

The Ambition

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The First Journal for Young Muslims in Canada

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The Qur'an, Kids, and Control

by Reema Said

Every Saturday, when I was a kid, my father used to load my sister, my brother, and myself into the car and drive us down to the local high school for weekend Islamic classes. We called it "Saturday School." I remember waking up on those weekend mornings dreading the thought of having to spend half the day learning things that I felt did not matter to me and many times left me feeling scared and vulnerable. I would have rather spent the time playing with my friends.

However, my parents were bent on saving us from the

corruption of Western society and felt that if we went to Islamic classes we would somehow be protected and immune. Even as a child I could sense their worry, fear, and concern about how we would turn out. I wanted to tell them that they could trust me, that I had a mind of my own. I needed them to talk to me about feelings, thoughts, and concerns no matter what they were. Instead they made us feel guilty and angry.

They tried hard to control our behaviour and thinking, both inside the home and by handing us over to the teachers at the School who would 'show us the light.' Sadly,

these people did not teach us with understanding; instead they focused dogmatically, like many parents, on the do's and don'ts of Islam. Many times we were told outright lies or threatened with Qur'anic verses which were totally out of context in order to control our behaviour and choices.

I remember feeling horrified when one teacher told us that if we missed any of our prayers we would have to pray them in the fire of Hell! I was only seven or eight years old at the time and a part of me believed him.

We were told that Islam meant

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Hajj and Eid Mubarak to all Muslims

The Judge's Decision Is Not Yet In

Reported by Sister Wilma

Chief Judge Sidney Linden of the Provincial Court, has yet to render his decision in the case of Mr. Mark Jan Harding of The Christian Standard.

The charge against Mr. Harding of "Wilful Promotion of Hate" was laid by the Metropolitan Toronto Police Intelligence Service, Hate Crime Unit under their mandate which states what a hate crime is: "A criminal offence committed against a person or property that is based upon the victims race, nationality or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical orientation, or any other similar factor".

The Christian Standard is a Mission to Muslims here in Toronto which has been operating

for approximately four years.

Mr. Harding's actions first became known to the police in the beginning of June 1997. He had left messages at local Islamic institutions, including The Ambition Newspaper. He also targeted Weston Collegiate School for allowing the Muslim students to gather together to pray Jumu'ah prayer.

Mr. Harding's messages, both written and by telephone, were extremely offensive to Muslims and their Faith. They caused anxiety and distress as the messages referred to Islam as a false religion and Muslims as those who worshipped Satan rather than God.

As the trial progressed, there were very many interesting points which the Defence Attorney, Mr.

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Prophet Musa and the Mysterious Teacher

by Mrs. Anwari Ali Khan

This story, from Surah al-Kahf, gives a lesson on the mysteries of life that the human mind can not solve.

Prophet Musa (Moses) in his thirst for knowledge forgot his limitations. Patience and faith were enjoined on him and he understood when the paradoxes of life were explained. He was up against mysteries which he wanted to explore. He searched out a man endowed with knowledge derived from the divine springs of wisdom from which the paradoxes of life unfold. He was shown three such paradoxes and how human impatience is inconsistent with their true understanding.

Prophet Musa was to find this servant of God who would instruct him in such knowledge that he did not already have. He was to take a fish with him. The place where he was to meet his mysterious teacher would be indicated by the fact that the fish would disappear when he got to the place. The fish is the emblem of secular knowledge which merges itself into divine knowledge at the point where human intelligence is ready for junction of the two. Divine

knowledge has to be sought patiently.

The name of the servant of God is not mentioned in the Qur'an but the traditions gives his name as 'Khidhr' which means 'green.' His knowledge is fresh and green and drawn out of the living sources of life, for it is drawn from God's own presence. Prophet Musa, not understanding the full import of what he was asking, makes a simple request. He wants to learn something of the special knowledge which God had bestowed on Khidhr.

Khidhr tells him that there would be many things which Prophet Musa would see with him;

things that he would not completely understand, thus making him impatient. Prophet Musa had faith and promised to obey him in all things with the help of God. The teacher was doubtful but permitted him to follow him on the condition that he ask no questions about anything until he himself mentions it first.

So both of them proceeded and three events took place.

Firstly, the teacher scuttled the boat in which they were sailing. Prophet Musa did not have the patience and challenged the teacher on whether there was any reason to ruin a boat in perfectly good

Continued on page 6

Free Gift of \$86,400

by Salem Almarri

Imagine there is a bank which credits your account each morning with \$86,400. I carries over no balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance, and every evening cancels whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day.

What would you do? Draw out every cent, of course!

Well, everyone has such a bank. Its name is TIME. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose. I carries

over no balance. It allows no overdraft. Each day it opens a new account for you. Each night it burns the remains of the day. If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours.

There is no going back. There is no drawing against "tomorrow." You must live in the present on today's deposits. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness, and success! The clock is running. Make the most of today.

To realise the value of ONE YEAR, ask a student who has failed a grade.

To realise the value of ONE MONTH, ask a mother who has

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The reasons are obvious:

The Ambition goes to thousands of Muslims regardless of their ethnicity.

Unlike most ethnic papers, it is read by the Youth, who need to buy your services and products.

Young people also have disposable money.

If you get all this business, you won't be able to handle it.



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Editorial

The Message of the New Year is Devotion to Allah

Muslims around the world celebrate a magnificent and blessed occasion around the first of Muharram, the day of the Islamic New Year. The beginning of the new year is a reminder of the Hijra that the Prophet (pbuh) made when the cruelties of the Makkah tribes became intolerable. The Prophet (pbuh) advised some of his fellow Muslims to migrate to Abyssinia, while he was later guided by Allah to migrate to Madinah.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) reached Madinah on a Friday morning and led the Friday prayers later in the day. He was received in his new home with overwhelming affection and kindness. It was due to the attitude of the people of Madinah that they became known as "al-Ansar" or the Helpers. Upon reaching Madinah, the Prophet (pbuh) introduced the practice of brotherhood between the locals and the new immigrant Muslims from Makkah (the "Muhajirun" or Emigrants). The mutual relations between individuals from among the two communities quickly grew as affectionate as that of real brothers. Friendly relations with non-Muslims were also established resulting in a pact that banned all bloodshed in the new centre of Islam.

Several months later, the Prophet (pbuh) began to build his new mosque. Helping the energetic Muslims with his own hands, the Prophet (pbuh) built a simple mosque which is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an: "There is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of thy standing forth (for prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loveth those who make themselves pure" (9:108).

The Arabic word *Hijra* is derived from *Hajira* meaning "to break off relations, to abandon one's tribe, to emigrate." *Hijra* means to forsake whatever is disliked by Allah, even if it involves leaving one's house or homeland. Consequently, the usual interpretation of the word *Hijra* as "flight" is incorrect. It does not only signify the leaving of one dwelling place or country for another in order to break away from evil and sin, and thus become a Muhajir who gives up all that Allah has forbidden. This is only the physical component of *Hijra* (i.e., travel). But *Hijra* also includes the spiritual component which should be practised by every Muslim each day of his life and that is, breaking away from what Allah has forbidden and going towards what pleases Allah.

The *Hijra* was a living symbol of the noble and sacred mission of Islam, which is the mission belonging to all Divine Revelations. It is a mission for the liberation of man and his preparation for the Hereafter. The Prophet (pbuh) left a people who were enslaved to their wrong beliefs and evil habits, and went to a people who were ready to remove the shackles of ignorance and misguidance.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was the greatest emancipator of mankind. He emphasized the Oneness of Allah and the fact that every individual is responsible only to his Creator, all being equal before Him. The Prophet (pbuh) taught us to fear the consequences of violating the natural and moral laws which have their source from the Will of Allah.

The *Hijra* was not only used to propagate Islam, but also to establish universal peace. After all, the Prophet (pbuh) left a hostile people to live in a more peaceful environment. The religion he preached was a religion of peace, but war was waged against his mission. It was the duty of the Prophet (pbuh) to defend his oppressed community and he was told that he should by no means resort to an aggressive war: "Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not transgressors" (2:190).

Faith is a personal matter only between Allah and His servants. No one has a right to compel others to adopt a particular faith. Therefore, the Prophet (pbuh) had to fight for the freedom of faith as Allah says: "And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression and there prevail justice and faith in Allah; but if they cease let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression" (2:193).

How many verses are there in the Holy Qur'an that incite Muslims to strive in the cause of Allah, even by forsaking our homes or sacrificing our souls? Those who are ready for such a sacrifice will deserve the beneficent reward of Allah: "He who forsakes his home in the cause of Allah finds in the Earth many a refuge wide and spacious: Should he die as a refugee from home for Allah and His Messenger his reward becomes due and sure with Allah: and Allah is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful" (4:100).

May Allah (swt) shower his blessings on the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and on his companions, both the Emigrants and the Helpers, and increase them in the noble ranks of the eternal life in the Hereafter. And may He, the Almighty, cause every Islamic New Year to be a one of prosperity and happiness for the entire Muslim world.

Mohammad Basil Ahmad

Letters to the Editors

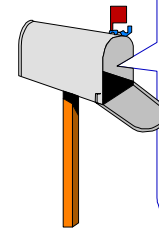
Prescription for Modesty

I started wearing the Hijab about a year ago and have had a number of surprising comments from both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Some of the questions range from "Aren't you hot in that?" to "You won't get a job dressed like that." But the question that I want to address is one that I am asked constantly by different people: "Why do you wear the Hijab?" Before answering that question we have to know the meaning of Hijab. Hijab stems from an Arabic word "Hajaba" which means to hide or conceal from view. It does not mean that we have to wear a head covering and still dress in an immodest fashion. It comprises of a total way of dressing for the Muslim woman.

The Hijab was prescribed for us, as it was for people before us (i.e., Christians and Jews) by our Lord, Allah. Every Muslim woman should wear the Hijab, not only because our parents say so or our friends do it, but because Allah has commanded us to do so: "O

Prophet, tell your wives and daughters and the believing women to draw their outer garments around them (when they go out or are among men). That is better in order that they may be recognized (as Muslims) and not annoyed" (Qur'an 33:59).

Before the external Hijab is worn, we must wear the internal Hijab. That basically means that we should take it to heart to obey Allah's wishes, both in public and private. We should modify our behaviour and manners, in that we do not attract unnecessary attention to ourselves. In addition, our speech and appearance in public should be dignified and humble. When it comes to the external Hijab this does not mean wearing a fashionable scarf to cover our head only. The Hijab is comprised, among other things, of a head covering for the hair, neck and bosom. One of the Hadith of the Prophet reported by Ayesha (ra) reports: "Asma, daughter of Abu Bakr (ra), entered upon the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) wearing



Letters to the editors are published unedited regardless of the paper's policy. We entertain all letters except ones with impolite language. Please include your name, address and telephone number. Only names are published.

thin clothes. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) turned his attention from her. He said: O Asma, when a woman reaches the age of menstruation, it does not suit her that she displays parts of her body except this and this, and he pointed to her face and hands" (Abu Dawood).

The manner of dress for a Muslimah means that her clothes should be loose and thick enough as not to show her figure or expose her skin. Finally, we should note that a Muslimah's clothes should not be too flashy that she attracts undue attention nor too ragged, thus gaining sympathy. When it comes to our manner of dressing, Muslims, both male and female, should strive to be modest and only then can we concentrate on applying the Islamic codes in our daily lives.

F. Jabaney

Readers appreciate Aneesa for "Success Stories"

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my very sincere compliments for an excellent article about the Hidayat Centre. Please keep up the good work. Muslim community needs young, talented and resourceful individuals like you, who are the future leaders of this country.

Hamida Chishti

Congratulations on a wonderful article. You are blazing a trail for our young people. Keep up the good work.

Amine Sargear

Some Islamic Websites to Visit

The Ambition - <http://www.globalseve.net/~raptor/ambition/>

You'll find past issues posted there as well as upcoming events in Toronto's Muslim community.

USC-MSA Islamic Server - <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/>

This evolving server provides information about the fundamentals of Islam and other aspects which make it a universal way of life. There is a lot of reference material available, including three translations of the Qur'an and various sets of Hadith.

The Islam Page by Ibrahim Shafi - <http://www.islamworld.net/>

This site has a lot of material covering the fundamentals of Islam along with Da'wah literature and information on Muslim countries.

IslamiCity in Cyberspace - <http://www.islam.org/>

This great multimedia site has many facilities including a Virtual Mosque where you can learn about Islam and a Radio/TV Station where you can hear lectures or listen to the Qur'an.

Qur'an in Arabic Script - <http://www.al-islam.com/quran2/Qdefault.asp>

Qur'an in Arabic and English - <http://www.al-islam.com/quran2/Qdefault.asp?l=eng>

Arabic/English Dictionary* - <http://www.alidrissi.com/dictionary/>

English/Arabic Dictionary* - <http://www.alqamoos.com/eng/>

* These sites require **Sindbad**, a Netscape plug-in at <http://www.sakhrsoft.com/main1.htm#>

We invite writers, interviewers, community news reporters, story writers for children, etc. to send us their contributions.

Our next deadline is: July 31st, 1998

We welcome new and budding writers.

Include your full name, address, telephone number, and your age. You can also send us your picture and a little introduction about yourself if you wish.

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This Journal is dedicated to:

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

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The Judge's Decision is not Yet In

Continued from page 1

Bruce Durno brought up in his effort to show that Islam and Christianity do not worship the same God.

Among them was the treatment of apostates, the different viewpoints of who Jesus (pbuh) really is, and the concept of Jihad.

For those interested in making a comparison what the two Holy Books says about apostasy, please refer to Deuteronomy Chapter 13, vs. 6-9 in The Bible, and Surah 47, aya (vs) 25 in the Qur'an. Jihad or war is also mentioned in both Books for those who wish to research further.

The Crown Attorney, Michael Blain called in two people from Weston Collegiate Institute to testify the former principal, Mr. Tony Cairns, and a former student, Mr. Ahmed Mian. Mr. Mian was instrumental in starting the Jumu'ah prayer group and it was his article written for a Muslim newspaper, The Ambition, whose outreach is to the Muslim community which sparked Mr. Harding's activities in the area around Weston Collegiate, which included a mail distribution and a message to the school. Mr. Cairns stressed that other groups of students also had activities and all groups in the school are treated equally.

During the course of the trial, it was learned that Mr. Harding had his voice mail cancelled twice by the provider due to the contents of his message on it.

Detective Kijewski of the Intelligence Service, Hate Crime Unit, with 24 years of service on the police force, testified about his involvement in this case. He and

his partner, Detective Dino Doria, became aware of complaints by various members of the Muslim community during the week of June 9, 1997 and commenced a thorough investigation which led up to Mr. Harding being charged.

Dr. Jane D. McAuliffe, of the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto was called in as an "expert witness" by the Crown Attorney. Her testimony showed that all three religions believe in the same God who reveals His Will to mankind. All three have traditions of prayer and fasting. According to Professor McAuliffe, both Christianity and Islam are missionary religions. Both religions dream of a time when God's Will will be done on earth. Professor McAuliffe stated without a doubt that it is the same God that all three religions worship.

The defendant, Mr. Harding, took the stand to testify. Mr. Harding presented himself as a sincere Christian, whose aim was to present to Muslims the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He apologized for offending Muslims and labelling them all terrorists. Three character witnesses were called by Mr. Durno, the Defence Attorney. Among them was the Minister of the Baptist Church where Mr. Harding is a member.

On May 14, Ms. Jamie Klukach - co-council for the Crown ably summed up the Crown's position, while the Defence Attorney, Mr. Bruce Durno, wrapped up his defence.

Chief Judge Linden set June 19 at 10 a.m. as the next court day.

We are sorry!

Due to the death of my mother, I had to go to my home country and we were unable to publish the paper on time. This is the combined issue for May-June and July August, 1998.

Please make a prayer for my mother. May Allah bless her soul and give us Sabr-Jameel.

Asma Warsi - Publisher, Editor-in-chief

Parenting

Buy toys for your children is always fun! But what happens when that fun turns to terror. It can happen and very often it is an accident which can be avoided. When buying toys it is important to follow the manufactures guidelines. These guidelines are

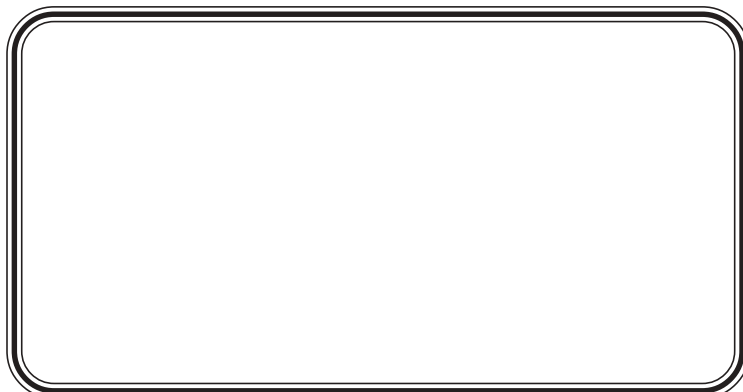
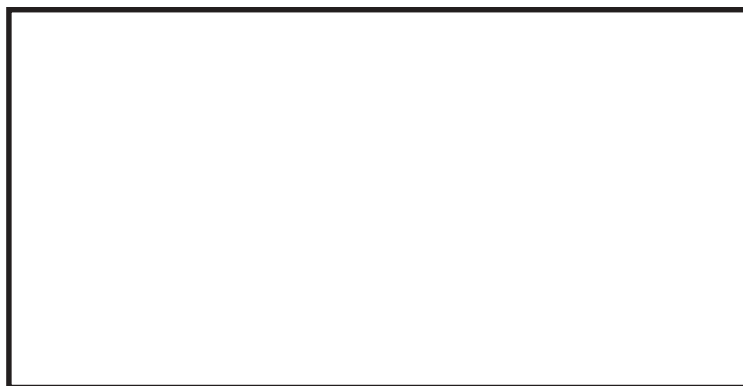
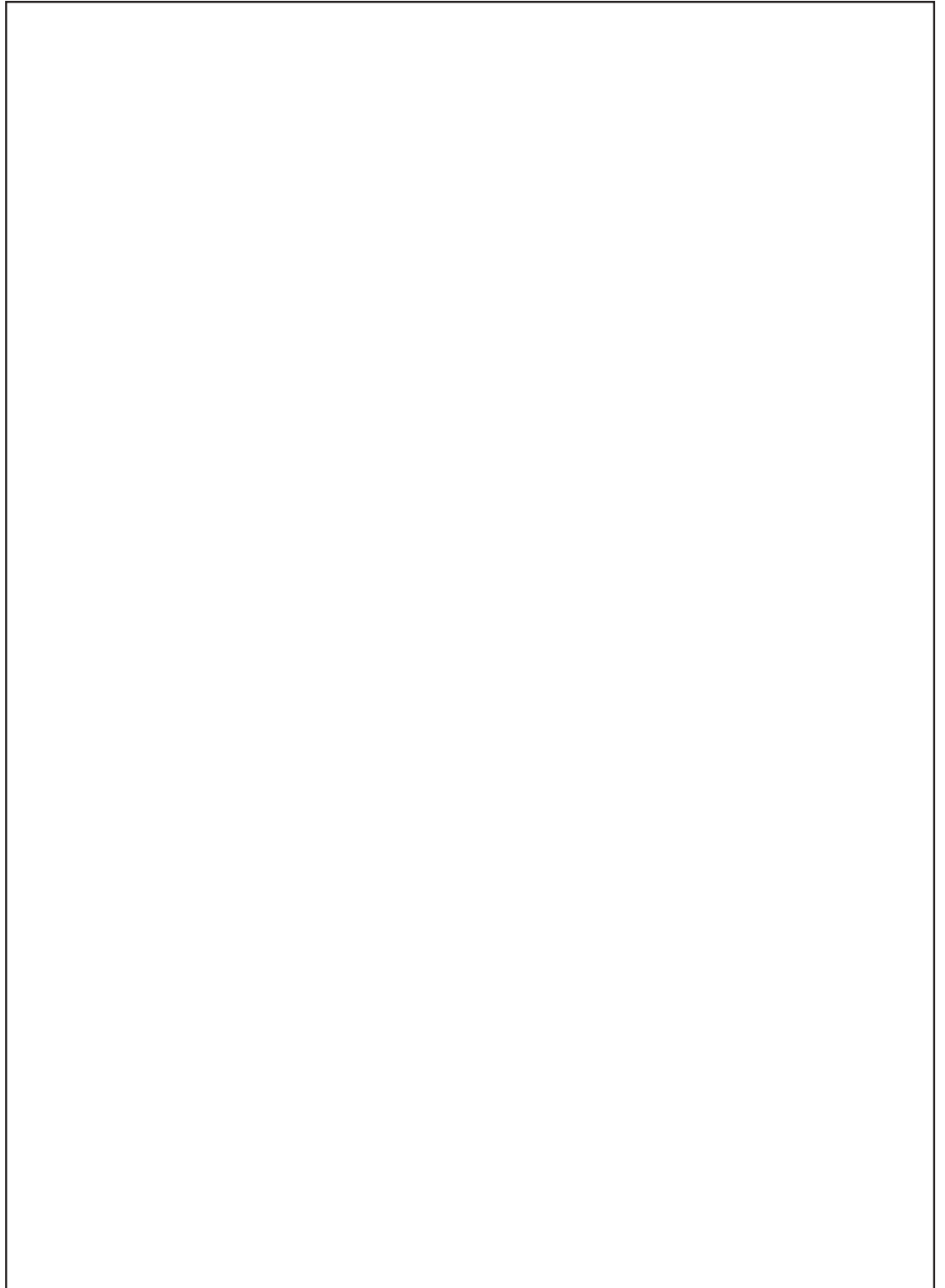
there to protect the child. Although all toys have age recommendations, the ultimate responsibility lies with the purchaser of the toy to make sure that it is safe and age appropriate.

- When buying toys for small children under the age of

Infant Safety

one, try purchasing soft toys. This will insure that they won't injure themselves when they flail their arms around with the toy.

- Buy toys that are large enough that they cannot be put into the child's mouth--this can cause choking. *Continued on page 6*



The Ambition is distributed free of charge every two months at several mosques in and around Metro from as far as Kingston & Oshwa in the east to Brampton, Burlington, Kitchner and Hamilton in the west. You can also pick up your copy at some Muslim grocery stores.

Your Questions

Answered by Shabir Ally

Q Is it not true that the Qur'an is copied from the Bible?

A No. This is not true. All evidence show that the Qur'an could not have been copied from the Bible.

Take for example the story of the flood that occurred in the days of the prophet Noah (pbuh). This event is narrated in both the Bible and the Qur'an. A careful examination of the two versions will show that the Qur'anic version could have come from no other source but God alone.

One important difference between the two accounts is that whereas the Bible describes the flood as a worldwide flood (Genesis ch.7) the Qur'an mentions it as a local flood affecting the people of Noah (Qur'an 7:59-64). Today it is acknowledged that no record exists of a worldwide flood occurring at the time specified in the Bible. How did the author of the Qur'an avoid this mistake unless the author was God Himself?

The closest thing in history to a flood like the one described in the Bible and the Qur'an is a discovery made by archaeologist Sir Charles Leonard Wooley. In 1929 he discovered remains from a flood which occurred around 4000 B.C. His findings are described in the book entitled *The Bible as History* by Werner Keller. Keller tells us (p. 27): "*The incredible discovery at Ur made headline news in the United States and in Britain.*"

But was this a worldwide flood? After describing the extent of the flood, Keller explains: "*Looking at the map we should call it today 'a local occurrence'*" (p.28).

Keller further writes: *In other words, (the flood was) obviously not of sufficient magnitude for the Biblical Flood*" (p. 29). Furthermore, he says: "*A flood of the unimaginable extent described in the Bible still remains 'archaeologically not demonstrated'*" (p. 29-30)

Another comparison will again demonstrate that the Qur'an was not copied from the Bible. In the Bible we are told that God drowned the Pharaoh and his army when they pursued Moses (pbuh) and his people (Exodus 14:28)/ the clear indication in that description is that the body of the Pharaoh perished in the sea. However, the Qur'an dared to differ and prove true. In the Qur'an we find that God promised to preserve the body of the Pharaoh as a sign for later generations (Qur'an 10:90-92).

True to the Qur'anic promise, the mummified body of the Pharaoh was discovered by Loret in 1898 at Thebes in the Kings' Valley (see *The Bible, the Qur'an and Science* by Dr. Maurice Bucaille, p. 238). From there it was transported to Cairo. Elliot Smith removed its wrappings on July 8, 1907 and gave a detailed description in his book entitled *The Royal Mummies* (1912).

From which source did the author of the Qur'an derive this information? How did the author of the Qur'an know that the Pharaoh's body was preserved whereas the knowledge that the ancient Egyptians mummified their dead was not discovered until recently? And how could the author of the Qur'an predict that the body of the Pharaoh will be discovered later, unless the author was God Himself?

(Do you have questions? Please write to Shabir Ally c/o The Ambition)

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From the Qur'an

From the Hadith

Muslim Role Models

Abdullah ibn Umar (ra)

by Shazeeda Shakur

The Prophet (pbuh) once related the categories of people that would have the Shade of Allah on the Day when there will be no shade except that of the Throne of Allah. Among these categories were the ones who spend their youth in the way of Allah.

Abdullah ibn Umar (ra) was one of the great companions of the Prophet (pbuh). He was the son of Umar ibn al-Khattab, one of the greatest companions of the Prophet (pbuh) who became the second Caliph of Islam after the death of the Prophet (pbuh). Abdullah's youth was one of dedication and strife in the way of Allah with true sincerity and piety.

Abdullah accepted Islam before he was ten years old and he made Hijrah to Madinah with his father, Umar and his sister, Hafsa. Abdullah had a great interest in helping the Prophet (pbuh) in his endeavours. He was so keen in working in the service of Islam that he tried to participate in both the Battles of Badr and Uhud. However, he was turned away from both because of his young age. It was not too long, though, until his wishes were granted. When he was fifteen years old, the Prophet (pbuh) decided to allow his participation in the Battle of the Ditch.

As a result of his outstanding dedication to the service of Islam, Abdullah ibn Umar (ra) was quite recognized and appreciated by the people. This was manifested in the beautiful title given to him, "the good one, son of the good one" (according to Abu Musa al-Ashari). Abdullah was known for his piety, humility, knowledge, generosity, truthfulness, incorruptibility, and his constant acts of *ibadah* or worship. Coupled with the influence of his

great father, all of these glorious characteristics and attitudes were acquired from being in the company of the greatest teacher ever, the Prophet (pbuh). It was reported that Ayesha (ra) once said: "There was no one who followed the footsteps of the Prophet (pbuh) in the places where he alighted as did Abdullah ibn Umar." He would observe the Prophet (pbuh) very closely and then he would put his observation into practice with sincere devotion.

His piety was demonstrated in the caution and fear of reporting the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh). He would only relate a Hadith if he was completely sure that he remembered every word of it. Although he was qualified to be a *qadhi* (a judge) he declined the position for he feared that he might commit errors in judging matters pertaining to Islam and do injustice to his fellow Muslims. Such was the humility and simplicity of Abdullah ibn Umar (ra).

Abdullah would stay up at night performing extra prayers and reading the Qur'an. He would weep and cry and ask Allah for His Forgiveness and Mercy. Whether he was at home or on a journey, he still maintained these practices, in the stillness of the night, wherever he was, he would remember Allah and tears would flow from his eyes as he recited, listened, and pondered on the warning verses of the Qur'an with his heart. It was reported that one day, he was sitting with some close friends and read the following verse from the Qur'an: "Woe unto those who give short measure, those who, when they are to receive their due from people, demand that it be given in full but when they have to measure or weigh whatever they owe to others, give less than what is due. Do they not know that they are bound to be raised from the dead (and called to account) on an Awesome Day when all men shall stand before the Sustainer of all the Worlds?" (83:1-6).

He kept repeating the words "the Day when all men shall stand before the Sustainer of all the Worlds" over and over again and wept until he fainted with God-consciousness.

Abdullah's generosity can not be undermined. He supported many

charitable causes for the poor and needy. Whenever he received any money, after attaining the necessities in his life, he was seen distributing it to the poor. Although he was a rich man, he maintained his simplicity and honoured the poor and needy.

Our society can indeed benefit

from the lessons of the story of this companion. Insha-Allah, if every one of us can reflect on the nature of the piety and beautiful characters of Abdullah ibn Umar (ra) and try to adopt at least one of the virtues of this man, we would surely nurture our soul and bring ourselves closer to Allah.

Canadian Islamic Congress

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should strike a balance between two extremes: isolation and assimilation." Dr. Muhammad Sirajuddin has this to say, "An excellent idea that its time has come," and St. Zubeda Vahed felt that it is "very necessary."

Few highlights of current CIC activities are as follows. The executive of CIC recently met with the editorial board of Toronto Star, and Globe and mail to address the use of terms such as "Muslim fundamentalist", "Islamic terrorist" and the anti-Islamic tone and attitude in the media. CIC will monitor the five major newspapers including Toronto Star and Globe and Mail, and will provide a report card to

each paper at the end of three months. Among its other activities include meetings with the federal politicians to address the shifting foreign policies of Canada, from peacekeeper to 'bomb' Iraq. In addition, CIC has recently published two newsletters, which can be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.cicnow.com>.

CIC is hosting its first conference on the 27th of June 1998, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at Ramada Inn, 1677 Wilson Ave., across from TARIC Islamic Centre, in North York. Speakers include Dr. Jamal Badawi, Dr. Maher Hathout, Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, Dr. Munir El-Kassem and representatives from Canadian Media and political parties. For further information and registration please call: Tel/Fax (519) 7461-CIC or E-mail at cic@cicnow.com.

Infant Safety

Continued from page 3

- Keep an eye out for toys that have small removable parts because they can also become a choking hazard.
- Don't buy toys that are hard, have sharp edges or cords attached to them
- If your child receives toys which have small or unsafe parts, put them away until your child is old enough to play with

them

Remember that babies cannot move things away that may smother them and that it is not very safe to keep too many toys in the child's crib. If you feel that there is a toy on the market that is unsafe, report the name of the toy, the model of the toy, the manufacturer and the store where it is being sold to The Product Safety Branch of Health Canada.

The Quran, Kids ...

Continued from page 1

praying, fasting, giving Zakat, believing in God and His Angels, and doing Hajj once in our lives. As deeply meaningful as these concepts are, we did not feel nor understand them at the time. No attention whatsoever was paid to whether we really understood what we memorized, or how we felt about it. No attention was paid to our fragile opinions, questions or doubts. It was assumed that we would just take in all the information and become what our teachers and parents wanted us to be.

What I remember the most were the threats. The threats certainly made us feel guilty but were not truly effective. I remember one of my rebellious friends in the Islamic class. She would go down to the corner store at lunch time and shoplift, always trying to encourage me to do the same. After pocketing her chocolate and lipstick she would return to the class for a lesson on praying five times a day.

I also remember the elaborate descriptions of Hell. To a young child this can be very confusing if not explained properly. I remember being told that on the Day of Judgement we would have to walk a thin rope over the Fire of Hell and that if we could not do it we would fall in it forever. As a child I remember being so confused and insecure about my physical ability and wondered how I would be able to accomplish what I felt to be a sinister and ridiculous challenge. I now realise that these methods of behavioural control through guilt are no different than the methods of the Catholic Church, except of course in content.

Have things changed from the time I was a girl? Unfortunately, there are still many teachers and parents who are treating children the same way. I find myself angry and deeply disappointed with these adults. I often hear them telling children inaccurate messages about the Qur'an and Allah in order to control them.

I am not doubting the love and deep concern that parents and teachers have for children. Raising children of sound mind and behaviour is challenging and sometimes frightening in this confused society. However, I believe that it is due to a lack of knowledge of Islam and a lack of knowledge of parenting skills, that parents inadvertently use incorrect information and communication styles in order to control their children through fear and guilt. This results in children often growing up and turning their backs on Islam. By doing so they are rightly rebelling against a false and highly distorted idea of Allah and His relationship with humanity.

Sometimes adults assume that they have correct knowledge of the Qur'an and Islam. Sometimes, because they feel weak in their

knowledge of Islam, they resort to relying on things they have heard from others. Many times they ignore their own minds and feelings. They are unable to recognize the nonsense in what they have heard from others. Usually they end up teaching their children in the false, rigid, non-developmental ways in which they were taught.

I am not saying that all parents, teachers, and schools fall back on these methods. Many teachers work hard to model the ways of the Prophet (pbuh), using openness and wisdom. They have a keen awareness and respect for the developmental level of the individual.

The biggest mistake that Muslims have made over the past centuries is to separate worldly knowledge from Islam. We can see this with parenting, where many Muslims ignore books that deal with child development. Muslim parents who are very 'religious' will often refuse to read books that were not written by someone who has a 'Muslim sounding name.'

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) told us to seek knowledge from the cradle to grave, even if we have to go to China to get it! But what many Muslims choose to do is to blindly rely on the practices that their own parents taught them when they were children. When Allah tells us in the Qur'an not to follow our forefathers, He is not just referring to idol worship. Allah is urging us everywhere in the Qur'an not to repeat the mistakes and unproductive practices of our parents in all realms of our life.

Many Muslims also rely on the local Imam for advice on raising children. An Imam might be highly knowledgeable in matters of Fiqh, Islamic history, or Hadith but this does not automatically make him qualified in other areas such as teaching, parenting skills, or human development.

Some Muslims also tell their children condemning things about the people of the Book. One day a little girl happily said to me, "We should not swear because then we will be like the Christians." Shocked by her statement I asked her who told her this, and she answered, "My father."

Parents tell their children that Allah says this in the Qur'an. The Qur'an, however, does not condemn all the People of the Book. What these parents fail to realise is that Allah also says that among the Christians and the Jews there are good people:

"Surely, those who Believe and those who are Jews, Christians, and Sabians (monotheists) and whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does righteous deeds shall have their reward with their Lord and Sustainer; and on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve" (2:62).

This type of brain-washing is contrary to the Qur'an and the way of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who was kind and amiable to

everyone. By encouraging this type of racism, parents are shaping their children into isolated, judgemental, and arrogant individuals, which is the opposite of the Islamic personality.

Another child, a five year old boy who seemed quite confused, was told by his father that if he continued to wear his baseball hat backwards (a common harmless fashion among young people) then Allah would not like this and he would end up in Hell. The reality is, that his father feels threatened by anything (even harmless) which he perceives as being 'un-Islamic.' Many parents try to control their children in this destructive manner. Why? Because of their own insecurities, fears and lack of knowledge.

Allah has told us in the Qur'an: *"And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge"* (17:36). There is an incredible truth in this verse, that we must all struggle to live by. We must never insist on something being the truth unless we are sure of it. To use Allah and Islam as a tactic to control anyone, especially children is to commit a grave offence for which we will be accountable on the Day of Judgement.

My advice to any parent is this: If something is not working with your child then admit it to yourself and ask Allah to show you the right way. Remember that Allah is not going to suddenly help you by zapping your brain with the answer, or send it to you all the time in the form of a dream. The following suggestions will set you on the right course, Insha-Allah:

1. Read! Read! Read! Find out how the Prophet (pbuh) dealt with children from authentic Hadith; his practices show many wise

solutions to different situations. In addition, there are many hundreds of books written on parenting, child development, and the best ways to communicate. These can be found in any language, but remember to be a critical reader and don't accept everything you read. Use the common sense that Allah gave you.

2. Take some time to seriously, honestly, and reasonably reflect upon your own childhood, and the validity of the practices and ideas instilled in you by your parents.

3. Read the Qur'an and Hadith with an open mind so that you may learn knowledge that will help you and your family. The application of knowledge and reason in any matter, whether big or small, is the tantamount theme which permeates in the Qur'an.

4. Trust your children. Allah has endowed every child with the miraculous capacity to reason and to decipher between that which is good for him/her and that which is not. Try to answer all of their questions in a healthy way and Insha-Allah they will follow in your footsteps.

5. The following books are excellent resources. I found that many of the techniques in these books are the same as used by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) such as good listening skills, empathy, and wisdom: P.E.T. (Parent Effectiveness Training) by Thomas Gordon, How To Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, and People Skills by Robert Bolton, Ph.D.

May Allah increase us all in knowledge and wisdom so that we and our families may truly be at peace in this generation and the generations to follow.

Moses and the Teacher

Continued from page 1

condition. Secondly, they met a young man and the teacher killed him. Again Prophet Musa could not stop asking why he had done that. Thirdly, they came to a town where the inhabitants refused to give them any food when they asked for it and behaved very rudely. In spite of their behaviour, when the teacher saw a wall that was about to fall, he fixed it. Prophet Musa was naturally surprised and asked why the teacher did it without even asking for any remuneration.

At this point, the teacher told him that they had to depart and gave him the interpretation of the three paradoxes. An unjust king ruling at that time seized every boat that he found in good shape. This boat belonged to a very poor man. The teacher made it unserviceable so that it would be saved from

being taken by the king's men. The owner could repair it after the danger was over. The young man that was slain was going to be a source of grief to his pious and righteous parents. He was going to be a rebel, ungrateful to God and a source of danger to the public. His parents were promised a better replacement of this son. In the case of the third event, a righteous man had buried a treasure under a wall that was owned by his orphan sons. If found, it would have been looted. The teacher fixed it so that the children could use it when they grew up.

In all these events, Khidhr was not acting on his own but under the guidance of Allah.

The lesson we learn from this is that the highest knowledge comes only by divine gift and needs a lot of patience, striving with faith to apprehend something of the purpose of God, the All Wise.

Free Gift of \$86,400

Continued from page 1

given birth to a pre-mature baby.

To realise the value of ONE WEEK, ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realise the value of ONE

DAY, ask a daily-wage labourer who has kids to feed.

To realise the value of ONE HOUR, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.

To realise the value of ONE MINUTE, ask a person who has

Matrimonials

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The Ambition

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M9V 1T4

missed the train.

To realise the value of ONE SECOND, ask a person who has avoided an accident.

To realise the value of ONE MILLISECOND, ask the person who has won a silver medal in the Olympics.

Treasure every moment that you have! And treasure it more because you shared it with someone special, special enough to spend your time . . . and remember that time waits for no one.

Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That is why it's called the PRESENT!

Kids' Korner

We Are Not All That

by Zafar Warsi

"Unbelievable game tonight, Mr. Ali! With all that pressure on you and with only two minutes left in the game, how did you manage to get open in front of the net and get the shot away so quickly? You were covered like a blanket by the opposing team's defence! Tell the fans out there how you did it."

"I don't know, all those years of practice really came through. I never thought I could get this far but now that I am playing professional hockey I'm really proud of myself."

"You should be proud! You're the man! Your play was absolutely astonishing! You have amazing skills that others would kill to have. You're a role model for all the kids out there! How does this make you feel?"

[TIME - O U T]

What does Mr. Ali say now?

1. "Yup! I can't help being so perfect. I know I am the greatest player out there! I'm the best in the game right now and will be forever. My records are untouchable. I am great, I am great!"

2. "Thank you very much for those pleasurable statements, but really I don't deserve it. All my skills and abilities are from Allah."

If you chose the second remark, you are correct. If you decided the first one was right, you really need to read the rest of this article. It is wrong and vain to think that you are so great.

Allah doesn't like those who walk around boasting and showing off. This is the arrogance that lives in all people. Allah strictly tells us this in the Qur'an: *"Surely, God does not love the arrogant and boastful"* (4:36).

This verse tells us that in order for us to be loved by Allah we have to try to be modest and conservative in our actions. It is also important to be modest to gain the respect

of other people. No one likes a person who walks around thinking he is 'all that.'

Assuming to be more superior and better than everyone else may mislead you and others into a form of Shirk. Without knowing it, you could be worshipping or idolizing someone; be it your favourite hockey player or a basketball superstar. Even though this worship may be unintentional, Shirk is still occurring because no one is worthy of worship and idolization.

Thinking highly of yourself is immoral. To stand in a different class than others is a fantasy

because we are all equal in the eyes of Allah.

I'm not saying that you shouldn't be confident. However, don't be so confident that it makes you become conceited. Confidence is good, but too much of it could be unhealthy. We tend to be proud of what we accomplish but we should not forget that without Allah's given knowledge and guidance we can never be successful.

About the Prophet

The Prophet Leaves for Makkah

Six Years Old Memorizes the Holy Quran

The proud parents of six years old Urjee Abdusamed Jundi have a great reason to be proud and thankful to Allah. Their daughter Urjee, has successfully completed the recitation of the Holy Qur'an with Tajweed and also has memorized forty Hadith. Not only that. She has also memorized the Holy Qur'an.

They humbly appreciate the efforts of Islamic Oromo Organization of Canada for providing the opportunity for their daughter. May Allah give them and the organization great rewards for halping the kids to achieve excellence in the Islamic education. Many hearty congratulations to Abdusamad Jundi, the father, and Sada Adem, the mother. God bless little Urjee.

Smile! 😊

A generous son sent a beautiful leather coat with fur lining to his stingy father. Knowing that his father would be mad at him for spending a fortune on the coat, the son put a label of only \$250 on the coat that was really worth \$700.

The next week he got a letter from his father saying, "The coat was beautiful. Guess what? I sold it for profit at \$450. Send me 5 more like that."

A child was playing on the doorsteps. A salesman came along and asked him if his mother was home. The child said that she was. Upon hearing that, the salesman knocked at the door to no answer. He knocked and knocked but nobody came to answer the door. Frustrated, he snapped at the child, "You said your mom is home, but here I am trying to make a sale, knocking my head off and there is no answer. Did you lie to me?"

I didn't lie to you," said the child innocently. "But this is not my house."

Success Stories Around Us

Re-Viewing Ourselves

Muslim women are presented by the media as oppressed, abused, submissive, and meek. The strength of Muslim women is ignored and their role in the society is undermined.

by Aneesa Lakhi

On March 1, 1998, a group of eight Muslim women of various ages, colours, backgrounds, cultures, and education, gathered at the Afghan Women's Centre to discuss how Muslim women are portrayed in the media. The project, sponsored by the Afghan Women's Organization, and funded through Status of Women Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage, aims to improve the way in which Muslim women are represented in newspapers, on television and the radio, and other media.

The meeting which I attended was but one of many which will take place before a report is

compiled which will be of use to both those who work to provide us with the information we take in every day, and the Muslim community at large.

The primary concern of the women at the meeting focused on the overwhelmingly negative images of Muslims in general and Muslim women in particular which saturate media coverage. Muslim women are presented as oppressed, abused, submissive, and meek. The veil is made to be a symbol of the exotic because unknown, and simultaneously a sign of helplessness. The strength of Muslim women is ignored. Their roles in their societies are subsumed in stereotypes and a

genuine discourse on our lives is eliminated as a possibility.

These portrayals left many of the women feeling as if they were constantly on the defensive, warding off silent attacks, self-righteous and ignorant pity or disdain. However, some of the women were also spurred to a feeling of bravado: they were comfortable with their religion, their gender, their identity, and they would not be made to feel otherwise.

The comments about various clever methods of asserting one's opinion in the midst of often tremendous ignorance and misunderstanding brought out the sense humour of the women,

another aspect of our personalities which has no place in the popular imagination.

Furthermore, as the morning progressed, and we got to know each other better, we began to speak of ourselves as Muslim women certainly, but also as Muslim women with opinions on nonreligious issues as well. The environment, education, employment -- all of these are our concerns too. The women were keen to stress that they were aware of the world around them, and of their religion, and they had ideas which should be heard. They were not isolated, nor were they following Islam blindly, out of fear or ignorance.

Perhaps what is most difficult about moving through the western world as a Muslim woman is the assumption that our lives are lived out base on the decisions of others. This misconception not only makes Muslim women seem incapable of speaking out for themselves, it cuts short any discussion of the very real and difficult choices which face all of us. The prospect of exchange, communication, support is not one that is not supplied by the media today to Muslim women. However the voices of the women I met on that morning in March and many others like them who I and undoubtedly many of you encounter every day cannot be kept silent in perpetuity.

Community in Action

MUSLIM GROUP PROMOTES CAREGIVING AND HEALTH AWARENESS

by Mirza Shafi

Two factors: baby boomers reaching middle age and recent changes in the health care system, have created an urgent need for caregivers. In 1992, eleven percent of the population of Canada were over age 65. By the year 2031, this number is expected to increase to 24 percent. Heart and stroke disease and cancer are today's most common causes of death. In 1995, 38 % of deaths in Canada were due to heart and stroke, and 28% were due to cancer.

Stress plays a major role in causing these diseases. People today are working longer hours. There are more single parent families, and society is ever becoming more materialistic. As well, many suffer from information overload as a result of the 'information age'. These and countless other factors contribute to the increased stress in people's lives. The result is many more sick people. A refurbished Health Care system also dictates that people are released from hospitals within days of procedures, when before they'd spend weeks in hospital. As a result, we have more sick people being cared for at home than ever before.

How do we, as Muslims, respond to these alarming statistics and facts? The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) demonstrated and encouraged us to live a healthy holistic lifestyle. He (pbuh) further made it incumbent on Muslims (as one of our essential duties) to visit the sick. Our approach need not be any different from his. First, we

must provide health awareness and healthy lifestyle choices to our communities. Can we find answers as to why heart and stroke disease are so prevalent among some of our ethnic groups, in particular South Asians? How can we prevent diseases like cancer and depression before they attack us and our loved ones? What are the early symptoms of these diseases? How can we become more proactive in our health care? Do we need to take a more careful look at our diet, our lifestyle? Secondly, we must train and develop Muslim caregivers to care for the sick, the elderly and the dying. Many of our sick and elderly are lonely and in need of company. This presents an excellent opportunity for healthy retirees, our youth and anyone with a few hours of spare time each week, to become a caregiver.

The Muslim Support Services for the Sick and Elderly is making a strong effort to get Muslims involved. Our efforts cover four areas.

1. Training Muslims in caregiving.
2. Getting Muslims to become active in hospitals, and established health care and support institutions like the Canadian Cancer Society and the Heart and Stroke Foundation.
3. Conducting health awareness programs where experts from the Muslim community, health care and support institutions can address us on disease prevention and support services.
4. Helping mosques or communities get started in this field.

Canadian Islamic Congress

The goal is to empower Canadian Muslims in articulating their Canadian Islamic identity.

by Sister Vahida

Canadian Muslims are accurately estimated at 450,000, making them the country's largest non-Christian religious group. By the year 2020 they will be approaching two million. The

On June 6th, 1998 an information seminar titled **YOU AND YOUR HEALTH**, was held at the Lester B. Pearson Collegiate Institute (McLevin and Washburn Way, Scarborough) from 5 pm - 9:30 pm. Dr. Ruby Alvi - Heart and Stroke Specialist, Dr. Yasmin Rahim - Cancer Specialist, Sh. Abdool Hamid, the Canadian Cancer Society and the Heart and Stroke Foundation had been invited to make presentations and answer questions in their specific fields. Additionally there were free brochures, information tables, displays, and information on how you can become involved in caregiving. Admission was free. Dinner was available at a nominal charge of \$4.00. People were encouraged to bring their family and friends, Muslim or non-Muslim.

In the meantime, any questions you have can be directed to the co-sponsors of the 6th June, 1998 program.

Muslim Support Services

416-284-0131

Muslim Cancer Support

416-493-4374

Islamic Institute of Toronto

416-396-4662

MENTORS

416-396-4663

(Mirza Shafi is the Co-ordinator of Recruitment, Training and Fundraising of Muslim Support Services for the Sick and Elderly)

community is fast growing because of large families, conversion and immigration. Canadian Muslims have spent the last thirty years building mosques, weekend and full time Islamic schools, social organizations, Islamic radio and television programs, and participated in the formation of North American Islamic Organizations, like ISNA, and ICNA. Now they are getting ready for the new millennium.

The one year old Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) is recently formed to empower Canadian Muslims and help in articulating their Canadian Islamic identity as they approach the new millennium. The main objectives of CIC are to address Canadian federal and

provincial politicians, the Canadian media and the Canadian legal system to promote the well-being of all Canadian Muslims. One of its aims is to establish a national Canadian network of Muslim individuals and organizations to encourage Canadian Muslims to participate in the national, social, cultural and educational aspects of Canadian public life and to act in matters affecting the status, rights and welfare of Canadian Muslims.

Here are few quotations from community leaders to emphasize the need and importance of CIC. According to Dr. Jamal Badawi, CIC is an "A timely needed organization. Canadian Muslims

Continued on page 6

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