

The Ambition

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The First Journal for Young Muslims in Canada

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Zulqarnain, the King of the Two Horns

Righteousness and true respect for God excludes man from the worship of everything else.

by Mrs. Anwari Ali Khan

The story of Zulqarnain is mentioned in the Qur'an in Sura Kahf. Who was he? Where did he live and in what era? The Qur'an gives us no material on which we can base a definite answer. But, then, it is not necessary to find an answer as the story is treated as a parable. Popular opinion identifies Zulqarnain with Alexander the Great or a Persian or a pre-historic Himyarite King.

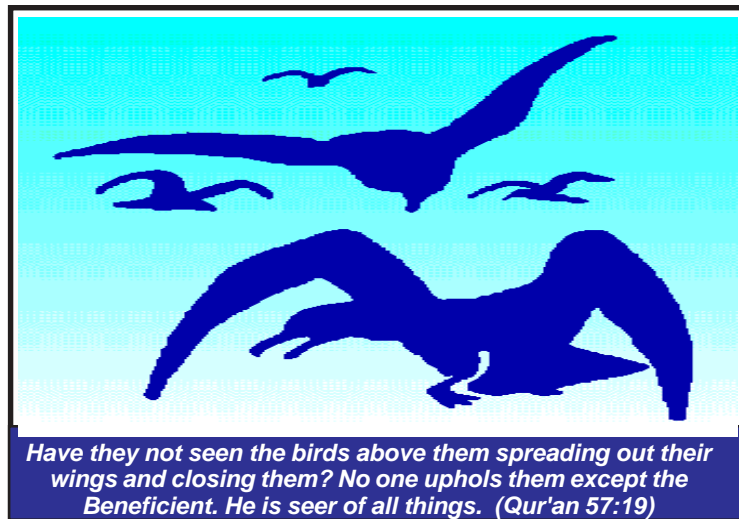
Zulqarnain was a very powerful king blessed with power by Allah who provided him the

ways and means for his great work. His sway extended from east to west over diverse civilizations. He was just and righteous. He protected the weak and punished the rebellious. Three of his expeditions are described in the Qur'an, each embodying a great ethical example about the possession of kingship or power. He had a strong faith and always remembered God.

The first episode mentions his expedition to the West. He won authority over a turbulent and unruly people. He had to decide

whether he would be harsh towards them or polite and lenient towards them. In order to protect the weak and the innocent, he punished the guilty and the headstrong, but he always remembered that the true punishment would come in the hereafter. He laid more stress on the good that he could do to those who lived their lives in faith and righteousness. He gave every opportunity to the rich and the poor for the exercise of virtue and goodness. This is the spiritual

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Empowering Muslim Women

It is a self-empowerment process to bring positive changes.

by Wahida Chishti Valiante

Islam teaches us to be active in order to make the world a better place for ourselves, our families, our community, our society and finally our Ummah. As human beings we will be called to account for our actions and deeds in making this world a better place. Therefore, as the other half of humanity, Muslim women are obliged to be equally involved in the affairs of this world to bring positive changes in their own and other people's lives.

Knowledge and information are sources of power. Read the Qur'an and gain knowledge of what Allah requires of us in practical terms as his representative on Earth, both in spiritual and physical existence. Gather information on current social and politics issues. Share this information with your friends,

neighbours, and family members. Involve your children in these discussions.

Education and politics are our pressing needs. Get involved in your children's education. Meet your child's teacher regularly. Join school and board committees. Call the local school boards and make a difference.

Read and audit school and library books: Read children's textbooks and library books for misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims. Make contacts at the board, school, and library to have the offending books removed. Promote the inclusion of Islamic history books, magazines, and Muslim storybooks.

Read the local, national, and international newspapers regularly. Write and call editors for using terms such as *Muslim fundamentalist, Muslim terrorist,*

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Our Bait-ul-Maal

Is there a place for the Bait-ul-Maal in today's world? The answer is 'YES' and the need is greater, more than ever

By Munawar Merchant

The word Bait-ul-Maal means Islamic Treasury. It is a kind of reserve under Islamic Law, which provides funds for the benefit of needy Muslims. Disbursements from this pool allow Muslims to live in dignity. The Bait-ul-Maal does exist in some form in certain Muslim countries. To what extent the practice exist and how well it confirms to the institution that was contemplated under Islam is a matter of conjecture.

Is there a place for the Bait-ul-Maal in today's world? The answer is 'YES.' The need is great more than ever, given the plight of Muslims the world over, regardless of their residence in so-called Muslim countries or elsewhere. So, why not a Bait-ul-Maal right here in the Southern Ontario region and more particularly in the area of GTA and surrounding localities. What follows is my version of why such funding is necessary, the setting up of the treasury, the source of the funds and the use to which these funds are to be put.

The Muslims in Southern Ontario are constantly being

solicited for donations for several different projects and undertakings by mosques and other Islamic organizations. Such drives are usually for the building of new mosques, extending existing ones, for Islamic schools and Islamic education. The pledges and commitment required of the contributors is often very large and unreasonable as far as financial abilities of most are concerned. And more often than not, the same people have to contribute time and again. There are times when mosques are planned which are not even necessary. For example one organization or the other wants to

put up a mosque when there is already an existing mosque nearby which is not fully attended and which is experiencing difficulty in meeting its operating budget, let alone having money for required Islamic activities.

Those who contribute are never sure that their donations will be put to the intended use. This is because the intended projects for which collections are made are quite pretentious and consequently, unattainable. The collections simply do not match the amounts needed. For this reason many such projects are abandoned after some initial

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Is Jesus the Son of God?

Allah has given us very clear answers from every angle

by Abdullah Sabree

[In the last issue a reader requested us to shed some light on this subject. We hope this article will answer his questions.]

This question goes beyond the Christian-Muslim debate. It is

a question that even some Christian scholars are debating among themselves. Some have come out openly and declared that Jesus is NOT God (for example the head of the United Church of Canada).

For Muslims, this is not an

issue of debate as Allah has given us very clear answers from every angle that the question can be asked. Some of these answers are as follows.

"Behold!" said the angel, "O Mary. Allah gives thee glad tidings of a Word from Him. His name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honour in this world and the hereafter and of the company of those nearest to Allah." (3:45)

She said: " 'O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man hath touched me?' He said 'Even so. Allah creates what He wills. When He has decreed a matter. He but says to it 'Be' and it is.' " (3:47)

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MUSLIMS UNDER SIEGE

New Hollywood film needs proactive community response

In the wake of the recent bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa tied to a Muslim extremist group, and the United States' subsequent bombings in the Sudan and Afghanistan, a new film has been released by 20th Century Fox with the clear message that Islam will bring violence to this continent and that Muslims pose a threat to society.

Opening in November, *The Siege* is a dangerous and stereotypical depiction of Muslims in North America. (The film's earlier titles were *Against All Enemies*, *Martial Law*, and *Holy War*.) The film is set in Brooklyn, New York, and involves a bombing campaign by "Muslim" extremist terrorists which prompts the U.S. military to declare martial law and carry out a mass arrest of American Muslims and Arab-Americans, echoing the detention of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

The Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) isn't the only entity that sees that the stereotypes shown in *The Siege* clearly point to Islam and Muslims. Speaking to The Toronto Sun (Oct. 21, 1998), Denzel Washington, who stars in the film, said, "I couldn't blame them (referring to CAIR's protest of the film). What that trailer did was say in one image 'Terrorism' and in the next 'Religion.' There are Jewish terrorists, but nobody would associate them with their religion. It's the juxtaposition of words and image that stings."

A major cause for concern is that the film links Islamic religious practices such as prayer, *wudu*, the *adhan*, *du'a*, female Islamic dress, beards, Qur'anic recitation, and even the green colour with terrorism. (CAIR requested months ago that these references be removed, but their request was refused.) Another issue is that the trustworthiness and peaceful intentions of the Muslim and Arab communities in North America are made suspect. Many of those who see this film will view the next Muslim or Arab they meet with increased suspicion and hostility.

In this film, the "Muslims" have total disregard for human life. In fact, they seek out the weakest and most vulnerable in society to kill. For example, we hear lines such as: "Your quaint laws don't mean sh-t to these people (the terrorists)." Islamic beliefs are cited as justifications for terrorism and Islamic terms are mocked with lines such as: "Some sheik told him (the terrorist) to die for Allah is beautiful." Also, the terrorists carry out their attacks because they believe they'll have "seventy virgins" in paradise.

In another subtle example, the Muslim character who is allegedly co-operating with the authorities turns out to be a terrorist mastermind. The ultimate message here is that North Americans should never trust Muslims or Arabs. Twisting the dagger of suspicion further, one character says, "You don't understand us . . . this is only the beginning."

This is not the first time Hollywood has produced such a controversial film. Other recent films that give Muslims a bad name include *True Lies* and *Executive Decision*. As Muslims living in North America, we must do everything we can to protest against *The Siege*. In a famous Hadith, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrated, "*I heard the Messenger of Allah as saying: 'He who amongst you sees something abominable should modify it with the help of his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue; and if he has not strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart and that is the least of faith'*" (Sahih Muslim).

Since we cannot modify this particular situation with our hands, we can certainly do it with our tongues by voicing our concern to the local movie theatres that decide to play the film. We can also form local committees to co-ordinate our community's response. Above all, our youth should figure prominently in this campaign. CAIR has asked all Muslims to inform moviegoers about the true meaning of Islam as a proactive form of protest. Muslim communities and mosques are advised to contact CAIR at 1-202-659-2247 in order to receive a **Siege Campaign Kit**, or visit CAIR at www.cair-net.org.

Insha-Allah, with our efforts, we can put Hollywood under siege for their continuous efforts to negatively portray all Muslims.

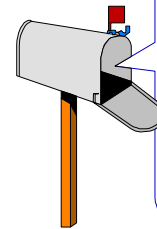
Muhammad Basil Ahmad

Our Mail

Reader disturbed by the Arabic on the first page of The Ambition

I read almost all the issues of the Ambition and I believe that your newspaper is serving a very useful purpose in our community. However, I wish to point out, perhaps an oversight of the publishers. The covering page always carries the words of Allah on the top right hand corner. These newspapers, as you know,

eventually end up in the garbage - thus the word of Allah is desecrated and as Muslims we have to uphold the word of Allaah to the highest level. Perhaps you may care to write the translation in English only and refrain from writing the Arabic Texts. On the other hand you may wish to consult with some of the *Fuqaha*



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.

on this subject. Brothers and sisters it is not my intention to offend you, and I ask Allah (SWT) that if I do that you forgive me.

Akbar Ali.

Journey to Islam...

Continued from page 4

everything) as being terrorists intent on bombing New York City. This whole thing destroys the image of Islam. In fact, Muslims are faced by a daily onslaught of articles that directly or indirectly criticize Islam or Muslims, in general so that society gets to believe that this is the way the world really is and that Islam is the source of all terrorism.

Getting back to the question, my family has generally accepted me, not entirely sure of my decision, but they do go out of their way to accommodate my beliefs. For example, my family only buys Halaal meat for occasions when my wife and I eat with them. My friends first reacted to me a little bit differently. I was quite happy when I first embraced Islam because it seemed to make my life easier. As I mentioned, I had quit drinking before even coming to Islam for competitive reasons. However, I was still invited to parties and people tried to entice me to drink even though I said I don't drink. It was like, "come on, one drink will not kill you." When I became Muslim, I merely said I was Muslim and no one tried to entice me to drink after hearing that which was good for me. I stopped going to parties altogether and as a venue for socialization, some of the corresponding friendships deteriorated and that did hurt. I was no longer seen as being hip...more like I was out of place but at least I was respected for my religion and beliefs. Sometimes I

would pray in class while sitting down with my eyes closed. When my friends saw me like that they wondered why I did not respond to their communications. After finishing the prayer I would talk to them and explain what I was doing. On several occasions I would be with friends and other people would speak to me and my friends would interject and say that I was praying and it actually was a form of Dawah in that sense.

Right now, my friends consist mainly of my fellow Muslims because I find that I do not have much in common with non-Muslims when it comes to social functions as alcohol and sex seemed to be the main ingredients of extracurricular activities. I just cannot stand it when I see people drink to change their personality or impede their inhibitions because it is not a true reflection of them, as alcohol totally affects their decision-making ability. We have to as Muslims, believe in our religion and practice it. The best form of Dawah is a true practising Muslim. People respect others who are disciplined and are constant in their moral behaviour. I help with Dawah activities with various units of the Islamic Circle of North America and I genuinely believe that if people in this society get to know more practising Muslims, they will accept Muslims as being regular people unlike the stereotypical view that the Media portrays us in. One problem is that Muslims are not always practising and thus people very rarely see Islam in its truest sense. There are

some so-called Muslims, who drink and eat pork and make other transgressions against Islam. This is the biggest challenge. If non-Muslims think of Muslims as being the same as they are, we have no differentiating qualities.

The Qur'an was sent down by God to give humanity a moral guide to follow so that there is harmony between all peoples and it should be followed. The world is in a sad state of affairs where it lacks an uncorrupted monotheistic religion, which is a source of guidance on how to live your life with other human beings. Without such a religion, there really is no form of hope except the mighty dollar which creates a void in the spiritual part of a person's life. I believe that if people practise their religion just as it has been revealed in their original scriptures, whether it be Islam, Christianity, or Judaism, the world would be a better place.

There is good in all the monotheistic religions. However, it is my firm belief that Islam has the truest message with the most perfected principles that are derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH), which, if practised, can lead to the kind of society I want to live as well as future generations would, Insha Allah. May Allah forgive me if I have offended anyone in any way through this interview.

[Jaafar Syed can be contacted at 1-888-918-1981, (905) 456-2469 or at his e-mail address: jaafer@interlog.com]

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

Please send your articles by Nov. 30/98 to be included in Jan/99 issue.

We welcome new and budding writers.

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

The Ambition

6452 Finch Ave. West
Unit #148

Toronto, Ontario M9V 1T4
Tel. & Fax : (416) 740-1491
E-mail: awarsi@hotmail.com

Publisher
Asma Warsi

Editors

Asma Warsi
Muhammad Basil Ahmad

Department Editors

Shazela Ali
Mehran Banaei
Aneesa Lakhi

This Journal is dedicated to:

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

Committee Members

Amina Bhimla
Asmat Khan
Munawar Merchant
Ahmed Mian
Abdullah Sabree
Muhammad Saleem Shaikh

Co-ordinator and Staff Reporter
Sister Wilma

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Is Jesus Son of God

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Then for those who argue that the miracle of Jesus being born without a father makes him divine, Allah said in the Qur'an: "The similitude of Jesus before Allah is as that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to 'Be' and he was." (3:59)

As Adam had no father or mother then the miracle of Adam is greater than that of Jesus. Allah calls humanity to purify our worship above creation and created things by telling us: "Say: He is Allah, the One Allah, the Eternal, Absolute. He begets not, nor is He begotten and there is

none like unto Him." (ch. 112)

We are also called to reason. "Say: O people of the book! Come to common terms as between you and us; that we worship none but God; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect not from among ourselves lords and patrons other than God. If

then they turn back, say: Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to God's will.)" (3:64)

When these verses of the Qur'an were recited to various delegates of Christians (e.g. Najrans), history proves that they accepted Islam. This is also stated

in the Qur'an: "Those to whom we sent the book before this they do believe in this revelation. And when it is recited to them they say we believe therein, for it is the Truth from our Lord. Indeed we have been Muslims (bowing to Allah's will) from before this." (28:52-53)

Empowering women

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Islamic militant, or articles that promote hatred towards Islam and Muslims. It is equally important to let them know when you see positive coverage of Islam and Muslims.

Monitor television and radio programs. Call, write, or e-mail the producers of programs for erroneous or insulting comments, documentaries, and interviews.

Use your right to vote. Your vote in any election should be an educated one. Find out by attending meetings to see how each candidate stands on the issues you care about. Our vote counts so use it to bring positive changes in this society for the sake of our families and ourselves.

It's important to get involved in the political process. Support political candidates. Volunteer your time to help the political

candidate of your choice with phone, mail, and door-to-door canvassing. It pays for us to know the politicians and for the politicians to know us.

Volunteer work is very rewarding and fulfilling. Create day-cares and create employment opportunities for others. Help young Muslims with marriage. Visit the sick and the elderly, take them for a walk if needed. Be a big sister to a child without a father or mother or siblings, or be a foster parent or a grandparent. Take leadership role in the community and outside the community.

Share your ideas, time, and energy in building the Muslim community and strong families. Allah helps those who help themselves.

(Sister Wahida Chishti Valiante is Vice President and Vice Chair of the Canadian Islamic Congress.)

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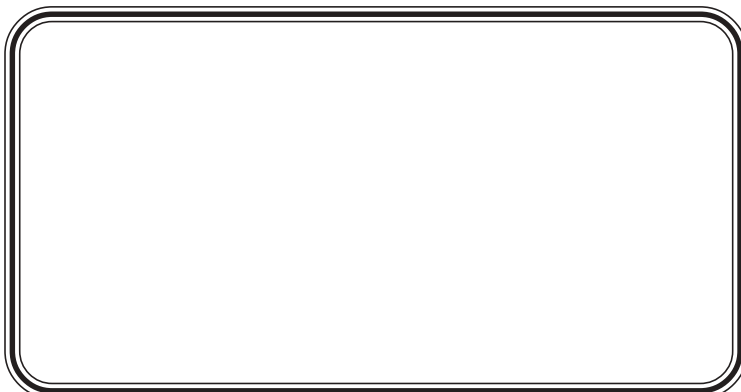
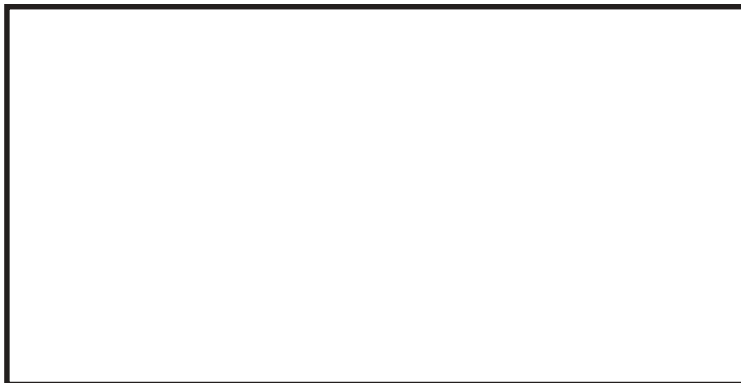
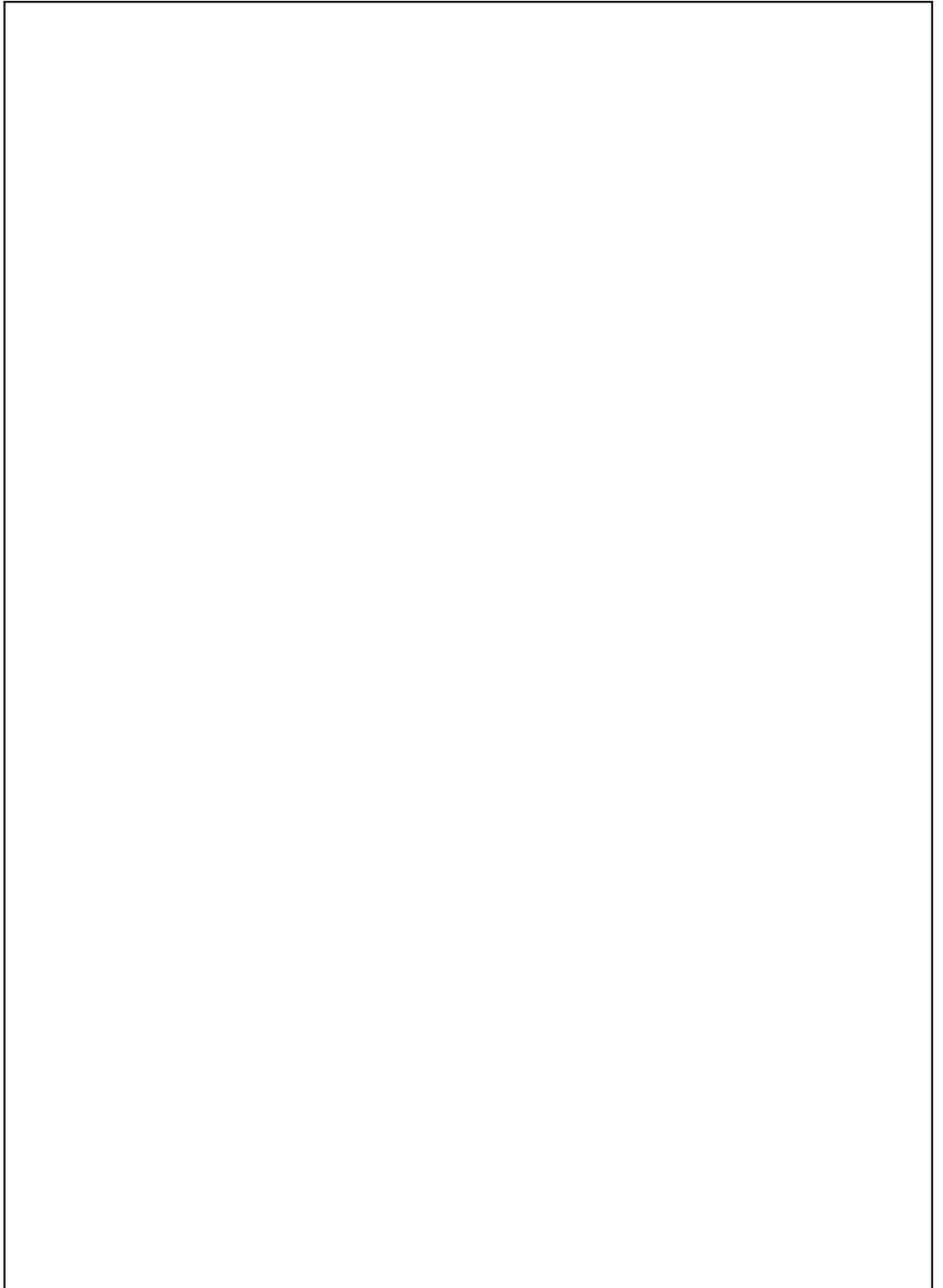
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Journey to Islam

Highlighting the experiences of new Muslims

Jeffré Gareau (Jaafer Syed), B.A., I.R.Econ. is a Financial Advisor who specializes in investments and retirement planning and tries to do so with an Islamic perspective that avoids Riba. He is 27 years old and is married. He accepted Islam in his second year at the University of Toronto on December 16, 1992. In an interview with Mehran Banaei he shares with us some of his thoughts.

Could you tell us a few things about your background?

I was born and raised in Metropolitan Toronto in a family where my mother was Protestant and my father was Roman Catholic. In North York, a child can go to the school of the father's faith and thus I went to a Catholic school and was taught Christianity as decreed by the Roman Catholic Church until after the completion of Grade 4 when I then transferred to a public school for grade 5 and subsequent grades. However, I had never celebrated my Communion or Confirmation so I never once accepted the host (wafer supposedly representing the flesh of Christ). I have a brother and a sister who are both younger than me. I have been married for over four years, Al Hamdullillah, and look forward to the time when my wife and I will have children. Insha Allah, we will raise them in an Islamic environment.

Why did you leave Christianity?

I guess it was a gradually progression away from Catholicism at an early age as I did not really accept certain dogmas that the Roman Catholic Church ruled on. Truly it seemed to me that my lack of respect for Christianity grew in the last few years of high school and first couple of years of University. I began to think that the Church, which represented Christianity for

me was really about money and not entirely about God. Another problem I found is how Jesus could be God when a supreme moral being, God, is categorically perfect in all His attributes. Thus, logically it does not makes sense that God would have to associate partners with himself because there is no reason God would lack for anything because he would be universally contented. Another concept that always stymied me were the two arguments regarding Original Sin (Adam and Eve). In Catholic school we were taught that baptism was necessary to cleanse the Original Sin which appeared to be nonsense to me because God with His infinite wisdom and mercy would simply forgive his creation and there would be no need for baptism or for sending a Son to die to give humanity salvation from sin. Most of the people that I knew growing up were secular beings who just celebrated things out of tradition more than a belief in God. Church was a social activity and no one actually practised their religion. For example no one actually fasted for Lent nor did they refrain from behaviours that were not condoned by the church.

How did you learn about Islam?

I started to learn about Islam from fellow students and friends who were Muslim. I really respected them because they seemed to have discipline and respect for their religion by adhering to its tenets strictly by not eating pork or drinking, etc. In fact I even stopped eating pork just out of respect for their religious beliefs and to make them feel more comfortable. Muslims just seemed to have better moral standards than the rest of the general student population and I liked that. From personal experience, I have always known how destructive alcohol is in terms of wrecking families and

individual decision-making and I actually quit drinking in late 1991 or early 1992 because I had started to seriously participate in the sport of bodybuilding and alcohol and fattening foods such as pork were not part of my life. After finding out a little more about Islam from my friends, I started to believe that their way of living accorded well with the way I wanted to live my life.

Fortunately for me, I had asked questions of my friends but no one had actually tried to convert me or anything, which for me would have turned me off somewhat. I then phoned the Muslim World League to get more information about Islam. Dr. Arafat El-Ashi gave me many brochures and explained many things to me for over an hour. Everything that he explained to me about Islam just made perfect sense, and I consequently accepted the tenets of Islam. He gave me my first Qur'an and actually gave me Shahadah right there that day in his office. I have always been a self-oriented perfectionist and Islam really appeals to myself and others who want to be disciplined and struggle to be the best they can be. In essence, Islam is a perfect moral guide because if you follow Islam you will always be able to overcome any obstacles with *Sabr* (perseverance) and Allah. I know this first-hand as I was in a terrible accident in August of 1993 and had to attend various rehabilitation programs over the next 2 years to recover. It was very depressing period in my life as I was not able to attend University or enjoy the other important things in my life like being able to body build, cycle, or play tennis. I had lost one academic year but my Islamic faith gave me hope while my Muslim friends were very thoughtful and supportive helping me to persevere through this difficult time of my life (especially those from the Halton Mosque in Burlington).

One question, I received a lot from therapists and doctors was how my heart seem to be so at rest. I explained that it was due to Salat and naturally they asked questions. Then they wanted for me to teach them how to pray but I retorted that Salat on its own is not the sole reason. Salat is only one part of Islam and you have to practise the entire religion to be at peace with yourself and what

Allah provides. My official given name is Jeffré and I asked Br. Arafat to recommend me a close Arabic name and he suggested Jaafer. I added Syed as a last name several years later out of respect for my father-in-law who carries the name Syed and it appealed to me because non-Muslims can easily pronounce Syed.

I am a worker for the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), which is one of the largest Muslim organizations in North America which is devoted to increasing awareness of Islam and taking its message to non-believers through comprehensive Dawah efforts. I also help to co-ordinate various activities including fund-raising for charitable projects with the primary cause in Toronto being Al-Falah Islamic School and Masjid in Oakville. I also write for a couple of national Muslim publications, such as The Message, sporadically when I have the time.

What really convinced you that the Qur'an is truly a revelation of God?

My appreciation for the Qur'an grows more with every day. The more and more experiences I have personally to read the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and interpretations by various scholars and speakers, some in person while I visited Turkey, in 1996, and India, in 1998, the more I am convinced that the word of God has been revealed in the Holy Qur'an. I find that there are too many contradictions in the other religions and that is due to the fact that everything has been modified and then re-modified to essentially appeal to the current rulers of the land at that time in history. Islam is the only religion that has the revelation as it was given by God. It has not been changed in any way. The Arabic text has never been modified for over 1400 years which is a testament to the fact that it is a sacred book which God will never let be altered or modified.

Some of the things that really impressed me were the actual contents of the Qur'an. Things that could not have been known over 1400 years ago were revealed in the Qur'an like the gestation cycle for humans. This had only been found out since the invention of the microscope. Or, for instance, sleeping on your right side which actually lessens the strain on the heart so that it is healthier. The list

goes on and on. In terms of the moral fabric of a society, if the Qur'an is followed strictly there would be a holistic society where racism and other forms of prejudice would not be present. The Qur'an is truly the only moral guide that was sent by God for all people. Islam is for all the nations of the world and not for just a certain group.

What kind of reaction have you received from people around you since embracing Islam?

Initially, there were a lot of problems at home and there was some friction from the Roman Catholic side of my family even though they only practised as a form of tokenism. However, I have always been a top achiever in school and deemed to be a perfectionist so I was cut some slack in that regard. My mother didn't understand Islam but she loved me and respected me and even separated my meals from the rest of the family. She cooked meats that were not pork in different pots, when all were eating pork. This caused some problems in the sense that other family members felt that I was receiving special treatment because of this accommodation.

My Grandparents, who hold a very special place in my heart, as they raised me for most of my life when I was not with my parents, were a little skeptical. My Grandfather who is educated and of worldly experience had questions but he could understand the basis of my decision whereas my beloved Grandmother had not experienced much of the world or other people than her closely knit Protestant community of closed-minded Anglo-Saxons. She could not understand how I could just simply denounce my own religion and be a Muslim. She had never practised Christianity in my lifetime, but she still felt I was making a mistake because for her and many people in this society who have had no experience with other religions or cultures, Islam means terrorism. The media is the cause of most of the negative perceptions of Islam and I believe it is the true root of all the friction between Islam and the rest of society. For example, the movie, The Siege, is coming out and it portrays Muslims (practising on the screen by making Salat and

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The Ambition

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From the Qur'an

They question you about strong drink (alcohol) and games of chance. Say: In both there is great sin, and (some) utility for people; but the sin of them is greater than their usefulness. And they ask you (o Muhammed) what they should spend (in the way of Allah.) Say: That which is superfluous.

(ch. 2:219)

From the Hadith

"If one gives in charity what equals (even) one date-fruit from the honestly earned money, and Allah accepts only the honestly earned money, Allah takes it in His Right (Hand) and then enlarges its reward for that person (who gives) as anyone of you brings up his baby horse, so much so that it becomes as big as a mountain." (al Bukhari)

Muslim Role Models

Imam Abu Haneefa (Rehmatullah Alaih)

by Muhammad Yaseen

His name was Nu'man ibn Thabit ibn Zuta ibn Mah, but the great Imam was better known by his kunya of Abu Haneefa. The Imam of Persian origin was born in the 80th year after the Hijra in the city of Kufa (now in Iraq). It is said that 'Ali (ra) was asked to pray over the family by Abu Haneefa's father. "I believe Abu Haneefa was the fruit of this Du'a," said Abu Haneefa (ra)'s grandson, Isma'il.

By profession he sold cloth and was an honest businessman. Once a woman came to him with a piece of cloth wanting him to sell it for her. When asked how much he should sell it for, the woman replied, "100 dirhams." The Imam looked at her in astonishment knowing that it was worth much more than that. The woman then raised the price to 200 dirhams. After this the Imam took out 500 dirhams and paid her for the cloth and told her it was worth that much. This shows the honesty and ethics of this great man.

The Imam sat at the feet of and learned from almost all the teachers in his city. Whilst his teacher, Hammad was alive, Abu Haneefa would never stretch his feet in the direction of his teacher's house. This shows the respect and the 'Adab' he showed towards those who imparted knowledge on him. Even when he went to other cities for business, he would find the circles where sacred knowledge was taught and sit there too.

During one of his travels to Madinah, he sat in a gathering of Imam Malik ibn Anas. Imam Malik, who was well aware of who Abu Haneefa was (for Abu Haneefa's fame had spread far and wide), had to leave. One of his (Imam Malik's) companions saw him leaving and asked why he was sweating so profusely. Then Imam Malik replied, "What a great

Faqeeh (scholar in Islamic jurisprudence) that man is! If he wanted to prove that this pillar was made of gold he would have surely done so!" Later on in his life, the same places that he once went to in order to acquire knowledge and learn, people heard of his coming ahead of time and gathered to listen and learn from him.

He was indeed a man of Taqwa and Wara'. For forty years he made his Fajr prayer with the same Wudhu that he made for his 'Isha prayer (he stayed up all night in prayer). He completed 7,000 readings of the Qur'an at the place of his death. He was known to be a man who gave so much charity it was as if he had no fear of poverty. As the Prophet (pbuh) said: "Charity does not decrease wealth."

'Allama Shibli Nu'mani relates in his Sirat-i-Nu'man the following story: "There was a man living in the Imam's neighbourhood. After his day's work he used to come home with meat and wine and entertain his friends at night. They would all eat kebabs, which he himself roasted, and drink his wine with him. Happily drunk, he would now and again sing a couplet which said: 'People have let me go to waste, who would have been so useful to them in battle and in siege.' The Imam, who used to spend the greater part of the night in prayer, would hear his singing, but never objected to it out of neighbourly consideration and his habitual kindness. One night the police, who happened to pass that way, arrested the man and locked him up. On the following morning the Imam mentioned to his friends that he had not heard his neighbour's singing during the previous night. They informed him of what had happened. The Imam at once ordered his mount, put on his darbar (formal) dress and proceeded to the governor's house. The governor then was 'Isa ibn Musa, a cousin of Caliph Mansur and distinguished among the Abbasids for sagacity and bravery. On being informed that Imam Abu Haneefa was coming to see him, he sent a number of his courtiers to receive him, with orders that he should be escorted on horseback right up to the courtyard of the governor's house. As soon as the Imam's horse approached, he stood up, and after the Imam had dismounted, took him to a seat with all respect. Then he said, "Why have you taken the trouble of coming here? You could have sent for me." The Imam said, "What brings me here is that a cobbler who is my neighbour has been arrested by the prefect of police and I want him released." 'Isa immediately sent orders for the cobbler's release. The cobbler was brought to the governor's house and set free, and he accompanied the Imam on his way home. "Well, my

friend," said the Imam to him, "have I allowed you to go to waste?" This was with reference to the couplet the cobbler used to sing. The cobbler replied, "No, sir, you have proved a good neighbour." From that day on the cobbler changed his way of life. Giving up his drunken merry-making, he joined the Imam's classes and in due course attained to such a scholarship that he came to be known as a Faqeeh. Subhan-Allah!

Among the Imam's many students that he produced are two great Fuqaha (scholars): Imam Muhammad as-Shaybani and Imam Abu Yusuf. These two were the leading students of Imam Abu Haneefa and helped codify the first collection of Fiqh, which is known today as the Hanafi Fiqh. This is the proof of the painstaking efforts that the Imam and his students went through to interpret the Sunnah and sift out the strong Hadith from the weak. The Hanafi school of thought is the first of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence that has been accepted up until today by the Ahl-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah. Approximately 75% of Ahl-Sunnah are of the Hanafi tradition. Imam Muhammad was one of the main teachers of Imam al-Idris as-Shafi'i.

One of the Imam's student's was once summoned by the Caliph to deliver a Khutba in his presence. The student, 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Rawad came to the great Imam for some advice on what to say. "Say," counselled the Imam, "Commander of the Faithful, there can be only three objects of worldly pursuits. Namely honour, territory, and wealth. You have all three. Turn now to piety and virtuous deeds, so that you acquire the good things of the other world."

There were many instances where the Imam would deny and reject jobs working as a Qadi (judge) for the government. The Imam would never give a ruling to please any government official, which is the main reason he would never accept this job. As a result of this stance taken by the Imam, Caliph Mansur became angry and had him thrown in jail.

The great Imam was taken to prison in 146 AH. By this time Kufa had become a centre of learning from all around the world. People had flocked from various countries to come and learn from Imam Abu Haneefa. The government allowed him for a period to carry on his classes from inside the jail. It was here where Imam Muhammad received most of his knowledge from him. As the crowds got larger and more and more people came to learn from him, the government finally decided to do away with him by having him poisoned. When Abu

Haneefa felt the effects of the poison, he bent down in prayer and died in the position of Sujud (prostration). The great Imam died in the year of 150 AH.

News of his death spread like wildfire throughout the land. When the city Qadi bathed his body, he kept on repeating, "By Allah, you were the greatest Faqeeh and the most pious man of our time. You had all the qualities of greatness in you. You were indeed so great that nobody after you may hope to reach your level." The first Janaza (funeral prayer) prayed for him was prayed by 50,000 people, but people still kept coming. So the prayer was performed six times and it was not till sunset that the burial took place. "There could be no greater evidence of his popularity than this," said 'Allama Shibli Nu'man.

Although people like Imam Abu Haneefa are rare to find (if at all they could be found) it is important for Muslims to look back and examine our past. We come from a rich and powerful tradition of God-fearing men and women; these same people struggled and fought to keep this Deen alive. These are the people who planted the seeds of whose fruit bear up until today. This Imam holds a special place in the Muslim tradition, and it should be noted that one cannot study his life without falling in complete love and awe of him. He once said: "If the 'Ulama are not Allah's friends, then Allah has no friends." Surely he was a friend of Allah who revived the Sunnah. The Prophet (pbuh) said: "He who brings life to my Sunnah, it's as if he brought life to me."

We ask Allah to shower Imam Abu Haneefa with His mercy, and send peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). We ask Allah to help us implement some of the characteristics of Imam Abu Haneefa in us, to forgive us, and to guide us upon the straight path, Insha-Allahu Ta'ala. Ameen.

Zulqarnain

Continued from page 1

lesson we learn from this story.

In the second episode he leads an expedition to the East. Here people live a simple life. Zulqarnain did not interfere with their lifestyle and recognized his own imitations in the sight of God. Man can never completely understand his own position but only when he devotedly looks to God. Only then he will live and let others live. This is the spiritual lesson from the second episode.

In the third episode, he conquered a people who did not understand his language. They communicated with him through interpreters. The people here were troubled by the Gog and Magog. They were willing to pay Zulqarnain tribute if he could provide them protection from these invasions.

The permanent protection they wanted was the closing of a mountain gap through which the incursions were made. Zulqarnain was not greedy and did not want to impose a tribute. He understood the power that God had given him and it was better than the tribute.

He told them that he would provide the know-how and skills and they should provide the material and labour to close the gap with a strong barrier, enforced with iron and well-secured gates. The work was done with their cooperation but Zulqarnain claimed no credit for it. He turned their attention to God who provided the ways and means. He told them that all such precautions must come to an end – God has said so in his Revelation and His word is true. The spiritual lesson from the third episode is this: Take precautions and do all in your power to protect yourself from evil. But no protection is complete unless you seek the help and grace of God. The best of precautions will crumble to dust when the appointed Day arrives. Zulqarnain relied upon God and made the people remember the Day of Judgement when they will receive punishments and rewards according to their deeds in their present life.

Righteousness and true respect for God excludes man from the worship of everything else. Such is the criteria of the true faith.

Muslim Lawyers unite

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lawyers and law students; (2) to provide education to the Muslim community regarding the Canadian legal system and common law rights; and (3) to provide peer support to Muslims in the legal community.

The Association is set up to operate without the purpose of financial gain for its members. Any money raised by the Association will go towards the promotion of its objectives. The Association is to be overseen by a Board of Governors which will be elected by the membership after an interim organisational period.

The MLA is a remarkably inclusive organisation as evidenced by its membership which is drawn from Muslim men and women from various ethnic backgrounds and denominations. Adhering to a high standard of professionalism, the lawyers range from sole practitioners to associates in major downtown law firms. The student members come from all the law schools in Ontario and also some from outside the province.

Khalid Baksh, one of the current "pillars" of the organisation, says that existing lawyers find it encouraging that young, highly-educated, and very able lawyers are coming out to represent their clients and the community at large, which is extremely fortunate. Although the "Establishment" has not been

exposed to Muslims as much before, it is now seeing them in a positive light. These lawyers are not just for the Muslim community; service and assistance is provided to everyone. Many of these lawyers already represent major corporations as barristers and solicitors of choice. They excel at what they do.

Bassem Shakeel, another stalwart figure of the MLA, recalls some of the initial efforts of getting lawyers together. Going through the professional and law school directories and calling up people out of the blue. Reactions ranged from the warm and welcoming to the apathetic and occasionally negative. After several years of small monthly dinner meetings at downtown restaurants, the network has grown to about fifty individuals with almost equal numbers of lawyers and law students.

MLA members have already made numerous presentations on various legal and academic issues at law schools and Muslim institutions. They will continue this work and expand their activities to meet the needs of their members and the Muslim community, Insha-Allah.

Khalid Baksh can be contacted at (416) 869-8410 and Bassem Shakeel at (416) 865-4550. Information on the MLA can be also be obtained on the Internet at their new website created by another active lawyer member, F. Asif Quadir at <http://www.muslimlaw.org/>.

Our Bait-ul-Maal

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collection. What is very sad about these exercises is that there is absolutely no accountability for those who solicit the funds. The end result is that people become disillusioned and lose faith.

Setting up of the Treasury.

The Bait-ul-Maal can only be set up through close cooperation of existing mosques and other Islamic bodies. The pre-requisite for the setting up of such a body, in my opinion, should be as follows.

First, there should be a close cooperation between mosques and other organizations in the true Islamic spirit and free from individual or corporate egos. Secondly, a legal Trust agreement should be executed to which the participating mosques and organizations become a party. Thirdly, the administration of the Trust document should be by a Board of Governors consisting of persons from the community who are nominated to the board by the participating parties and the participants should be willing to abide by the decisions for the Board of Governors. Fourthly, it should be made sure that the Board consists of persons who are both reasonably knowledgeable about Islamic Shariah, and who are both educated and professionals. Lastly, an independent and neutral party should periodically review the activities of the Treasury to ensure that legal clauses of the trust document are being abided by.

Source of Funds.

The funds for this Bait-ul-Maal will come from annual contributions PLUS the Zakat, Fitra and Khairat (donations) collected by the participating organizations at Eid and throughout the year. The moneys collected by the participating parties during Jummah and at other times that are not designated as Zakat, Fitra or Khairat may remain with the donors and need not go into the treasury.

The annual contribution should be a fixed sum of money per adult Muslims per month. The amount of the contribution should be such that it causes a minimum of hardship on contributors in even the lowest income bracket. This, however, will not preclude anyone from contributing anything in excess of the set minimum amount. The amount may be paid each month, or by making an annual contribution. The ideal form of payment and collection would be by pre-authorised payments.

Next comes the question of

what that minimum amount should be. Let us say that amount is \$5 or \$10 per adult Muslim per month. At these rates a single person would pay between \$60 and \$120 per year. A family of two adults will pay between \$120 or \$240 per year and so on. Compare this to the several hundreds (up to \$5000) that the Muslims are asked to contribute or pledge whenever there is a drive for money for a new mosque, improvement of existing facilities and for other religious plans and projects. This form of annual contribution will promote the Islamic concept of equality as far as the contributing goes which is something very similar to the concept of Fitra. Drops of water, however small, can form an ocean. Assuming that there will be 100,000 Muslims in Southern Ontario willing to contribute at the rate of \$10 per month, the annual revenue in this case should be twelve million per year from this source alone. With 150,000 donors, the total collection would be eighteen million dollars. Add to this what may be received by the participating organizations in the form of Zakat, Fitra and Khairat and you could have an amount in excess of twenty million dollars per year!

Use of funds.

Once the funds are collected, they will be used in accordance with the terms of the Trust document. These terms will be decided by the Board of Governors when drafting the agreement.

The uses to which the funds may be put are unlimited. However, here is a list of things which I believe is of prime importance and a slice of the pie could be devoted to each: maintenance and upkeep of the participating mosques, or Islamic Centers; building or purchasing of new mosques, or centers based on the needs of the community for such projects; Food Bank for the Muslims; Islamic Education; helping new Muslims and Muslims who are new arrivals in the province in their settlement; protecting the cause of Islam and other relevant causes.

The foregoing suggestion is a "plea from the heart." It is a dream! But it is a dream that is not

Matrimonials

Muslim professional, 49, employed, from the subcontinent, involved in the community work, enjoys travel, going through separation, is seeking an Allah-fearing, practicing Muslima who wishes to have children, for a life-time commitment to share and enjoy the bounties of this life. Please send details with a current returnable photo. Inquiry #80.

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unattainable. Furthermore the suggestions are not something cast in stone, but rather a outline which can be adapted and built upon for the benefit of the community by the leaders who will be responsible in administering the Bait-ul-Maal.

Will it work? Why, sure! If we work with honesty, devotion, dedication and selflessness, we are bound to succeed. Muslims are a giving people and once they see that the system is established, working and trustworthy, they will fill the coffers of the Treasure. Soon hereafter the system may spread throughout Canada.

**It pays to Advertise in
The Ambition
Reach thousands of Muslims from all
ethnic backgrounds**

**Have
a
HAPPY
RAMADHAN**

Kids' Korner

by Shameel Siddiqi

Islamic knowledge is education of Islam. It is beliefs and teachings. Islam is the way of peace and harmony, submission and obedience to Allah. A person who accepts the Islamic way of life and acts upon it, is a Muslim. Islamic knowledge is based on the Five Pillars of Islam, which are as follows:

1. Shahadah [beliefs in Allah and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)]
2. Salat (praying five times each day)
3. Sawm (fasting in the month of Ramadan)
4. Zakat (obligatory charity)
5. Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca.)

In Islam you shouldn't backbite. It is like eating the flesh of your brother. Islamic knowledge should be learned from the Holy Qur'an.

One can learn more about Islamic knowledge by reading the Seerah [life of Muhammad (pbuh)] and other stories about other prophets, such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus [pbuh].

The Qur'an is the complete book of guidance for mankind. It is a sacred book of the Muslims and the main source of law in Islam. The whole Qur'an is from Allah. Each word in it is a revealed word. No other book in the world can match the Qur'an in

respect of its recording and preservation.

Salah is the practical proof of our faith in Allah and Islam. The five daily prayers are:

1. Fajr
2. Zuhr
3. Asr
4. Maghrib
5. Isha

Other duties of a Muslim are to obey your parents, respect your relatives, neighbours, help the needy, and the orphans. Islam is the complete way of life. Allah is the Creator of the universe for all mankind. Islam is an Arabic word which means submission and obedience.

BASIC QUALITIES OF A BELIEVER IN ISLAM are

as follow:

Always telling the truth, keeping promises that are told, be tolerant to others, always be polite to others, be modest, maintain good brotherhood, learn from each other, always be kind, be thankful, and visiting the sick

Basic believes of a believer are:

1. One God, Allah
2. Angels
3. Books of Allah
4. Messengers of Allah
5. The Day of Judgement
6. Life after Death
7. Allah's Divine and complete Knowledge

PROPHETS OF ALLAH (Biblical Names):

1. Adam (pbuh)

2. Enoch (pbuh)
3. Noah (pbuh)
4. Hud (pbuh)
5. Salih (pbuh)
6. Abraham (pbuh)
7. Ishmael (pbuh)
8. Isaac (pbuh)
9. Lot (pbuh)
10. Jacob (pbuh)
11. Joseph (pbuh)
12. Shu'aib (pbuh)
13. Job (pbuh)
14. Moses (pbuh)
15. Aaron (pbuh)
16. Ezekiel (pbuh)
17. David (pbuh)
18. Solomon (pbuh)
19. Elias (pbuh)
20. Elisha (pbuh)
21. Jonah (pbuh)
22. Zachariah (pbuh)
23. John (pbuh)
24. Jesus (pbuh)
25. Muhammad (pbuh) the last prophet of Islam

Islamic Summer Day Camp - "A First of Its Kind in Toronto"

By Muaz Nasir

During the month of July, while most of you were enjoying your summerbreak, the Islamic Summer Day Camp was in full swing at Midland Avenue Collegiate Institute. The camp started on July 6th with 45 students and on July 31st it concluded its final day with a total number of 65 students. The camp was organized by the Islamic Institute of Toronto and MENTORS (Muslim Education Network, Training and Outreach Service). The goal was to offer Muslim children from the ages 6 to 12 an Islamic environment to take part in a variety of educational and recreational activities and we are pleased to say we fulfilled our objective. Just to give you an idea of the Camp, there were four subjects (Islamic Studies, Islamic Songs and Stories, Arts and Crafts, and Recreation) and four weeks. Each week was given a theme accompanied by a trip. The first week's theme was "Exploring the Natural World", which

gave the children a look at the natural world and the powers of Allah. For that week the whole camp went on a trip to Riverdale Farm to look in close up the wonders of the natural world and the creativity of Allah. The second week took campers back into the time of the early Muslims and was called "Time Travellers." After a week of learning about the past, the camp went into the future on a trip to the Ontario Science Center. The theme of the third week was "World Explorers," and it showed the kids how Islam spread throughout Arabia and the World. The trip for that week was to the Royal Ontario Museum to see an exhibit on Islam. The theme for the last week was "Bridge Builders." It showed everyone the importance of responsibility, self respect and our duties towards Allah and our fellow Muslims. The last trip was to Thomson Memorial Park and the campers' parents were invited to join in the fun. The instructors for the camp included Shaykh Abdool Hamid, Shaykh

Abdullah Hakim, Br. Bilal Ibrahim, Sr. Rukhshana Khan, Sr. Fanieza Nasir and Sr. Uzma Jalaluddin. There were also camp counselors (high school and university students) who were provided with a great summer experience.

(Muaz Nasir is a Grade 8 student. He volunteered at the Islamic Summer day Camp.)

Awards Ceremony for Children

by Farhan A. Khan

On October 11th, 1998, the 20th annual Quaid-E-Azam Awards Ceremony took place at the University of Toronto. These awards recognize students who achieve excellent academic marks above 75%. They are a means of motivating students to perform better. This year, I, Farhan Ali Khan, came in 2nd place among Grade 12 students. My brother, Zeeshan Ali Khan, won a prize in a "Jeopardy" like contest. The entire evening was a great experience and I hope to attend it again next year.

Thirteen-year-old memorises the Holy Qura'an

Reported by Naseer Syed

Omais Ali is one of the latest (memoriser of the Qur'an) to Uloom-al-Islamiyyah (Institute of Ontario. He started at the age of 10 and completed the 3-year program in July of this year. At his enrolment he was evaluated on the Tajweed (pronunciations) of the Surahs that he knew. Before starting the memorisation part of the program, Omais was taught proper Tajweed for 4 months. At that time there were about 30-40 children; now there are about 115, ranging in age from 10-20 years old.



home-grown Hafiz-ul-Qur'an graduate from the Jamiah-al-Islamic Learning) in Ajax, in September 1994 and

Based on the format of a boarding school for boys, Omais shared a large room with five roommates. Meals were provided for all, except for those boys who were used to food from home provided by their parents. Following a relatively demanding study schedule, the boys were busy from 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and Saturdays from 7:45 a.m. till noon. Sundays were generally free, but evening programs were held from 6-8 p.m.

Academic courses such as English, Social Studies, History, Science, and Math (and also recently-added Geography and Physical/Health Education) are offered from 1-4 p.m. daily. The boys maintain their dual studies so that when they return to their regular public schools they are at the same level as the other students. Tuition is currently \$4,000 per year. Begun modestly in August 1992, the Ajax school is striving to improve its programs and facilities and has a large property that can be developed much further. In addition to the memorisation of the Qur'an, the school offers a seven-year Alim program which is more comprehensive and includes learning the Arabic language, Tafseer, Hadith, Shari'ah, and much more. A sister school for girls, the Mariyah Islamic School at 3609 Sheppard Avenue East (with classes also at 100 McLevin Avenue), offers Qur'an reading classes for a surprisingly low fee.

After graduating and entering Grade 9, Omais continues his Qur'an studies two hours a day after school with a Hafiz Teacher, in order to maintain and strengthen his memorisation. During the upcoming Ramadan, Omais may be found leading Taraweeh prayers at the Muslim Community Centre in Mississauga (Winston Churchill and Rideway), sharing duties with another recently graduated student and supervised by a seasoned Hafiz. Omais's parents, Syed Abdul Jabbar Ali (Basit) and Muneer Fatima Ali (Atiya) are very proud, as is his older sister Arshiya.

The Ambition publishes your announcements for a nominal cost. Please call for info.

Community in Action

CIC Establishes Writing Award for Yom Zekrah, a day to remember Muslim victims of genocide

The Canadian Islamic Congress announced that it has designated the first Friday of November as Yom Zekrah, a day to remember all Muslim victims of genocide and its following week as *Genocide Against Muslims Awareness Week*.

The Congress has also established the annual *Sister Aziza Mohamed Youssef Award* for best student essay on the subject of Muslim victims of genocide. The competition is open to all high school and university/college students.

The award consists of \$400 to the winning essay, distributed equally between the student author(s) of the essay (\$200 cash prize) and (\$200 worth of Islamic books) to the library of the

sponsoring school or organisation.

The essay may be co-authored and its length should be 1000-1200 words. The deadline for submission is March 1, 1999. The essay should be typed and double-spaced.

All the submitted essays become CIC's property. The award is given at the CIC's annual conference on Saturday, June 26, 1999, Insha-Allah in Toronto.

The family of the late Sister Aziza Mohamed Youssef has established an endowment fund as *Sadaqa Jareeyah* with CIC for the award. The Congress calls on CIC members and friends to establish similar endowment funds.

Some references describing genocide against Muslims:

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Federation of Muslim Women

by Farhia Jabaney

A group of dedicated Muslim women have recently formed the Federation of Muslim Women in Toronto. This organisation is composed of young, dynamic Muslimahs who are striving to help and educate others about Muslim women in Canada.

Although Muslims are well-represented by various Islamic organisations, there are few organisations targeted specifically to the Muslim woman. The FMW's primary mandate is to educate the public about Islam and in particular, address the needs of Muslimahs. This under-represented group of Muslims will now have a strong voice that will allow them to deal with topics specific to their gender. Some of the FMW's objectives are to identify and find solutions for the special needs of Muslimahs,

provide support services, assist newcomers and provide humanitarian relief for Muslims both globally and at home. In addition, the Federation seeks to disseminate information specific to Muslim women to all public and private institutions.

The FMW already has a team of dedicated sisters and would gladly welcome any Muslims who

can contribute in their many activities, which range from literacy and health to social activities. Their annual membership fee is \$10 and membership is open to all Muslims.

Call or write to contact the FMW:

Tel: (416) 654-3549,

Fax: (416) 654-2086

E-mail: info@fmw.org

Muslim lawyers unite to serve the community

by Naseer Syed

After years of relatively quiet and informal networking and modest behind-the-scenes community involvement, Muslim lawyers in Ontario are announcing the formal creation of the Muslim Lawyers Association. Begun in 1992-1993 through the initial

efforts of Khalid Baksh, El-Farouk Khaki, Bassem Shakeel, and Kabir Ahmed (the latter two were law students at the time), the organisation has evolved into a dynamic and exciting network of professionals and students with ambitious plans for their members and the Muslim community in Ontario.

The formal objectives of the Association are (1) to advocate areas of interest for Muslim

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Youth VIP, during the summer of 1998.

To join CIC's Youth VIP for Summer 1999, send a complete resume, with a cover letter of areas of interest in volunteer work (e.g. research, web research, media watch, database, compilation, web

News Room

Ramadhan on December 20 And Eid on January 19

The National Research Council (NRC) of Canada has confirmed the scientific calculation made by Dr. Fakhri Karray of the University of Waterloo, Canada, concerning the occurrence time of the new moon (universal timing), and the local timing of the moon set and moon rise in 8 major Canadian cities for Ramadan (1st day of Ramadan) and Shawal (first day of Eid Elfitr). "These times have been confirmed to be accurate within

one minute precision," Dr. Karray said. "According to these computations, it is impossible to sight the moon on December 18 (First day of Ramadan can not be declared December 19.

Most probably the first day will be December 20, Inshallah. For the day of Eid El Fitr, it is highly unlikely that the moon could be sighted on January 17th in North America. Hence, Eid will not be declared on January 18, but most probably on the 19th, Inshallah."

Two dedicated "Servants of Allah" (Abdullah) leave Canada this month

Two of Canada's prominent Imams will soon be leaving us.

Dr. Abdullah Hakim Quick is moving to South Africa and Imam Abdalla Idris Ali is moving to the U.S.A. Contributions of these two brothers to the development of Islamic communities in Toronto in particular and North America in General are well known. As a token of appreciation, a farewell Reception and Dinner to recognize and honour them was organised by the Council of Imams-Canada, followed by the presentation of Plaques. Imams, Community Leaders, Islamic workers and other well wishers were invited to this event.

At the end of this month both of these Imams will be leaving Canada, Insha Allah. Dr. Abdullah Hakim is moving to South Africa and Imam Abdalla Idris is moving to Kansas, USA.

Remember worthy causes in Ramadhan and give generously

In the month of Ramadhan we will all be remembering and being encouraged to give generous donations to worthy causes. In addition to seeking the pleasure of Allah, you will also be able to qualify for tax-receipts for the income tax returns that you will be filing next year. You can give various amounts to different charities. The tax receipts may be issued immediately, a few months later, or just before the tax return season. Because there will be many charities competing for your donations, I would recommend that you try to give more to few charities as it can have a bigger impact, and entails fewer administrative costs. In the past, you received a greater tax benefit for the portion of your total donations which exceeded \$200. Although these tax-receipts will only be available for those charities which are registered and recognized as a Charity in Canada, there are many worthy causes for which your only rewards will come from Allah and the good feelings from within yourself.

Canadian Muslims: Who's Who

The CIC will publish the Muslims' Who is Who book in the first quarter of 1999. This is the first time in Canada for such a publication.

The Congress invites individuals and organisations, Muslims and non-Muslims, to nominate individuals to be included in the prestigious publication. The data on the nominated person and four photos are needed before December 31, 1998. Details are given at the Congress' Internet website, <http://www.cicnow.com/>. The person can be nominated based on his/her community service, his professional achievements and/or his/her contributions to the well-being of Canada, Islam, Muslims, and/or humanity.

"The achievements and contributions of Muslim Canadians, especially women and youth are under-reported. We want to change this situation," the Congress said in statement. "We know of many deserving people, but we have very little documentation for future generations and for history."

CIC Establishes Youth VIP: A Youth Volunteer Internship Program

The Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) has established a Youth Volunteer Internship Program (Youth VIP) designated to encourage Muslim youth (ages 13-23) to volunteer to serve the community by completing an internship with CIC.

The internship can be completed at the volunteer's home city. In appreciation of the volunteer's contribution, CIC pays a nominal honorarium and upon completion of the volunteer task, each volunteer receives a *Certificate of Recognition* of volunteer hours, which can be used when applying to medical and law schools, MBA, and other university programs.

The CIC certificates can be used to apply for provincial government programs, if applicable, that pay university or college student tuition fees.

British Columbian students who spend 300 hours with CIC's Youth VIP will be able to apply for up to \$2,400 grant money from the B.C. government as tuition fees. Other provincial governments may follow B.C.'s lead, and create similar programs.

Nadia Sabry, a second year Science student at McGill university has finished an internship working for CIC as the first Student Volunteer, under CIC's