

The Ambition

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The First Journal for Young Muslims in Canada

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The Benefits and Importance of Hajj

Hajj commemorates the divine rituals performed by Abraham and Ishmael to the first house of God on Earth.

by Nosheen Mian, W.C.I.

Islam is composed of five pillars: First, the declaration of faith or *Shahada*, then prayers or *Salah*, fasting or *Sawm*, alms or *Zakat*, and finally, pilgrimage to Makkah or *Hajj* which is also one of the finest institutions of Islam. It is mandatory upon all Muslims, male and female, provided they are mentally, physically, and financially fit, to perform at least once in their lifetime.

The Qur'an states: "And (O Muhammad) proclaim the pilgrimage among men; they will come to you on foot and (mounted) on every kind of fast mount, lean on account of journeys through deep and distant mountain highways, so that they experience much that shall be of benefit to them; and that they might exalt the name of God on the days appointed (for sacrifice) over whatever heads of

cattle He may have provided for them. Eat then, thereof, and feed the poor. Then let them bring their state of self-denial to an end, and let them fulfill their vows which they have made, and let them circumambulate the most ancient house. Such (is the pilgrimage) whoever honours the sacred rites for Allah, it will rebound to his own good in his Sustainer's sight" (22:27-30).

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After Ramadhan, What's Next?

The acts of devotion and sacrifice should not end with Ramadhan but rather be implemented throughout the rest of the year.

by S. A. Ali

Ramadhan is now over and we are left with a feeling of sadness and emptiness. For one whole month we made the effort to fast long hours without food, drink, television and many other conveniences. We made a change in our lives and routine.

During Ramadhan we found ourselves making extra Dhikr, performing extra Salaat, trying our best to do the right things and refrain from that which is wrong. We tried not to listen to music and to refrain from watching long hours of TV. We asked Allah for forgiveness and made Du'a in repentance feverishly.

However, once the month of Ramadhan was over we found it hard to continue those conscious acts of devotion and sacrifice. It is as if a trigger in us has been mechanically turned off and we return to the practice of those very things we are not supposed to be doing. We never stop to think how we could continue to reap Allah's blessings throughout the rest of the year by implementing what we learned during the month of Ramadhan.

I would like to highlight the

reasons why we must be mindful of maintaining a degree of consistency and of continuously striving for improvement.

Firstly, Allah says that we must persistently persevere at all times and in whatever we do. Remember Allah also tells that He does not place a burden (i.e. a challenge) on us greater than which we can bear. Secondly, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) told us to be consistent in what we do. He recommends that we do a little of something regularly rather than doing a great deal and then neglecting to do it for a long time. The point is that we have to make changes in our life during this

month and consciously maintain these positive changes during the rest of the year and in our lives.

To start with, let's read the Qur'an daily and perform five daily Salaats. If that is already in place, then try making extra Salaat such as Tahajjud in the early morning. Practise fasting on those days that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) used to fast such as Mondays and Thursdays of every month and for six days during the month of Shawwal.

Let's try to make Dhikr at all times. When travelling in the bus, the train, or in the car saying Subhan Allah, Allhamdu-lillah and Allahu Akbar should be easy.

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The Role of Muslim Women in Society

Muslims women should recognize their rights and responsibilities and take an active role in shaping the future.

by Ahmad Mian,
first year, U of T

The light of Islam dawned upon humankind, some fourteen hundred years ago, in the total darkness of ignorance. One major

aspect of this ignorance was with respect to the treatment of women. There was no respect for them. They were buried alive and treated like goods and chattels. They did not have any important role to play

in society except to please their male masters. There was no concept of morality. People used to have as many female-mates as they wished. They even used to marry their mothers. It was a society where "everything goes."

It was then that Allah sent His Messenger Muhammad (pbuh) who proclaimed the equality of women. The Qur'an declared: "Whoever works with righteousness, man or woman, and has faith, verily to them will We give a new life that is good and pure and We will bestow on them reward according to their actions."

This is just one Ayah from the
Continued on page 6

To Surf or Not To Surf

Analyzing all information sensibly is important in order to get informed.

by Sister Wilma

The inquisitive mind behind the waiting fingers toyed with the idea of reading the newspaper, going for a walk, or surfing the Net.

Curiosity got the best of me as I wondered who had sent me an E-mail and from which area of the world. The little envelope at the bottom of the screen had an exclamation mark. Oh joy, some mail!

Click, read, delete. My eyes read the many messages. Some needed an immediate reply, others did not.

This attended to, my finger once again touched the mouse, to go back to the home page.

My eager eyes scanned the news releases on the home page,

but found none that I wanted to read right away. Umm. Let's see what is written under "Islam" in Yahoo or any of the other search engines. That should be interesting.

My fingers typed in ISLAM and clicked SEARCH. A few of the headings took my eyes, but being a woman, I was interested in Islamic marriage. There were several on that subject. Click, went the mouse and a long article spread out before my eyes. My eyes became more glued to the page, as statement after statement came from the article saying how badly women were treated in Islam and especially in marriage. My dismayed eyes were kept on the page reading until I was thoroughly

Continued on page 6

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Editorial

Socializing is a human need

In several mosques and Islamic centers many intelligent and righteous people are finding the straight path of Islam and choosing to practice the religion of all the prophets. There are Muslims who are re-discovering Islam as a way of life as well as people who are just entering into it.

One thing is common between them: When they start practising Islam, their lifestyle changes. Their interests change. Their idea of having fun becomes different. Their topics of discussion are modified. In other words, their social needs and preferences become distinct from others. What does not change is their need to socialize.

People who are born into Islam have families, old friends and usually a well established circle where they can move. They visit each other on the weekends, go to get-togethers, or get invited to parties and what not. They have a support system that newcomers to Islam don't have. Before accepting this way of life, they had a life. They had friends, families and a social circle. They used to have fun on Friday and Saturday nights. Maybe they used to spend time with their boyfriends or girlfriends. But now, their interests are different. In many cases, the family is not very supportive of this conversion. Friends think of them as "wierd." Weekend night parties don't attract them any more. The idea of going out with a girlfriend or a boyfriend is out of the question. What can they do to socialize?

Of course the mosque and study circles are there. But the atmosphere is more formal and school-like. You do not crack a joke in the mosque. You do not talk freely about things like who is looking for a job or who wants to get married. There is a need to get together in an Islamic yet informal setting.

I realized all this when I visited my doctor some time ago. She told me of a female who was a newcomer to Islam. Nobody in her family was a Muslim. She did not have any social circle. Even at work she was being pressured to go back to the old religion. She did not have a lot of time to attend study circles or go to mosques but she wanted to have a Muslim friend to talk to. She also wanted to get married. Muslim families have networking. She did not. There was a problem.

I saw the need to have a group that could handle this problem, especially for the newcomers to Islam. In this circle, people can make brotherly/sisterly bonds or *Mawwakhath*, establish friendships, invite and be invited to each others' house for supper or just a cup of tea, and have time to have a general interest talk. Families from different ethnic backgrounds can come to know each other. Single people can find somebody to get married to and parents can look for prospective spouses for their sons and daughters. All this is to be done in an Islamic yet non-scholastic atmosphere.

This idea was welcomed by *The Ambition* committee. We also discussed it with responsible people involved in some mosques and Islamic Da'wah programs. It was agreed upon as a good idea.

We would like to hear from our readers about it. It is not going to be a study circle or dedicated to any group or school of thought. We are just trying to do it for the sake of Allah, to bring the Ummah together.

Please let us know your opinion about it. Call us at (416) 740-1491 and leave a message with your name and phone number for us to get back to you. (Please speak clearly and slowly.)

If you are interested in helping us organize this group, please let us know.

Asma Warsi

Letters to the Editors

A Reader Advises to All

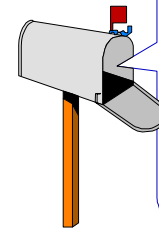
My name is Mohsen. I am from Iran. I would like to thank you because of your wonderful journal, *The Ambition*. It is very helpful and interesting. May Allah bless you all. In *The Ambition* Vol. 8 No. 1, I read about "The Changing Trends in Marriages..." under the Letters to the Editors. This is a very old and serious problem. As long as I can remember, so many people talk about it but nobody does anything. We have so many Muslim mosques, committees, centres, etc. Why don't we make a centre for matchmakers (of course in an Islamic way)? Why doesn't our Muslim community make some arrangements for families to know each other better and close? What is the best way for a Muslim man or woman to find his or her partner? We have to rely on Allah (swt) or in Arabic, Tawwakulto Allah.

By the way here is some advise for all of O' creatures of Allah! Fear Allah and anticipate your death by good actions. Purchase everlasting joy by paying transitory things - pleasures of this world. Get ready for the journey, for you are being driven, and prepare yourselves for death, since it is

hovering over you. Be a people who wake up when called, and who know that this world is not their abode, and so have it changed (with the next).

Certainly, Allah has not created you aimlessly not left you as useless. There is nothing between anyone of you and Paradise or Hell except death that must befall him. The life that is being shortened every moment and being dismantled every hour must be regarded as very short. The hidden thing namely death which is being driven (to you) by two ever new phenomena, the day and the night, is certainly quick of approach. The traveller who is approaching with success of failure (namely death) deserves the best of provision. So acquire such provision from this world while you are here with which you may shield yourself tomorrow (on the Day of Judgement).

So everyone should fear Allah and admonish himself, should send forward his repentance and should overpower his desire because his death is hidden from him. His desires deceive him and Satan is posted on him and he beautifies for him sin so that he may commit it



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.

and prompts him to delay repentance till his desires make him the negligent.

We ask Allah, the Glorified, that He may make us and you like one whom bounty does not mislead, whom nothing can stop from obedience of Allah and whom shame and grief do not befall after death. Beware! Surely this world is a place from which protection can not be sought except while one is in it. The action which is performed only for this world can not secure salvation. People are tested in it through calamities. Those who have taken worldly pleasures here will be taken out from them (by death) and will be questioned about them. And whatever good they have achieved for the other world, they will get them there and stay in them. For the intelligent, this world is like the shade--one moment it is spread out and extended but soon it shrinks and contracts.

May Allah protect us from all evil.

Mohsen

Send Us The Ambition, Reader Requests

This is a new mosque and serves a community of about three to four hundred Muslim in the downtown Toronto area. We request you to please add our mosque to your mailing list to receive *The Ambition* and any other periodicals which you publish from time to time.

Muhammed Deen
Secretary, Masjid-ul-Taqwa
Islamic Organization

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This Journal is dedicated to:
Professor Syed Aley Ahmad Abdi, Former Principal, Government Education College, Multan, Pakistan

The Real Jihad

by *Munawar Merchant*

There is no word in the Muslim vocabulary that is more maligned than the word Jihad. Non-Muslims, without exception associate it with terrorism and terrorist killings and slaughter. Headlines in newspapers in the Western world scream out with words like "Islamic Jihad group..."

That is not surprising for two reasons. One is that an average non-Muslim does not know better. The other is that even if some did know, they do not hold the media, which do not spare an effort to smear the name of Muslims and Islam. But, why blame others? The majority of Muslims around the world firmly believe that Jihad *only* means killing and getting killed in the name of Allah.

Alas! How wrong they are! For Jihad literally means *sacrifice in the cause of Allah*. Of course it does not exclude the laying down of your life if necessary, but it also means a host of other things. To understand what those other things are, one must try and fathom what sacrifice really means. Literally, the word sacrifice means losing, consecrating or forfeiting. In short, it means giving up. But giving up *what*?

In the context of Jihad, sacrifice would mean parting with anything that is dear to us, for the sake of Allah. So before deciding what must be given up, we must determine what is really dear to us as individuals. The list could be endless but let me venture with a roster of what I perceive as common aspirations, the giving up of which could classify as Jihad.

The first thing that comes to my mind is lust for power, fame and glory. These must be relinquished if they are contrary to the spirit of Islam. The lust for wealth is also a big one. It should be given up if the accumulation of wealth is at the expense of depriving someone else, irrespective of whether that somebody is a Muslim or a non-Muslim. Paying Zakat and giving

Sadaqa provides a good training for that purpose. Earning all money by Halal means should also be the objective at all times.

Self-interest and personal ego are also things to abhor. Many times we see Muslims fighting with each other over matters concerning issues of personal interest. We break up organizations and ruin initiatives being undertaken in the cause of Islam merely because these efforts are not in accordance with our egocentric perceptions of how things should be. We ignore the well-being of the Ummah and put our own self-interest in the front. This ego can lead to breaking up of countries and loss of lives and property of fellow human beings. Jihad is where Muslims subordinate their own individual well-being for the greater good of all Muslims and of Islam.

Finally, life to a human being is without doubt the most precious thing. To lay it down defending the name and the Deen of Allah is Jihad. If this requires taking up arms and engaging in a foray for the defense of a Muslim right, it is one thing. However, one must exercise care in differentiating this motive for armed conflict and sacrifice from entering into battle in a cause that is political rather than Islamic in origin.

There are many other items that could have formed part of the above list. However, the purpose if this submission is merely to highlight the true understanding of the term Jihad.

If we are able to abide by the

Parenting

by *Nosheen Khan*

Routines are very important for children of all ages. Whether the child is young or old, it is very important to establish them for children right from the beginning. Routines not only consist of when to feed and put children to sleep, but consist of TV time, homework, and playtime. Establishing them early on in the child's life is beneficial not only for the child but also the parents.

Children need routines not only as a form of discipline but also as a form of security. Well performed routines are also builders of self-esteem. When a pattern is established and executed on a regular basis, the child knows when to expect what, and what the expectations are. An example of this can be as simple as learning to wash hands before eating or as complex as toilet training. Both practices have one thing in common--consistency! If you are not consistent, your child won't be either. A child can not learn if they don't get consistent daily patterns. If you want your baby to sleep at 9:00 p.m. then it is important for you as the parent to help establish that. By

form of oblations suggested herein, would it not make for a better and more united Muslim Ummah which would gain the respect of the world rather than being the object of ridicule and exploitation which is basically how things stand today, whether we like it or not.

Habits and Routines

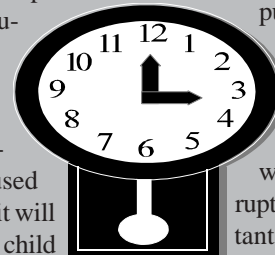
putting your child to sleep everyday at 9:00 p.m. you will develop a pattern for your child and eventually your child will get used to sleeping at the established time and begin to feel sleepy at that time.

Routines are also the foundations of habits. In order to have good habits, it is important to have good routines. If you establish a daily system where the child must wash their hands before eating, the child will be used to this and eventually it will become a habit for the child in the future. Habits are easily picked up but are very hard to break-- therefore, if good habits are taught, the chances of children keeping them are very likely. Islam supports the idea that patterns should be developed at a young age. Parents are told to develop routines such as prayer and fasting at an early age so that they will be familiar with them and so that it becomes a common everyday part of their life.

Routines are also a very big help for parents. A child who has good daily patterns is usually more

easier to handle because even the parent gets used to the child's schedule and can anticipate the child's needs better. For example if your child is used to sleeping at 9:00 p.m. and she becomes cranky around that time the parent can assume that the child is crying because they are tired and then the parent can put them to sleep. Parents or caregivers can also plan their days according to the child's needs without too much disruption. The most important thing we should remember is that all routines should be consistent, and that we should try to avoid too many changes in the child's schedule because the child may start feeling insecure if they don't understand why the changes are being made.

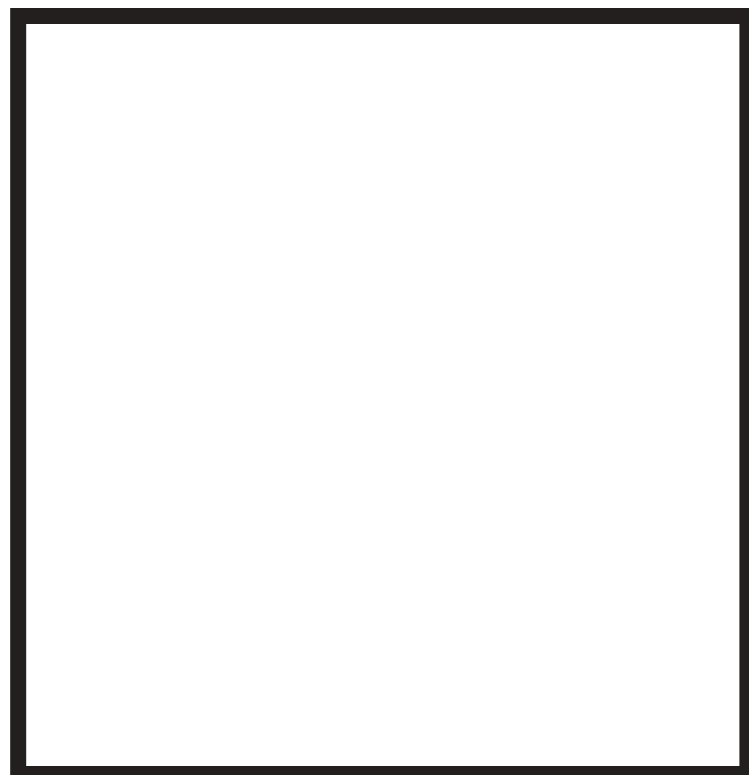
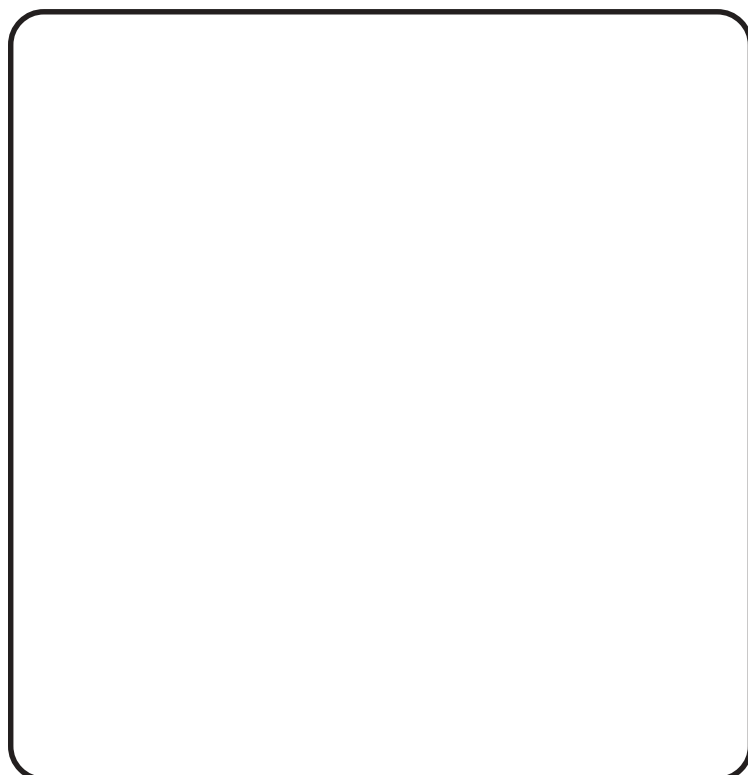
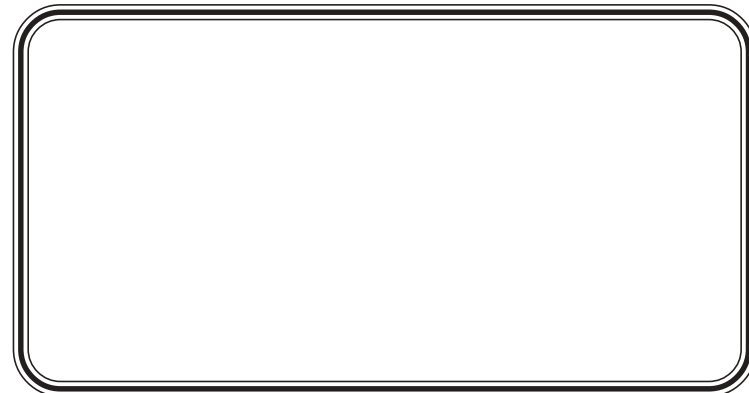
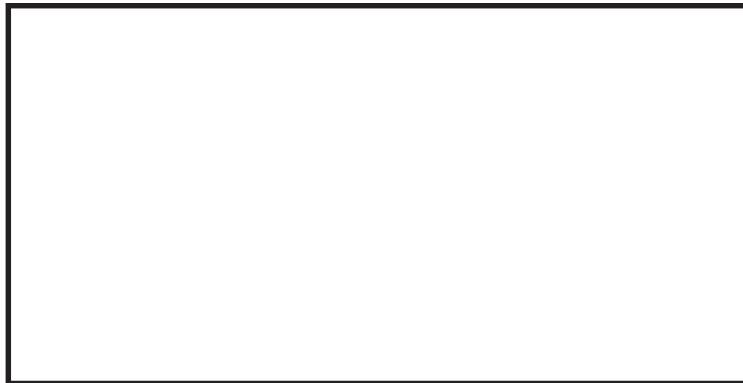
Habits and routines developed at an earlier stage of life are usually the one that will be with your child forever. It is our duty as parents to establish the best habit and routines possible because after all, good routines equal good habits.



Success Stories, *Continued from page 8*

be seen taking form and shape when one needs Sister Hamida and encounters her commitment to this work.

Currently Sister Hamida is organizing a ladies' group at the Centre. The group will explore arts and craft activities, further Islamic knowledge in order to strengthen families, and provide an opportunity to make new friends and participate in economics-related projects. She can be contacted at the Centre at (416) 638-1866 on Thursdays and Fridays between 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.



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 Why did Prophet Muhammad marry many wives?

A When people hear that the Prophet (pbuh) had many wives they conclude without much thought that the Prophet (pbuh) was a sensuous man. However, a quick historical review of his marriages, proves otherwise.

When he was twenty-five years old he married for the first time. His wife, Khadijah, was fifteen years older than him. She remained the only wife of the Prophet (pbuh) for the next twenty-five years, until she died (may Allah be pleased with her).

Only after her death, did the Prophet (pbuh) marry other women. Now, it is obvious that if the Prophet (pbuh) was after physical pleasure he did not have to wait until he was more than fifty years old to start marrying more wives. He lived in a society in which it was quite acceptable to have many wives. But the Prophet (pbuh) remained devoted to his only wife for twenty-five years. When she died she was sixty-five years old.

His later marriages were for various reasons. Some marriages were with the view to help women whose husbands had been killed while they were defending their faith. Others were with a view to cement relationships with devoted followers like Abu Bakr (ra). Yet others were to build bridges with various tribes who were otherwise at war with the Muslims. When the Prophet (pbuh) became their relative through marriage, their hostilities calmed down, and much bloodshed was averted.

Recent non-Muslim writers who had the opportunity to study the life of the Prophet (pbuh) first-hand reach a similar conclusion about his plural marriages.

John L. Esposito, Professor of Religion and Director of the Centre for International Studies at the College of the Holy Cross, says that most of these marriages had "political and social motives" (Islam: The Straight Path, Oxford University Press, 1988, p.19). This he explained as follows: "As was customary for Arab chiefs, many were political marriages to cement alliances. Others were marriages to the widows of his companions who had fallen in combat and were in need of protection" (John L. Esposito, Islam: The Straight Path, pp. 19-20).

On page 19, in the same book, he reminds us of the following historical fact: "Though less common, polygyny was also permitted in Biblical and even in post-Biblical Judaism. From Abraham, David, and Solomon down to the reformation period, polygyny was practised."

Another non-Muslim, Caesar E. Farah, writes as follows: "In the prime of his youth and adult years Muhammad remained thoroughly devoted to Khadijah and would have none other for consort. This was an age that looked upon plural marriages with favor and in a society that in pre-Biblical and post-Biblical days considered polygamy an essential feature of social existence. David had six wives and numerous concubines (2 Samuel 5:13; 1 Chronicles 3:1-9, 14:3) and Solomon was said to have had as many as seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines (1 Kings 11:3). Solomon's son Rehoboam had eighteen wives and sixty concubines (2 Chronicles 11:21). The New Testament contains no specific injunction against plural marriages. It was commonplace for the nobility among the Christians and Jews to contract plural marriages. Luther spoke of it with toleration" (Caesar E. Farah, Islam: Beliefs and Observances, 4th edition, Barron's, U.S. 1987, p. 69).

Mr. Farah then concluded that Muhammad's (pbuh) plural marriages were due "partly to political reasons and partly to his concern for the wives of his companions who had fallen in battle defending the nascent Islamic community" (p. 69).

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

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SHOULD I, AS A HUMAN, DESTROY MY TELEVISION?

by Abubakar Nurain Kassim

One of the most important and constructive characteristics of humans which differentiate them from the rest of living things is to organize their time by avoiding what is harmful and meaningless and doing what is good and beneficial for themselves and for their society. Because time is a valuable limited gift given to mankind by the Creator, once it is gone, no one can ever bring it back.

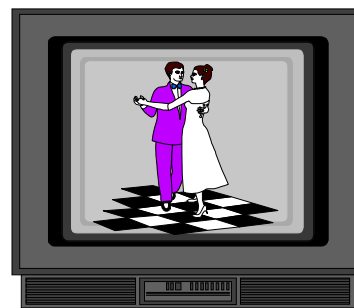
In the majority of human residences on this planet, people have the "magic colour box" known as television in their sitting rooms. They consider it as their life term companion and they spend a great amount of their life by watching it. Since television is just a tool or an inanimate object which depends fully on its master, then the blame on its negative impact should be directed to its master who holds its wheel.

Unfortunately, today television is leading people into completely devastating consequences such as violence, criminal activities, indecency, and instability especially in their relationships with each other and many other destructive and horrifying results.

Throughout its programs, it trains children to be disobedient to their parents and elders and to have the courage of saying to their parents whenever they are questioned about their activities "it is none of your business" or "shut up" or to beat them up when is necessary. And to throw them into the seniors' residence once they are aged with some flowers and post cards once or never each year.

Television also teaches people, especially youngsters, to behave like animals by conducting indecent acts on the street without having morality and shyness and soon it might teach human being not to hesitate to have sexual relationship on the street as a part of the "new civilization." It trains younger people to settle their disputes with their fellow human beings by violence as "movie heroes" solve their disputes by "heroic" actions. As a result of being fed up with its dramas and daily shows known as soap operas, husbands and wives lack from honest and faithful rela-

tionships and the number of divorces in the society is on a constant increase. Couples are programmed by those dramas not to have any concern or trust with each other and they are made to believe in illusions that once they divorce each other, there will always be hundreds of other people who are more good looking and have more money than their partners who will be ready to marry



them. But after the divorce and when it is too late, they start to wake up from their illusion which they got from those shows and they regret their foolish decisions for the rest of their lives and they start to realize that their partner really was a good human. Many students perform poorly in school after wasting their time on that "magic box" and after getting low grades, they finally drop out from schools and start to pursue the path of "heroism" or "cowboism." It also teaches people that decency, good values, and morality are "old-fashioned" and actions of uncivilized people and everything immoral and indecency to be "fun" and "cool" things to do. It also keeps people away from remembering their Creator.

After getting all the facts about the unpleasant consequences of television, caring people might ask what is the solution? There are three important and constructive points which should be seriously considered in order to cut the roots of this problem. Firstly, since television is just an inanimate object like a car which depends on the person who holds the steering wheel, the important obligation comes on the government by making rules on television. It should pay a close attention on the individuals who hold the steering wheel of television and make basic standards and good values for them to follow. It

should control it as it strictly regulates and controls the rules of the highways. As the government strictly controls and regulates the highway regulations in order to decrease the number of car accidents which leads to human physical casualties, it should also regulate the rules of the television in order to decrease the human mental and moral casualties which destroys the society and leads humanity into a nightmare and horrifying consequences.

Someone might try to defend those who are behind the screen by saying that they have started to put warning signs at the beginning of the immoral programs such as "parental discretion is advised" and so on. But this is a ridiculous and sarcastic idea which instead, makes children watch those programs even if it is late at night because one of the human characteristics is curiosity. Whenever you tell someone or your child not to open a certain box or a room at your house for example, by hook or crook the child will definitely try to open that room in order to satisfy his curiosity about what made that room so special.

Secondly, parents should pay close attention to their kids about the programs they watch. They should spend their time with their kids on beneficial activities such as helping them in their school

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From the Qur'an

Muslim Role Models

At-Tufayl ibn Amr ad-Dawsi

by *Shazeela Ali*

South of the Arabian peninsula, in a village named Tihama, lived a man by the name of at-Tufayl ibn Amr ad-Dawsi. He was the chief of the Daws tribe and was known amongst the Arabs as a distinguished Arab who had many good virtues and had done a lot of good work.

Tufayl was a very kind man. He fed the hungry, comforted those in distress and granted asylum to refugees. He was also keenly interested in poetry and was himself a sharp and sensitive poet capable of expressing the most delicate emotions.

During the time when the struggle between the Prophet (pbuh) and the Quraish was going on, Tufayl set out to go to Makkah. Tufayl, however, was unaware of the situation in Makkah.

Upon entering Makkah, the leaders of the Quraish welcomed Tufayl whole-heartedly and gave him accommodation in a big house. The leaders then gathered together to warn him about the Prophet (pbuh). They said, "This man who claims that he is a prophet has ruined our authority and shattered our community. We are afraid that he would succeed in undermining you and your authority among your people just as he has done to us. Don't speak to this man. On no account listen to anything he has to say. He has the speech of a wizard, causing division between father and son, between brother and brother and between husband and wife."

So fearful at what the Quraish told him about the Prophet, Tufayl decided to put pieces of cotton in his ears when he went to the Ka'abah the next day. Sure enough, when he reached the Ka'abah, he saw the Prophet (pbuh) already there. Tufayl was totally captivated by the Prophet's (pbuh) method of prayer and

found himself drawn to this man who claimed to be a messenger of Allah.

Even with the cotton in his ear, Tufayl was still able to hear Muhammad's (pbuh) words. Finally Tufayl took out the cotton out of his ears as he reassured himself that he was an intelligent person who could distinguish good from bad and did not need to be afraid and plug his ears.

Tufayl stayed at the Ka'abah until the Prophet (pbuh) left to go home. He decided to follow the Prophet (pbuh) in order to ask him more about what he was speaking of at the Ka'abah. When he finished listening to the Prophet (pbuh), he accepted Islam by saying the Shahadah.

Tufayl stayed in Makkah long enough to learn about Islam and memorize the Qur'an. When he returned back to his home, he told his father and wife about his experience in Makkah and the encounter with the Prophet (pbuh).

They quickly accepted Islam saying, "Your religion is my religion." His tribe, however, was not much interested in this religion. The first one among them to accept Islam was Abu Hurayrah.

The next time Tufayl went to Makkah, he was accompanied by Abu Hurayrah. When he met with the Prophet (pbuh), Tufayl told him (pbuh) that he had left behind "hearts with veils over them obscuring the truth and firm disbelief." The Prophet (pbuh) then prayed to Allah for the tribe of Daws. After praying he told Tufayl to return to his tribe and invite them to Islam gently.

Tufayl returned back to his people. He stayed with them until after the Muslims of Makkah migrated to Madinah, the battle of Badr, Uhud, and Khandaq. He then went to the Prophet with eighty families from Daws who accepted Islam.

After the conquest of Makkah, Tufayl, with the Prophet's (pbuh)

permission returned to Tihama to destroy Dhu-I-Khafiyyin, the chief idol among the Daws. When the idol was destroyed and the people witnessed that no calamity fell on them, they realized that idols have no power and they are not worthy of worship. The whole tribe of Daws, then, accepted Islam.

Tufayl lived long enough to see the Caliphate of Abu Bakar (ra) and he took an important role in the Jihad against the imposter Musaylamah Kazzab.

Tufayl met his Creator as a Shaheed (martyr) in the battle of Yamamah.

A lesson to learn from the life of the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) is that whatever Allah wills to happen will happen. Allah willed that Tufayl should hear the Truth from the Prophet (pbuh) even though he tried to prevent it by putting cotton in his ears. Allah is the most powerful and no one can prevent what He wishes to happen. For He just says "Be" and it is.

From the Hadith

Television

Continued from page 4

home-work, reading and understanding together the meaning of the Glorious Qur'an, reading the history of our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and his companions, and they should teach their kids to watch decent programs including the very interesting cartoons which are produced by the Sound Vi-

sion of Chicago. Such videos are available in Islamic book stores or they can be obtained directly from Sound Vision at 1-800-432-4262.

Thirdly, people who care for their lives and their futures, especially adults, should be extremely careful of that magic box which sits in their sitting rooms and they should narrow and minimize the time they waste on it. On their leisure time, they should watch Is-

lamic videos of our great scholars such as Sheikh Ahmed Deedat and others who have left us good knowledge on their cassettes about our religion and on how to conduct friendly dialogues with our fellow human beings who lack from the real meaning of Islam and who are completely brainwashed by the media propaganda about Islam.

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Benefits of Hajj

Continued from page 1

Hajj commemorates the divine rituals performed by the first known pilgrims, Abraham and Ishmael, to the first house of God on Earth. It is a reminder of the fact that Makkah alone, in the entire universe, was honoured by Allah as the center of monotheism since the time of Abraham and that it will continue to be the center of the pure monotheistic religion of Islam. The Qur'an declares: "Surely, the first house of worship ever set up for mankind was indeed the one at Bakkah: rich in blessing and a source of guidance unto all the worlds, full of a clear message. It is the place whereon Abraham once stood; and whoever enters it finds security. Pilgrimage is a duty men owe to Allah - those who can afford the journey; and as for those who deny the Truth, Allah stands not in need of anything in all the worlds" (3:96-99).

Hajj is a unique attribute of Islam. It is enjoined by God to serve many purposes. It serves as a reminder to us of the grand assembly on the Day of Judgement when people will stand equally before Allah awaiting their final destiny.

It is the largest demonstration of how universal Islam is and exhibits the brotherhood and equality of Muslims. During the Hajj, Muslims from all walks of life, from all trades and classes, and from every single corner of the globe assemble in Makkah, in response to the call of Allah. No matter how rich or poor one is, they dress in the same simple way, observe the same regulations, utter the same supplications at the same time, in the same way, and for the same purpose.

Not only is it the largest gathering of faith where Muslims meet to know one another, but it is also the largest regular conference of peace known in the history of mankind. Peace is the dominant theme during the course of Hajj. Peace with God and one's soul, peace with one another and peace even with the animals. To disturb the peace of anyone or any creature is severely prohibited, especially in this month.

In the course of Hajj, pilgrims to Makkah are acquainted with the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) spiritual and historical environment so that they can strengthen their faith, their love for the Prophet (pbuh) and their love for Islam. It confirms the commitment of Muslims to

Allah and their readiness to abandon material interests in his service.

Performing the Hajj to Makkah is a very beneficial, refreshing and

beautiful experience. I pray that Insha-Allah at least once, in our lifetime, we will be so blessed as to experience the pilgrimage to Makkah.

turned off marrying a Muslim man.

Then my common sense and knowledge of happily married

Muslim couples took over and I scrolled down the article until I saw who had written it. It was not a Muslim at but rather a missionary from another religion who had a very biased opinion.

It would seem to me that this man had been influenced in writing his article not by what Islam says but rather the cultural practices in some countries where Muslims reside. But I don't blame him. Why are people able to point to Muslims as ones who beat their wives and do not value them as a gift from Allah, to love, and to protect? Should we not be the best example of a happy family? Should we not show others how marriages work, rather than turning people

To Surf or Not To Surf



against Islam due to such disgraceful behaviour which is cultural, rather than Islamic? Is it not a shame upon the

Muslim Ummah that a non-Muslim could sincerely believe that this is what Islam preaches? Total discrimination against women and putting her at a lower level!

With sadness in my heart, my finger pressed the mouse again.

What's this? Muslim homosexuals? Totally un-Islamic!

I clicked on other sites listed under Islam. Many of them have been written by non-Muslims and are definitely written to turn people against Islam.

In order to be fair, it would be good if some of our scholars could write about Islam rather than non-Muslims who appear to be judging Islam and making their statements based on some cultural practices. Imagine people turning to the websites on Islam and reading all this negative information. After spending hours reading this posted information, my mind could not handle anymore and I switched to more suitable websites like news, etc.

There is a wide variety of information on the World Wide Web. Some excellent sites with great care are called for if there are children in the family. Careful screening should be done by parents on what their child is doing on the Net.

In closing, may I respectfully suggest that extreme caution should be taken by "surfers" to guard against the evil which is on the Net. As with any media, it can be used or abused. The choice is up to those of us who "surf" whether to fill our minds with positive and healthy information or to pollute our minds.

Muslim Women

Continued from page 1

Qur'an. But there are numerous others on the importance of both genders to be righteous and henceforth be contributors to the betterment of society. This was further cemented by the numerous profound Muslimahs that helped Islam spread throughout the world with great success. One such example was Aisha (ra), the Prophet's (pbuh) wife, who was highly educated and taught many Muslims how to read and memorize the Holy Qur'an. She was among the first to memorize all of the Qur'an and was also one of the most reliable sources of Hadith. She was also a very pious Muslimah with immense integrity and character, someone whom the beloved Prophet (pbuh) could always rely upon.

With the coming of Islam and the subsequent revelations, women were given the right to inheritance, education, and ownership of property, equality and respect in marriage as well as in society. In fact the female is so highly regarded in our Deen that according to a Hadith, the service to the mother is three times more important than that to the father

and a child's paradise lies at the feet of his mother. This signifies how special a female is, since the lowest portion of her body, the feet, is where a child's entry to heaven lies. This metaphor illustrates how much respect the female deserves.

Islam is a religion that makes sense and all of the above mentioned makes sense. If the female is uneducated in the Qur'an, religious knowledge, or other aspects of worldly education, how will the children, during the early years of their upbringing learn things that are important for them? How will they pray, read Qur'an, balance the Dunya and Deen, and most importantly, how will they regard their mothers? How will they regard their sisters and wives if they see their mothers being ignorant and not well educated? As a whole, what will be their perception of female kind? For this simple reason, Muslim females have to be not only educated but actively participating in the education of others. They have to show and provide leadership in all aspects of life.

Muslims are growing in Canada. For us to be an example to society and true representatives

of Islam and what Muslims stand for, we have to instill the values of Islam into our children, both males and females. Of course this is best done by example.

I humbly implore my sisters in Islam to realize the rights and responsibilities given to them from Allah and to adhere to them. They should not be passive. They should be active.

I plead to my sisters to get the knowledge of Islam and then do what you can to dispense your responsibilities in this part of the world without becoming those who transgress the boundaries laid by Allah. The fear and love of Allah will set you free from all forms of repression. Carry yourself with the dignity and honour that Islam has provided for you. Your contributions, no matter how large or small, give us all a huge pillar of strength to fall back on. Your involvement helps us to realize the beauty of Islam and allows us to reflect upon our duties and actions. For those who adhere to Islam, they strongly show the society that they know between right and wrong and will never be intimidated by falsehood.

Matrimonials

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Address your responses to **Matrimonials c/o The Ambition** and include the inquiry # on the outside of the envelope.

The Ambition accepts Matrimonial ads at \$15 for 3 lines per single insert. They must be pre-paid by cheque or money order. To place an ad call Sister Wilma at (416) 247-0948.

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Kids' Korner

A Trip to Remember

by Kareem Inam, Age 11

The most exciting day of my life was when I went to Makkah with my mother and uncle. I was just five years old when my mom started telling me about an upcoming trip to the holy land in Arabia.

She told me that we will be visiting all the places that our Prophet (pbuh) resided in more than fourteen hundred years ago. My first reaction was a mixture of joy and anxiety about what to expect. My mom had previously told me all about Makkah, the Ka'abah, the well of Zamzam and its sweet water. She even told me about the history of the House of Allah that we were about to visit.

Still, however, for a few moments I was silent as though I did not care or as though I heard about this for the first time. Suddenly, my feelings of excitement came loose and I broke out. O wow! I am going to see and circle around the Ka'abah and the well of Zamzam! When? When? "Soon, Insha-Allah," she said. "I will come back to tell all my friends about it," I interrupted. "Yes," she said. "But don't get too excited so soon."

We still had a few months ahead of us for the trip. I went to bed that night with nothing on my mind but the trip with the pictures my mother had shown me previously and her words about the Prophet (pbuh) and his hard work in the way of Allah. She had told me about Makkah and the Holy House toward which Muslims all over the world face when they pray and which Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) built long ago for the worship of Allah.

My excitement was getting stronger as the date of departure drew nearer until one morning I found myself boarding an airplane along with my mom, uncle and some of their friends. After a long and exhausting flight when we reached the holy place in Makkah, I found what I was expecting and much more. Perhaps the best way to relate my experience to others is to say that the atmosphere was warm, pious, and holy such that words or pictures can not make people appreciate it. People, regardless of their age will never know what they have been missing until they have been there and have experienced the holiness

and warmth of the atmosphere.

I hope and pray that I will be able to make the trip not only once but many times in the future. I will always be looking forward to my next time in Makkah.

About the Prophet



Hold your Tongue

by Nazie Shakor, Gr. 9

A famous scholar said: "Allah has bestowed a special favour upon man by creating the tongue (Lisaan) for him. It is created for several good purposes. The ungrateful man, misuses it and commits sins which lead him to destruction in this world and in the next. As Muslims we should keep our tongues under firm control."

How true! Telling lies does not help us. It only leads to sin and corruption in the world. The Prophet (pbuh) said: "The most dangerous piece of flesh

that man possess is the tongue."

Allah says in the Qur'an: "O you who believe, stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents or your kin, and whether it be against rich or poor. For Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts of your hearts, lest you swerve, and if you distort justice or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do" (4:135).

Imam al-Ghazali advised us in these words to stay away from dishonesty and speaking lies: "Guard

your tongue against eight things - lying, breaking promises, disputing, self-glorification, cursing, invoking evil towards others, and mockery." On the Day of Judgement our tongue, like all other limbs, will speak out against us.

We should always follow the example of the Prophet (pbuh) who was known as the Truthful and the Trustworthy. This is why people trusted him and believed in what he was saying when the Revelation came to him to declare him as the Prophet of Allah (pbuh).

Love of Allah

The love of Allah is like the love of nature. When it showers rain upon the dry Earth and gives it life. And behold! a plant grows, which bears fruits that we eat and enjoy.

If it be Allah's will, The food that we eat, would be enough to sustain us. And give us enough strength to seek out and explore our beautiful Earth.

But the Love of Allah has given us taste. So that we may not only eat but enjoy with sweet taste and find fulfilment.

Abdulkadir Mohamoud, age 12

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."

Success Stories Around Us

Devotion, leadership, and self-support are at work at Hidayet Muslim Family and Child Centre

by Aneesa Lakhi

Ask Hamida Chishti to tell you a little about herself and she demurs. She would much rather talk about the work being done by the Hidayet Muslim Family and Child Centre.

Situated in a sun-filled room at the Imdadul Islamic Center, the community-based non-profit Hidayet organization has been providing services and support to members of the Muslim community since October 1994. The organization received its impetus from the findings of the Community Sounding Board sponsored by the Islamic Coordination Council of Imams in October 1992. The Sounding Board had been brought together to evaluate the services and resources available to the Muslim community. Comprising forty people involved with these services and resources, as well as Imams, mosque representatives, and others, the Sounding Board found that although mainstream support and services were indeed available to Muslims, people and organizations aware of and concerned with the Muslim community and its needs specifically were almost non-existent.

With these findings in mind, and experience and knowledge garnered from working for many years as an interpreter, ESL instructor, and a volunteer and advocate for various community-based organizations, Sister

Hamida proceeded to visit mosques throughout Metropolitan Toronto in the hopes of finding a place from which to begin constructing the much-needed support network. The Imdadul Islamic Centre in North York became this place, and three years later, the Hidayet Muslim Family and Child Centre boasts a board of directors composed of doctors, lawyers, and other professionals with expertise in the areas of counselling, education, and training; a staff which consists of Sister Hamida, Amina Sangrar, and the aid of Wahida Chishti Waliante; and a positive reputation and track record which now has social service organizations from the mainstream and mosques and Imams from the Muslim community turning to the organization for assistance and advice.

What has motivated Hamida Chishti to donate so much of her time and energy to the Muslim community? Where have her leadership qualities come from? Her younger sister, Wahida Chishti Waliante, active herself in community work, provides some insight into Sister Hamida's dedication by narrating the story of their early lives.

Sister Hamida was born one of four children in Kashmir, with a father who was a public prosecutor and a mother who would become a teacher. With the death of her father when she was five and the partition of Indian subcontinent,

Sister Hamida and her siblings moved with their mother to Lahore, Pakistan. There the 35-year-old widow proceeded to raise her children on her own, returned to school, and became a volunteer teaching youngsters who had been orphaned in the aftermath of the violence that marked the partition. This example of strength in a time of difficulties, self-sufficiency, and self-sacrifice left its mark on her daughters.

As Sister Hamida expresses it, her focus is on incorporating religion into her life in such a way that the dictates of the Qur'an are

applies on a day-to-day basis. And volunteerism, involvement in the community, dedication to family, all of these are a very important part of her identity as a Muslim and as a human being.

Sister Hamida's initiatives have focused not only on helping others, but on broadening her own perspectives as well. She received her B.A. in England, then returned to school in Canada where she acquired a Social Services degree and a diploma in Counselling and Conflict Resolution. She speaks Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, English, and Italian, and she is now taking time

to improve her Arabic language skills.

The work of the Hidayet Muslim Family and Child Centre--providing information on housing, employment, immigration, shelters, health and social services, filling out forms, providing referrals to various agencies, crisis intervention, support counselling, family and community mediation, and services specifically aimed at seniors--is summed up by its mission statement: ***To help individuals and families attain self-sufficiency in just and supportive communities.*** These words can

Continued on page 3

