was the amount of time between the two?" He responded: "[The time it would take to recite] fifty verses." (Bukhari

and Muslim.)

'Amr ibn Maimun adds: "The companions of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, would be the first to break the fast and the last to eat their pre-dawn meals."...(Baihaqi)

Abu Dharr al-Ghafari related that the Prophet said: "My nation will always retain some goodness as long as they hasten breaking the fast and delay eating the pre-dawn meal." **NIYYA'H/ Intention to fast:** The intention must be made before Fajr and during every night of Ramadan. This point is based on the Hadith that Hafsa reported, that the Prophet said: "Whoever does not determine to fast before Fajr will have no fast" (that is, it won't be accepted). (Nisaai, Abu Dawood and Ibn Maajah)

## IFTAR or Breaking of the fast – References from the Hadith

It is preferred for the fasting person to hasten in breaking the fast when the sun has set. Sahl ibn Sad reported that the Prophet said: "The people will always be with the good as long as they hasten in breaking the fast." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Anas reported: "The Messenger of Allah would break his fast with ripe dates before he would pray. If those were not available, he would eat dried dates. If those were not available, he would drink some water (Al Bukhari and Muslim.) Narrated Abu Hurayrah: Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, that Allah Most High said, "Those of my servants who are quickest in breaking their fast are dearest to me." (Tirmidhi -(Hadith Qudsi)

## Supplications at the time of Iftar and during Ramadhan

Related Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas that the Prophet, (pbuh) said: "A fasting person, upon breaking his fast, has a supplication that will not be rejected." (Ibn Majah) It is confirmed that the Prophet would say: "The thirst has gone, the glands are wet and, Allah willing, the reward is confirmed." (Fiqh Sunnah)

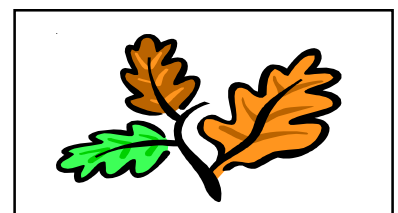
The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Three people will not have their supplications rejected: a fasting person until he breaks his fast, a just ruler, and an oppressed person." (Tirmidhi)

## TARAWEEH Prayers – A recommended Sunnah

### References from the Hadith

The specific prayers during the month of Ramadan, which are known as Taraweeh, are Sunnah for both men and women, and they are to be performed after the obligatory 'isha and before the performance of the Witr. (Fiqh Sunnah 2.27)

Narrated Abu Huraira: I heard Allah's Apostle saying regarding Ramadan, "Whoever prayed at night in it (the month of Ramadan) out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven." "Allah has made fasting in Ramadan obligatory, and I have made the special prayer of Ramadan (i.e. the Tarawih) a Sunnah".



## The Design in Nature

Continued from page 1  
and assembled in the plant.

However, what about a living creature? Can a bird and mechanics of its flying be a design as well? Before giving an answer, let us repeat the evaluation we did for the example of a car. The goal at hand, in this case, is to fly. For this purpose, hollowed bones, strong muscles that move these bones are utilized together with feathers capable of suspending in the air. Wings are formed aerodynamically, and metabolism is in tune with the bird's need for high levels of energy. It is obvious that the bird is product of a certain design.

If one explores other creatures besides a bird, similar facts are attained. There are examples of a certain meticulous design in every creature. If one continues further on this quest, one would discover that our selves are also a part of this certain design. Our hands that hold these pages are functional as no robot hands could ever be. Our eyes that read these lines are making vision possible with such focus that the best camera on earth simply cannot.

Hence one arrives at this important conclusion: all creatures in Nature, including us, are of a Design. This, in turn, shows the existence of a Creator Who designs all creatures at will, sustains the entire nature and holds absolute power and wisdom.

However, this truth is rejected by the theory of evolution that was formed in the middle of 19th century. The theory set forth in Charles Darwin's book "On The Origin of Species" asserts that all creatures evolved within a chain of coincidences and essentially mutated from one another.

According to the fundamental assertion of this theory all living things go through minute and coincidental changes. If these coincidental changes help the creature then it gains advantage over the others, which in turn is carried onto following generations.

This scenario has been passed around as if it is a very scientific and convincing one for 140 years. When scrutinized under a bigger microscope and when compared against the examples of the Design in creatures Darwin's theory paints a very different picture i.e. Darwinism's explanation of creation is nothing more than a self-conflicting vicious circle.

Let us first focus on the "coincidental changes". Darwin could not provide a comprehensive definition to this concept due to lack of genealogical knowledge in his time. The evolutionists who followed him put forth the concept of "mutation" on this subject. Mutation is arbitrary disconnections, dislocation or shifts of genes in living things. Most important point is that there is not one single mutation in history that is shown to improve the condition of genetic information of a creature. Nearly all the known cases of mutations disable or harm these creatures and the rest are neutral in effect. Therefore, to think that a creature can improve through mutation is same as shooting at a crowd of people and hope that the injuries will

result in healthier and improved individuals. This would clearly be nonsense.

As importantly, on contrary to all the scientific data, even if one assumes that a certain mutation could actually improve a being's condition, Darwinism still cannot be delivered from inevitable collapse. The reason for this is a concept called "irreducible complexity". The implication of this concept is that majority of systems and organs in living things function as a result of various independent parts, working together, elimination or disabling of even one of which would be enough, to disable the entire system or organ.

For example, an ear perceives sounds only through a chain reaction of a series of smaller organs. Take out or deform one of these, e.g. one of the bones of the middle ear, and there would be no hearing whatsoever. In order for an ear to perceive a variety of components such as auditory meatus, malleous, incus and stapes bones, tympanic membrane, cochlea and fluid, sensory cells, vibration sensor extensions of these cells, net of nerves that connect to brain and hearing center in the brain have to work together without exception. The system could not have developed in segments because none of the segments could possibly function alone at all.

Hence the concept of irreducible complexity demolishes the theory of evolution from its foundations. What is really interesting is the fact that Darwin also worried about these very prospects. He wrote in On The Origin of Species: "If the impossibility of formation of a complex organ through a series of small changes was ever to be proven my theory would have certainly collapsed. However I could not find such an organ..."

Darwin could not or might not have wanted to find such an organ at the premature levels of 19th century science. However the science of 20th century did study the nature down to minute details and proved that majority of living structures embody irreducible complexity. Therefore, Darwin's theory has most certainly "collapsed" just as he had feared.

As we examine the living beings we will not only see an immense error Darwinism makes but also witness the greatness of wisdom that these systems were created with. These mechanisms will be found anywhere from the wings of a bird to inside a bat's skull. Hence we will see the indisputable evidences of Allah's creation without error. Likewise, the power and faculty of Allah to create without error is expressed in the Qur'an as follows: "He is Allah — the Creator, the Maker, the Giver of Form. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies Him. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise." (59:24)

**Peace to all.  
Submission to Only One.  
That is Islam.**

## Globalization and its effects on Muslim youth

Continued from page 1

children, or the clothes etc.

Parents view and judge Islamicity by what their children wear, eat, and the company of friends they espouse. They are willing to accept challenges from their children on clothes and food, but not on the subject of marriage.

The western youth can accept Islamic reasoning, but not cultural reasoning. Often they do not know what is the difference and henceforth it comes down to the choice of rejection. When this crossover point is reached, proper Islamic guidance becomes necessary, but it is not always available to them. The family elders, the Imams or the scholars are caught between the family and cultural loyalty and true Islam and often do not provide the right guidance.

In the absence of such guidance, the youths suffer from *total rejection or pseudo rejection syndrome*.

Total rejection is not very common but often ends in leaving the family and later Islam for not having their ways in marriage. Desertion can be short term or permanent.

Pseudo rejection, which is most common in today's society, often leads to temporary severance of family ties, but not leaving Islam and after a period, reconciliation with the family is possible.

What is the prescription for this religious and cultural schizophrenia? There are some guidelines among which are understanding and practicing Islam; dealing with peer pressure; effective utilization of Internet and media; understanding media language and connotations; and travel.

Globalization has not created the desired awareness and knowledge of Muslim Ummah and their way of life. Documentaries produced by mostly western media do not depict the positive aspect of life or inner culture of people. Only by travel people learn about each other. Current trend in the globalization is increasing accessibility to many corners of the World.

However, Muslims need to understand the difference between Islam and deeply rooted traditions and culture in their societies, which they bring with them hoping to uphold them to the maximum.

Many Muslims after immigration becomes paranoid over the threat of western influence on their children and try to create world within their dwellings based on nationalism, ethnicity and culture under the banner of Islam. This includes everything from furniture arrangements, decorations to sleeping habits, clothes and above all food and eating habits. This imposition of cultural traditions upon children works well until they reach high school. Then the nightmare starts as parents see the personality disorder taking birth in their otherwise obedient and loyal children. Peer pressure injects the poison of rebellion and rights, but not responsibilities.

Parents now face a new dilemma to cope with their children, called "peer pressure." Average working-class parents struggling for economic survival often abdicate their respon-

sibilities to their children. Coming home from long day's work they are too tired to deal with their children's problems. This neglect drives Muslim youth to explore solutions elsewhere, which can result in positive or negative depending on where they go and who they meet.

One of the components of globalization is Internet and Muslim youth are increasingly turning to cyberspace for both information and friendship. Through this the youth are better informed about Islam and Muslims than their parents. Every one has to develop and implement monitoring-mechanism that is best suited to their family's way of life.

Globalization is proving to be an unsolicited avenue for influencing Western youth, through its readily affordable computers.

But these entire mediums cannot satisfy the spiritual hunger of Muslim youth in the west. Internet, Satellites and many Islamic Centres cannot provide the spiritual nourishment in the West. Muslims need to focus on ways to develop spiritual uplifting through in-person training camps and forums. Qualified Sheikhs should conduct them.

While the Eastern youth, from predominantly Muslim countries, look to the Western way of life and culture, youth in the west are more eager to learn and practice Islamic way to create identity and visibility.

Globalization, despite increased awareness of the World, has given strength to the number of other cultures, such as strong consumer culture, music culture and drug culture among the youth in the West. These cultures coupled with post 9-11 impact on Muslims have sent the Mus-

lim youth identity in a tailspin. For example the Patriot act in USA and Bill C-36 and Bill C-55 in Canada and similar legislations in Western Europe will force Muslims to conceal their identity even more out of fear.

Trend of globalization is continuing and Muslims throughout the World need to understand its process. We need to become active players, so we can be proactive in identifying the problems and produce solutions before its impact is felt.

I believe the Ummah should develop an international global identity

for Muslim youth worldwide. This would leave culture, country, and tribe aside. The main push would be for a Muslim global youth identity, based on Islamic culture. This is the future and we should aim to create this through a combination of media and personal contact.

As it stands Muslim youth are searching for their

identity and link with Muslim Ummah. Current trends in Islamic movements and Organizations are all leading to a segmented identity by association to create acceptance by the community e.g. Ikhwan, Tablighi, Salafi, ISNA, ICNA etc. These labels often result in isolation and at times, edging them into extremism or tunnel vision thinking. We need to overcome our own stereotypes.

In its effort to revitalize Muslim Ummah, the inner focus of Islamic cause is lost and replaced by an identifiable loyalty to organizations. We need to develop a dynamic young Muslim who serves Islam instead of movements. This is the future I believe, we need to strive for. May Allah help us. Ameen.

***The inner focus of Islamic cause is lost and replaced by an identifiable loyalty to organizations. We need to develop a dynamic young Muslim who serves Islam instead of movements.***

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## Book Review

Review by Rashid Mughal

Good books on *ibadaat* (Islamic medical ethics) – prayer, devotion, faith – are few and far between. Most are dogmatic in dealing with everyday aspects such as personal hygiene, mental attitude, prayer and devotion and few actually profess a common-sense approach to a Muslim's sense of spirituality or a personal relationship with Allah.

Many books nowadays harp on how difficult it is to render Arabic scriptures into English. They demonstrate the inability of the authors – some of them so-called scholars of Islam – who balk at the idea of using Roget's thesaurus for whatever reason yet choose to write in English for a universal audience.

Amjad Syed has thankfully produced a compilation of the best advice of any that I know and, for ease of reference, has organized the subjects under scrutiny in a Q&A format for easier reference and meaningful reading at a glance. He quotes the authentic *Ahadith* or the traditions established by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) surrounding the issues under discussion and simplifies matters for scholar and layperson alike to resolve delicate issues concerning faith.

The author, a 30-year veteran of hospital visitation in Ontario, clearly suggests that instead of thrusting God aside in times of bodily trouble, and waiting for the hour of strength in which to acknowledge Him, *Islamic Perspectives on Prayers & Coping with Sickness* is meant to remind readers that Allah can do all things for us in sickness as in health.

The author's attitude is remarkably simple: he guides the reader again and again to the main sources of Islam – namely, the Qur'an and Sunnah – and helps the reader to appreciate the unifying similarities of the four schools of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) rather than dwell on their prevalent differences.

Concerning such matters as losing or not losing one's ablution upon minor actions or on eating camel meat (a rare delight in Canada, no



### Islamic Perspectives on Prayers & Coping with Sickness

by Amjad R. M. Syed  
ISNA Canada, 152pp, \$15

thank you!) or upon the obligatory nature of *ghusl*, the author constantly reminds us of the non-dogmatic traditions and why we should practise simplicity in our lives and not get bogged down in culture or conjecture.

The lucid and clear writing style of *Islamic Perspectives on Prayers & Coping with Sickness* has much to recommend it to the second generation of Arab and non-Arab Muslims who have made the West their home, for herein they will find the diction smooth and well researched and the content meaningful and enlightening. The book contains a good balance of rational and revelational food for thought for the living concerning the sick, the dying, and the dead – and a useful glossary to boot – on one's prayerful journey back to health.

In resolving *fiqh* matters and issues, the author exhorts the reader to (1) look into the Qur'an, (2) look into the Sunnah, and (3) exercise one's God-given judgment. This book will be useful to everyone who does not have access to as many *ahadith* as s/he may need to be guided correctly in one's day-to-day affairs, both in sickness and in health.

The book will be a boon to hospitals, patient care-givers, visitors, doctors and medical practitioners in Canada and the United States in dealing with their Muslim patients and for Muslim patients to turn to the greatest healer of all, Allah, at all times.

*Islamic Perspectives on Prayers & Coping with Sickness* sells for \$15 at ISNA's Islamic Book Store (2200 South Sheridan Way, Mississauga, Ontario L5J 2M4, Tel (905) 403-8406, Fax (905) 403-8409, Email: [isna@isnacanada.com](mailto:isna@isnacanada.com) and it would make an ideal Eid gift this year.