

The Ambition

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Christmas and Eid have nothing in common

There are fundamental differences in the significances of the celebrations

by Munawar Merchant

A good many Muslims draw similarities between Eid and Christmas in order to promote cultural diversity. Some actually believe that "Eid is the Muslims' Christmas." The truth is that they don't have much in common apart from the fact that both are religious celebrations. There are fundamental differences in the significance of the observation of Eid and of Christmas, a day believed by the Christians to be the birthday of Jesus (pbuh), whom they rank as the Son of God.

Christmas as we know it today in North America is preceded by

the singing of religious hymns called Christmas Carols several days before the Christmas day. On the Eve of Christmas most followers attend a midnight religious service or Mass in their church. The houses are decorated with the spruce (X-mas) tree and lights and tensile. On Christmas day, gifts are opened in the morning beneath the tree. Families get together for their traditional turkey dinner.

The festivities, however concentrate heavily on Santa Claus, the traditional carrier of gifts. Giving and receiving gifts has become a big part of Christmas, if not bigger than remembering and abiding

by the teachings of Prophet Jesus (pbuh). Jesus taught his followers to offer prayers and to give charity. He was a poor, meek, humble and very highly revered messenger of Allah who would by no means have wanted his disciples, or followers to display the material consumerism that is exhibited today. Families get into debt in the melee of bestowing material offerings to friends and relatives. Expectations among recipients are high and for many the season is one rife with stress and tension.

Eid-ul-Fitr, on the other hand, marks the day on which Muslims

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Ahmadiyya Movement In (against) Islam

The movement was implanted and cultivated by the British to divide the Muslim Ummah

by Dr. Rashid

The colonial era began in the 17th century when European powers started colonizing various parts of the globe. The British, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Belgian—all of them took part in this rat-race.

The British came to India as traders in the 18th Century and gradually usurped the power from Muslims who had been ruling the Indian Subcontinent for 1000 years. They faced repeated uprisings especially from the Muslim quarters. This was the same Movement of Jihad which had ear-

lier forced them to leave Sudan. The Independence Movement of 1857 and the Jihad Movement of Syed Ahmed Shaheed were nearly successful in uprooting them from the Indian soil but for some black sheep amongst the Muslim ranks, who took sides with the Colonial Masters for their petty interests, thus compromising Muslim resistance.

A commission of inquiry consisting of members of British Parliament, church officials and journalists, came to India in 1868 to find out ways and means of controlling this spirit of Jihad. In 1870

they submitted their report entitled, THE ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA. In this report they recommended that:

"THE MENTALITY OF INDIAN MUSLIMS IS SUCH THAT IF THEY ACCEPT SOMEBODY

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*This Journal contains the words of Allah.
Please treat it with due respect.*

The Stranger

"I wonder if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave."

A few months before I was born, my dad met a stranger who was new to our small Tennessee town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later.

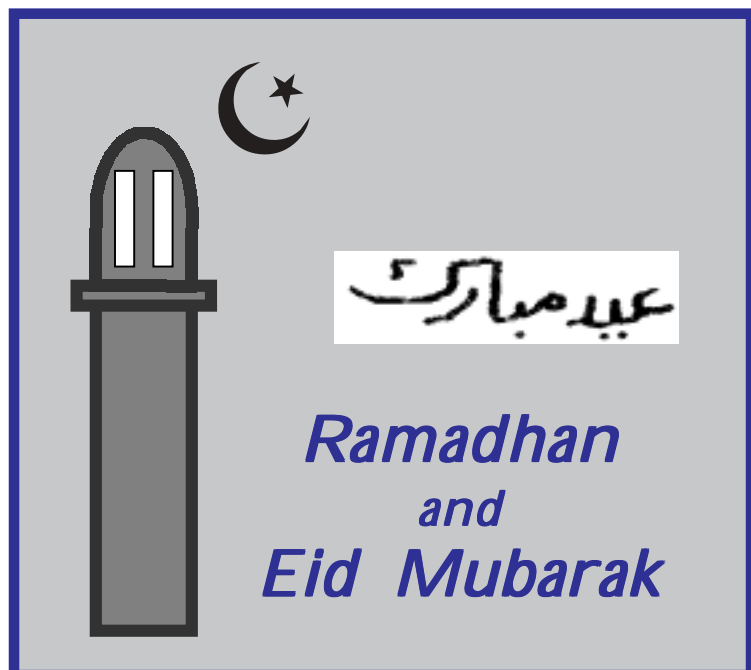
As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family. In

my young mind, each member had a special niche. My brother, Yusuf, five years my senior, was my example. Samya, my younger sister, gave me an opportunity to play 'big brother' and develop the art of teasing. My parents were complementary instructors—Mom taught me to love Allah, and Dad taught me to how to obey Him. But the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most

fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries, and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spell-bound for hours each evening. If I wanted to know about politics, history, or science, he knew it.

He knew about the past and seemed to understand the present. The pictures he could draw were so life-like that I would often laugh

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Editorial

In a split second

We take everything for granted. And we complain a lot. It's either too cold or too hot! Too sunny or too dark! Too rainy or too dry! We're never happy with what we've got.

It's not only the weather that we grumble about. We are never happy with ourselves either. We complain that God has made us too short or too fat. Too dark or too pale. Too this or too that. The hair colour or length is never right. The eyebrows don't suit our face-cut. The eyes are not beautiful enough or the lips are not quite full.

We are whiners.

We are not satisfied with the lifestyle we have. The house we live in is too small or not large enough like the one our friend has. The car is not a late model. The job is boring and the money is never enough! The over-flowing wardrobe is old and seen by every one and there is *nothing* to wear.

Let's stop for a moment and think. This body that we have is a gift from Allah to us. He has provided us with the means to support ourselves and our families. He has given us a place to live and food to eat. He has bestowed upon us the blessings in the form of family and friends. More than anything, He has given us health. The Prophet (pbuh) said, "One should value health before sickness . . ."

All this can be gone in a minute. He has the power to take it away from us at any time.

Comforts of life make us ungrateful. We start taking everything for granted. We think that everything that we have is our RIGHT and we deserve it! We have the false conceit that we are the masters of the universe.

But adversity can fall at any time. A split second can change the course of life for ever. We never know what the future holds for us. At one moment, it's life; boisterous, jubilant, bouncy and bubbly. The other moment there is only dark, despair and despondence.

Ask Javed Iqbal! The Muslim brother who knows it first hand.

A few years ago, he came to Canada in the search of a happy life, bright future and fulfilled dreams. A handsome young man, holding a Master's degree in Islamic Studies, and recently married to a wife in Canada, he was fast-tracked to an entry in Canada on the Minister's permit, a temporary permission to stay here while his claim for landed immigrant would be processed and completed.

It was never completed!

His dreams were shattered and so was his life. A speeding taxi left him totally paraplegic and confined to a wheel chair. He lost his job and his future too. Soon after that accident, his marriage fell apart. The wife would not carry on his sponsorship. The authorities refused him immigration considering that his severe handicap would be a drain on the Canadian health system. He was left in this cold country without a job, money, a spouse, a family, or landed papers. Being a non-immigrant, he was also disqualified from the Ontario health insurance coverage.

I recently met him at the ISSRA office. I was totally moved and touched by his plight. The taxi's insurance company has been very co-operative with him and has paid all his medical bills and expenses but then there is a limit. He has no money to buy medicine. He gets his food from (non-Muslim) food banks and he longs for halal meat. He is totally dependent on others for even a slightest move. Although despair was written all over his face, he was not dejected. He is still thankful to Allah. He is thankful for being alive!

How can WE be thankful to Allah? We can say our thanks by helping this brother with the money that Allah has given us. We can provide halal food for him and pay for his medicine. We can give him donation (Sadaqah) so he can hire a lawyer to fight his case in the immigration court. Call him at (416) 652-6554 or mail him your cheque at 250 Oakwood Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M6E 2V5.

Remember, this can happen to us, to anyone. Let's not sit back. Let's give in the way of Allah before somebody has to give us! Let's be grateful to Allah for everything. Let's not take everything for granted!

Asma Warsi

Our Mail

Reader gets some answers but still has more questions

First I must say thanks for publishing my question, in your journal dated September-October 1998. Brother Abdullah Sabree answered one of my questions [in Nov.-Dec. 1998 issue] by the quote Ch. 3, V. 59 of the Qur'an, but he did not answer my second question. I didn't ask him who accepted Islam.

The brother wrote that Jesus was created like Adam but the verse says that 'the likeness of Jesus with Allah is as the likeness of Adam.' It does not say that Jesus was created like Adam, as Adam was a man so too was Jesus. In answer to Brother Sabree, Jesus was born from a woman and Adam was not, so my dear brother how can you say Jesus was created like Adam?

What Brother Sabree does not think is that we are dealing with procreation.

The immutability of the laws

of God is stressed over and over again in the Qur'an: "And you shall not find a change in our course."

"For you shall not find any alteration in the course of Allah and you shall not find any change in the course of Allah."

So in dealing with procreation the Qur'an stresses that with life to go on we have to have the union of a male and a female: "O ye men surely we have created you from a male and a female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other."

As for Ch.3, V. 45 and 47, it states that the angel told Mary she was going to have a son. It does not say that it happened then and there.

Azeem Khan

[Insha Allah we will address your concerns in a subsequent issue.]

A sad experience in a school cafeteria: Are we losing our children?

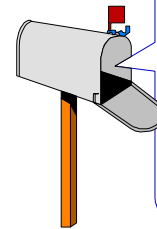
It was the first day of school and almost every face was new. During lunch time, I was delighted to see a young Somali teenager sitting in front of me. He seemed to be new in the school. After a short introductory conversation, I asked my new friend, "In your previous school, did you have a place for Juma prayer?" After pausing for couple of seconds as if hesitating to answer, he said, "I am no longer a Muslim!" I was so shocked to hear that statement as if the whole building had collapsed on me at that instance.

Having digested his shocking response, I moved closer to him and talked more to him. He informed me that a young American gentleman who lived in Somalia for many years "had shown him the way."

I said to him that we as human beings will never live in this world forever. In our limited life span, our Creator has bestowed us with a mind to use in seeking the truth

and stick to it firmly. Because once we die, there won't be another chance at all. So, if that is the case, we have to be extremely careful in choosing our way of living. Once we depart, the chance would be over and we will have to face our Lord. At that time, we will have no one to blame for our deeds except ourselves. He agreed with my statement. I also told him that I won't ask him to follow me blindly or to follow his Christian friend blindly but that I would suggest he use his mind carefully to seek the truth which is crystal clear and adhere to it. I told my friend that if he would check the Bible carefully and examine the Muslim/Christian dialogues (such as the videos of Sheikh Deedat and others) he would see clearly that the message Jesus (peace be upon him) gave was exactly the message of Islam, a total submission to the Will of God.

I indicated that there is not a single verse in the whole Bible



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.

A reader from Ghana appreciates The Ambition

I am very happy in the name of Allah to write to you this letter.

I am a young Muslim from Ghana and a student in one of the national colleges. I got to know *The Ambition* through a Muslim friend and actually the paper attracted my interest.

The reason for writing this letter is to subscribe to the paper.

I hope this letter will be given the necessary attention.

Maa Salam.

Mustapha Merisah

where Jesus said "I am God" or "Worship me." On the contrary, he always told people that he was a humble human being sent to show people the way of salvation as all the prophets have.

I suggested that he go to the Islamic Information and Da'wah Centre International at 1168 Bloor Street West in Toronto and let that knowledgeable friend have a dialogue with the director, Brother Shabir Ally who has a wide experience in comparative religions. Unfortunately, this young man never went.

Muslims should be extremely careful in this environment or they will lose their children to ignorance. We should establish Islamic schools; learn about Islam and transfer that knowledge to our children; spend time with them; go to mosques on a regular basis so they would learn about their faith and grow up as Muslims.

Abubakar Nurain Kasim

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The Ambition

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Sister Wilma

Your Child, My Child

by Sister Wilma

The young people come, one by one. Scared and alone, knowing no one in this big city of Toronto. Knapsacks slung over their shoulders, they disembark from the Gray Coach buses on Bay Street hoping to find a better life than what they fled from.

Many have run away from abusive homes where all they hear is language which belittles them, and where all they see as an example are parents in an alcoholic or drug induced stupor.

Some of these young people have been sexually abused at home as well.

Life, for these young people, becomes unbearable with no positive parental influences to guide them. Some may not have had caring relatives or neighbours or school officials who could provide a positive role model thus giving the children hope.

They leave their homes and their towns and come to the big city ill-prepared for what awaits them. With no marketable skills, emotionally vulnerable and with very little money, they are just ripe for the taking.

Toronto, which used to be called "Toronto the Good" is now a city which has pimps and predatory people that roam the streets lying in wait for these vulnerable youth. A city where one can see strip joints, peek shows and buy young people, both male and female, for the purpose of prostitution.

When they arrive, excitement, nervousness and fear is what they feel as they step onto the streets of Toronto. Streets where busy people walk by, uncaring and unseeing. Streets where they see

people of all ages begging wherever they turn.

If they are unlucky, they may be befriended by another teenager who is employed by a pimp. Friendless and alone, with a deep mistrust of adults, they more readily trust another teen when they

are offered a place to stay for a few days. Once in that environment, it is very difficult to escape.

If they are lucky, they may hear about a place like Covenant House on Gerrard Street East. It is a safe haven which provides shelter to runaways and other homeless teenagers.

Lest you think that it is only children from out of town, think again. It could be your child, or my child, or the boy or girl next door.

There are many reasons why teens feel threatened in their homes and they are too numerous to mention in this short article. Suffice it to say that if the teen has a loving family environment where he or she is respected and loved, it is highly unlikely that they would ever leave home.

At the present time it appears to be more a mainstream problem and does not seem to affect our Muslim community. But as marriages are breaking down and family structures are eroding, there is always the possibility that our own families will be affected.

With this in mind, as parents we all must remember that children mimic what we do. They are like sponges soaking up all experiences, both good and bad. We set the example.

All children, including these runaways, are a gift from God.

We are part of this larger soci-

ety in which we live. We must get involved by volunteering our time, money and talents to help where we can.

As a reminder to us all, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: "He is not one of us who does not show mercy to our minors, who does not

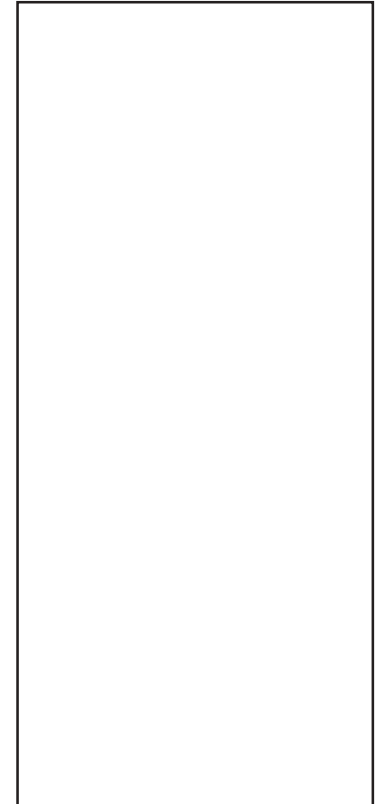
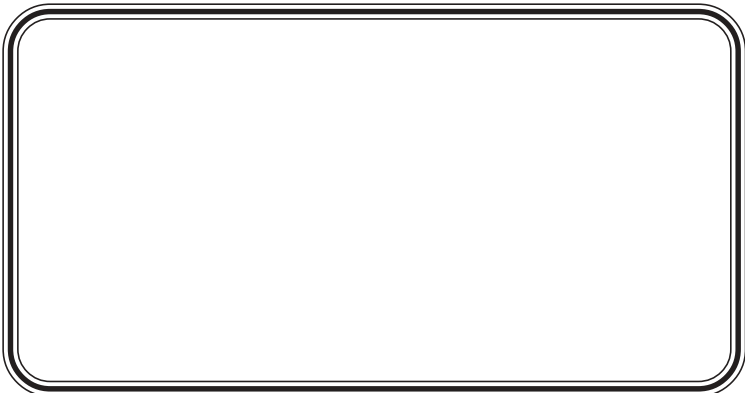
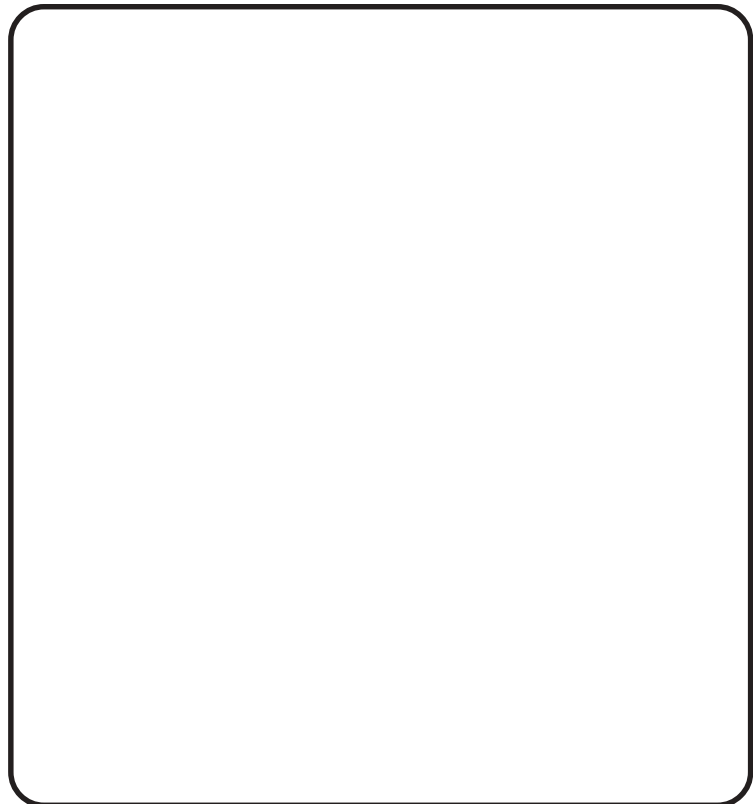
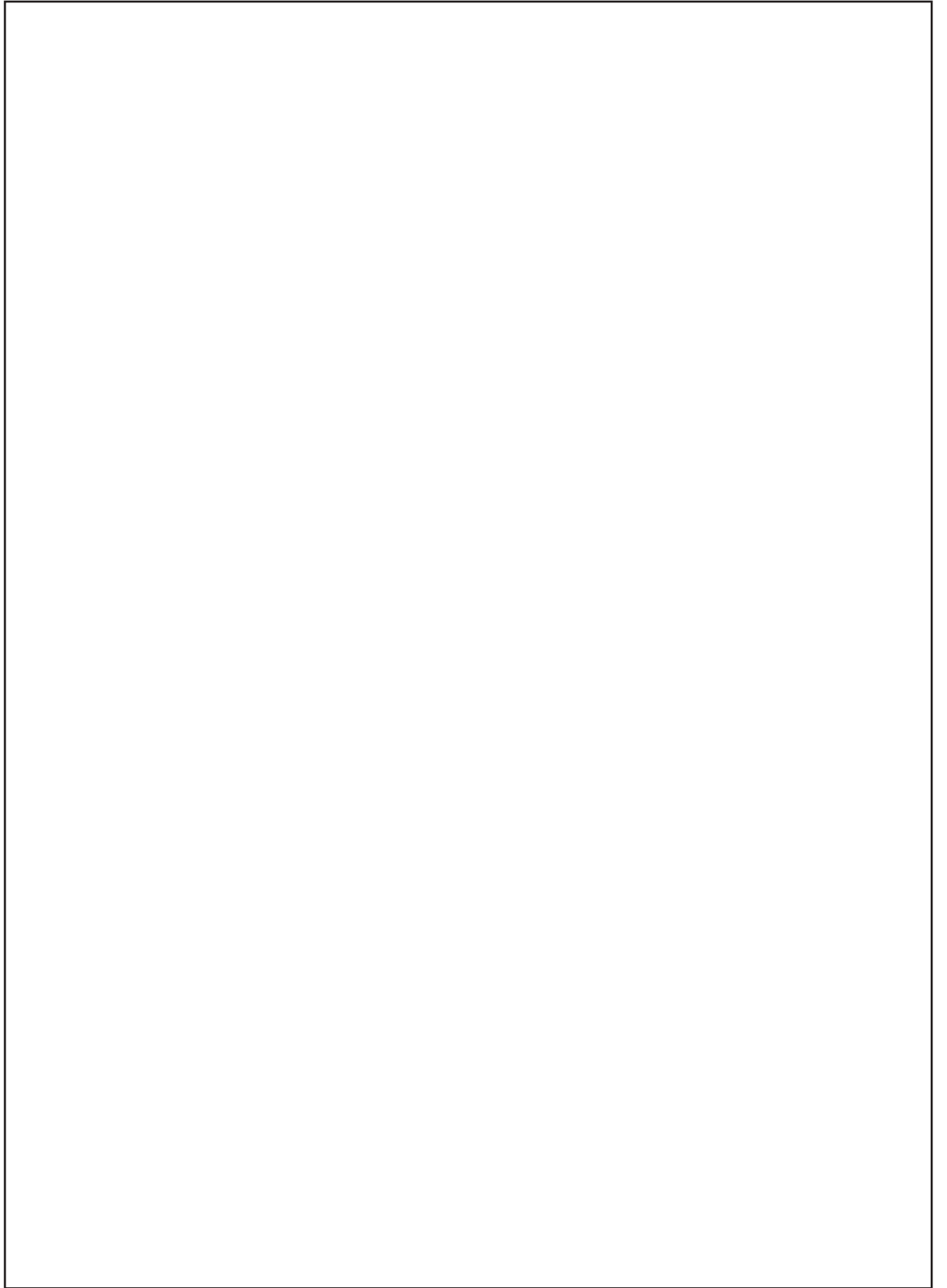
respect our seniors, who does not enjoin good and does not forbid evil."

As Muslims, are we not responsible to make a difference in the society where we live? If each person did one little thing consistently to make a difference, then our positive influence could affect this society including the runaway children who flock to this city look-

ing for a better way and find instead, a life of Hell.

Sister Wilma has many years of experience in the social service field, having worked with street people, assaulted women, the developmentally challenged, people with mental disabilities and the economically disadvantaged.

As marriages are breaking down and family structures are eroding, there is always the possibility that our own families will be affected.



Politically Active

Many people gripe about government and politics in Canada. A few seek elected office themselves, but very few among these have realistic opportunities to be elected. It can be a long and difficult road to put oneself in the right position and even then there are no guarantees.

It is not well-known among the Muslim community that several politicians with Muslim

backgrounds have in fact been elected to offices in the past and continue in the present, including some in governing parties.

Part of the reason for their obscurity is that many of these candidates have not identified strongly with Islam, either because they are not very religious or because it was not in their political advantage to do so. However, now there are encouraging signs that members of our community who do publicly identify and associate with Muslims and Islam are finally coming forward to give it a try.

The Ambition, as an independent, objective, and community-based newspaper is in a unique position to profile these candidates in a manner that will not only introduce them to you, but to seek to find relevance for you in their efforts.

As none of these candidates are running for positions of religious leadership, their evaluations must be made having in mind the broader context of the balancing of the interests with other communities.

Insha Allah, this will be the first in a series of interviews towards these objectives.

Dr. Shafiq Qaadri: A Muslim candidate for the next election

by Naseer Syed

In what may be considered as a breakthrough of sorts, Dr. Shafiq Qaadri has become the new Liberal Party candidate for MPP in the Etobicoke North riding of Toronto. The 35-year-old family doctor won the nomination in September and has already begun campaigning for the next provincial election which is expected to be called in spring or early summer of 1999.

Originally born in Chicago to Pakistani parents who had come to the United States to study Nuclear Engineering (father) and Obstetrics & Gynecology (mother), his family moved to Canada in 1966. Shafiq's education consisted of both public and private schooling including attendance at Upper Canada College and the University of Toronto, finally graduating from Medical School in 1988. He has practised family medicine for nearly 10 years, mainly in the Queen and Roncesvalles area with patient referrals to Etobicoke General Hospital.

Shafiq and his parents' involvement with the Liberal Party goes back to more than 20 years. At the age of 14 Shafiq helped in voter canvassing for his History teacher who successfully got elected as a member of the Federal Parliament. Shafiq was also involved in Student Government and in Debating for which he won awards, some at the national level. Dr. Qaadri first began seriously considering running for elected office in 1996 soon after the Ontario Liberal Party's leadership election. Both he and his parents

had spent considerable time over the years with the Liberal party and had gained a great deal of experience. Also, as a doctor, he had been actively involved with his profession as a member of the Governing Council of Physicians, an instructor for Continuing Medical Education, and as a writer for the *Medical Post*. He was encouraged by both his political friends and his professional colleagues to seek office. As there are currently no health care professionals in the Provincial Legislature, many doctors have felt frustrated and upset that they have not been represented in the current Conservative government's restructuring of the health care system.

Dr. Qaadri attended a three-and-a-half-day Campaigns & Elections Training program in Washington D.C. learning about what was required to run an election campaign before deciding in the fall of 1997 to seek nomination. Assembling a team of professionals and volunteers he began his first door-to-door campaign to make himself known in the Etobicoke North area and sign up members for that area's Liberal Riding Association.

From January to September of 1998 he was able to sign up 1200 members, each of whom paid \$10 to join. Mobilizing his supporters to come and vote on the day of the nomination election resulted in his winning the nomination. Dr. Qaadri was one of the first to win a nomination for his party. Out of 103 ridings in the province, only about 20 have had their Liberal party candidate chosen by the

beginning of December.

Taking little time to catch his breath, Dr. Qaadri has already begun to expand his campaign to get both his and his party's message out: A focus on returning compassion and funding. Dr. Qaadri

Dr. Qaadri likens his task as a natural extension of his medical practice, moving from helping people one-on-one to helping address the needs of many through elected government office.

by "Americanizing" or privatizing many of the institutions Canadians hold dear such as universal health-care and education. Dr. Qaadri's direct opponent in the next election will be

the Tories' John Hastings who is a sitting member of the Mike Harris government. The NDP candidate has yet to be confirmed, but is expected to be Ed Philips. There has been a restructuring of the election districts in Ontario by the provincial government, reducing the total from 130 to 103 ridings. The number of Toronto ridings dropped from 31 to 22. The Etobicoke North riding is quite a mixed community with a variety of ethnic groups, homeowners and apartment-dwellers. The boundaries of the riding are Steeles Ave. in the north, the Humber River in the east, Highway 427 in the west, and 401 and the north side of Dixon Road in the south.

Although his life hasn't entirely been smooth-sailing and he

isn't a professional politician yet, Dr. Qaadri is recently happily-married and he and his wife are expecting their first child in 1999, Insha Allah.

He is the vice-president of the Islamic Medical Association and both he and his parents have been active with Muslim and Pakistani community organizations. His campaign will aim to build a broad working coalition and will be seeking support in time, ideas, money, and eventually votes.

He and his campaign team can be reached by phone at 416-756-1500, fax: 416-537-4101, or at e-mail: drshafiq@aracnet.net.

We would urge Muslim voters to become informed, get politically active in their communities and support whomever they believe would best represent their individual and collective interests.

It would be good to know that Revenue Canada allows a very generous tax-deduction for political contributions.

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Muslim Role Models

UMM HABIBAH (ra) The Mother of the Believers

By Nazi

Her nickname was Ramlah but she was called Umm Habibah after her daughter Habibah. She was the daughter of Abu Sufyan and was born seventeen years before the commencement of the revelations. She was married to 'Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh. When the Prophet declared his mission, the couple embraced Islam and migrated to Abyssinia during the second movement. Their daughter, Habibah, was born in Abyssinia.

On reaching Abyssinia, 'Ubaydullah embraced Christianity but Umm Habibah persisted in Islam. His conversion led to the disruption of their marriage. Later on the husband died. When the Prophet heard of her plight, he sent 'Amr ibn Umayyah al-Damri to Negus, the king of Abyssinia, to negotiate her marriage with the Prophet. By this stroke of genius he won two objects. He satisfied his pet policy of rehabilitation of the distressed and, at the same time, disarmed the hostility of Abu Sufyan, her father, who was an inveterate foe of Islam. The Negus held a feast to celebrate the marriage to which all the Muslims were invited. After the wedding, Umm Habibah joined her husband in Medina. When Abu Sufyan heard of the marriage, he blurted out: "At least Muhammad (on whom be peace) has no black mark in his career as a man."

Umm Habibah was a kind and considerate lady with great respect for the Prophet. She had great fear of Allah in her heart. She cherished orphans greatly. Once when a believer died, all his children were taken over by the good lady and looked after until they attained maturity.

Once Abu Sufyan paid a visit to Madinah as an ambassador of the Quraysh, and visited his daughter. He was about to sit on the bed of the Holy Prophet when

Umm Habibah pulled off the bed and made him sit on a mat. Abu Sufyan was surprised. When asked to explain this, Umm Habibah replied that being a polluted infidel, he could not sit on the sacred bed of the Prophet of Allah. The father left in fury and cursing, saying that from the first day of her youth she had been a loser, but she replied: "I care not for this world."

She remained true to Islam and the Muslims even after the Prophet. When 'Uthman, during his Khilafat, was besieged in his house and the inmates thirsted for drink, Umm Habibah took a supply

of water to the house, but the insurgents handled her roughly and one of them punctured the water bag, draining off the drink.

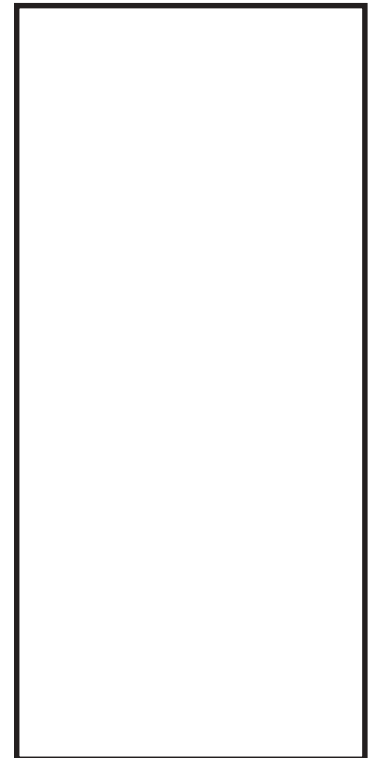
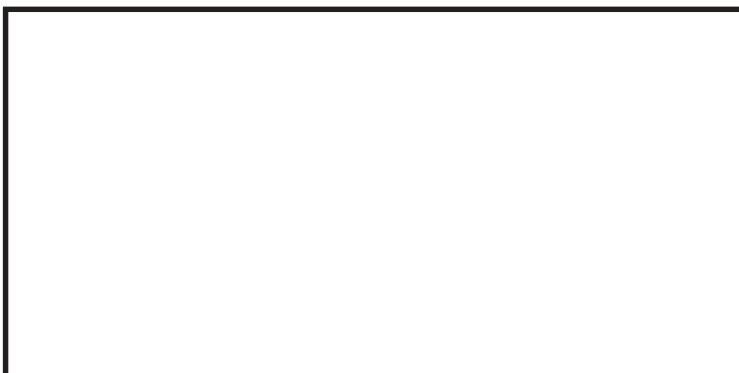
She died at the age of seventy-three in the forty-fourth year of Hijrah during the reign of Mu'awiyah, her brother. She lies buried in Medina, in Jannat-al-Baqi. Of all the wives, Umm Habibah had to make great sacrifices for Islam. Although she was an aristocratic lady and the daughter of a chief, and a great beauty of her days, she preferred to embrace Islam.

There are some great lessons

to be learned from this story. First, that Umm Habibah knew the pleasure and riches of this world are temporary. She gave up her family greatness and ancestry to accept Islam and migrated to a foreign land. Secondly, she maintained strong faith in Islam and Allah even in times of adversity. She persisted in Islam even after her husband deserted her and converted to Christianity.

Thirdly, Umm Habibah understood that believers and Kuffars are not equal. The best among us are those who are best in conduct. This she demonstrated when she refused her father to sit on the Prophet's bed. Finally, she demonstrated strong faith even after insults and ridicule from loved ones. She remained firm in her Deen even after her father insulted her and called her a loser.

Sacrifices for Allah and His Deen are rewarded either in this world and/or in the Hereafter. After all her struggles and sacrifices, she was rewarded with marriage to the Prophet (pbuh) and became the Mother of the Believers.



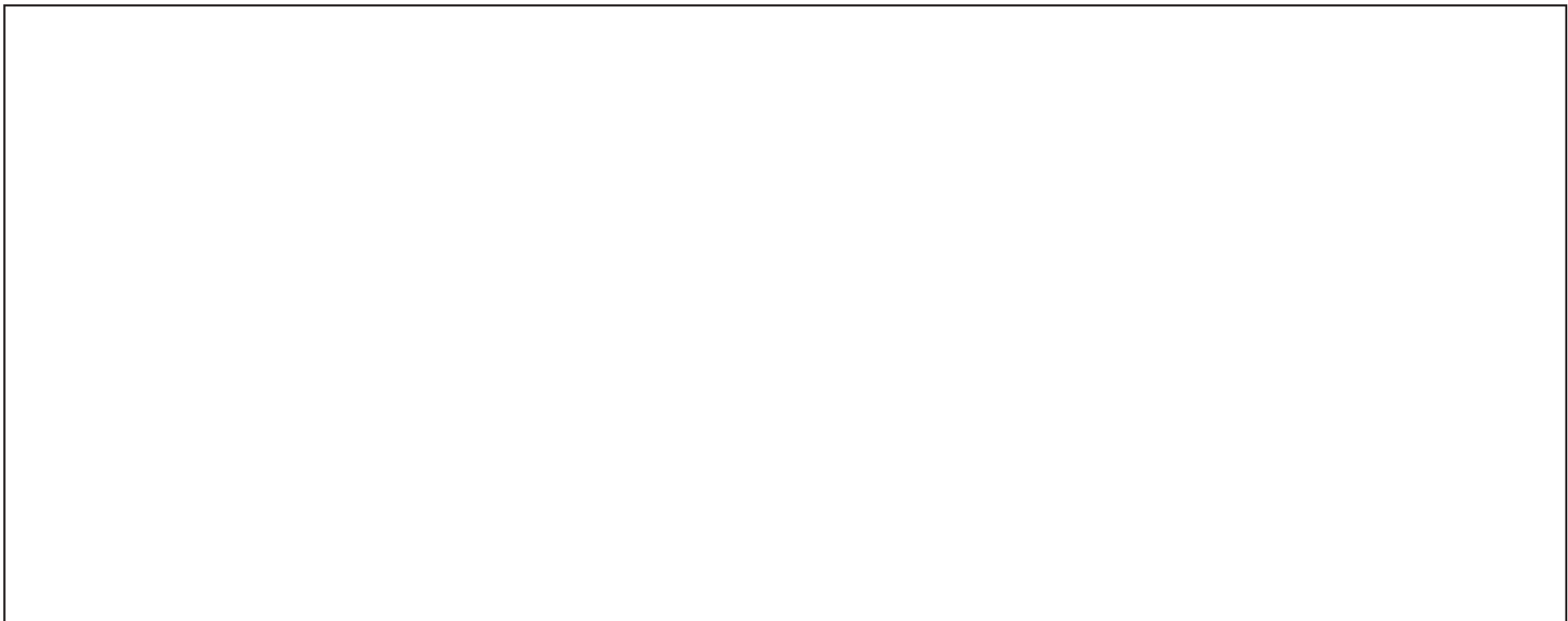
From the Qur'an

"We have indeed revealed this (Qur'an) on the Night of Power: And what will explain to thee what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months."
(Qur'an 97:1-3)

From the Hadith

"Abu Huraira (ra) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, 'Whoever establishes prayers on the Night of Power out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven; and whoever fasts in the month of Ramadhan out of sincere faith, and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven.'"

(Related by Al-Bukhari)



Ahmadiyya Movement

continued from page 1

AS THEIR RELIGIOUS LEADER, THEN THEY FOLLOW THEM BLINDLY. IF WE CAN FIND SOMEONE WHO CAN CLAIM TO BE AN APOSTOLIC PROPHET, OUR TARGET CAN BE ACHIEVED."

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, was selected for the task.

Years later, he admitted in his letter to the Lt. Governor of Punjab that he is the SELF-IMPLANTED AND SELF-CULTIVATED SEEDLING OF THE BRITISH MASTERS. In another letter to Queen Victoria on the occasion of Silver Jubilee Celebrations of her coronation, he reminded her of the services rendered by his father (who donated fifty armed horsemen to fight against the Muslims in the Mutiny of 1857, to prove

Christmas and Eid...

continued from page 1

give thanks to God for blessing them with yet another month of Ramadhan. To understand the meaning of Eid-ul-Fitr, we need to understand the significance of Ramadhan.

The Qur'an tells us about the greatness and blessings of this month for three main reasons. First, the Qur'an was revealed onto Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in this month. Secondly, Lailatul Qadr (the Night of Power) is in this month and thirdly, fasting in this month has been prescribed for Muslims. Since fasting with the true belief and spirit cleanses our heart and soul, this is the best time for practising Muslims to prepare themselves for the rest of the year with Taqwa (God-consciousness) and self-restraint, as these are the main benefits of Islamic fasting. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said that the first ten days of Ramadhan have Rahma (Allah's Mercy), the second ten days have Mughfirah (Allah's Forgiveness) and the last ten days are salvation from the Hell Fire. When Muslims observe fasting, they are blessed and then they celebrate the blessings by being grateful to God on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Fitr means "giving in charity" and it is compulsory for all Muslims to give a prescribed nominal amount on this day. (Only very destitute and poor people who don't even have a day's worth of sustenance are exempt.) This practice has much significance. First and foremost, it is a day of giving as opposed to a day of receiving or exchanging. What is given is then used for the benefit of the less fortunate in the locality, city, or country for the purpose of preserving the dignity of the needy, the destitute, wayfarer and the like. Next, the giving promotes equality and a feeling of oneness amongst the Muslims as the not-so-affluent and the more affluent give the same amount of charity.

The Eid festival starts with the sighting of the new moon marking the end of Ramadhan. People

his loyalty to the Raj) and his own CONTRIBUTION of FIFTY THOUSAND leaflets, treatises, and books written, printed and distributed in various Muslim countries, "TO REMOVE THE FILTHY IDEAS OF JIHAD FROM THE HEARTS OF STUPID MUSLIMS," as the proof of his unswerving loyalty to the British Raj.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born in 1839/1840 in a Mughal Barlas landlord family, who had lost all its lands at the hands of Sikh rulers. With the coming of the British, the family saw a chance to regain the lost estate and became their faithful servants. Mirza received formal religious education at home and studied medicine from his father. Being of weak mind, his father used to discourage him from indulging in books. Around 25 years of age, he ran away from home with his father's yearly pension and spent it in various undesirable pursuits. Later he took up a clerical appointment at a civil court in Sialkot. Here he befriended certain Christian Padres, who were later on responsible for his selection as a candidate for 'apostolic prophet.'

According to his writings, Mirza Ghulam suffered from various illnesses including melancholia, hypochondriasis, paranoia, fits of unconsciousness, attacks of hysteria, dizzy turns, diabetes mellitus, excessive urination of up to 100 times per day, impotence, etc. He used to consume wine to boost his health. Under "divine instructions" he prepared a special medicine called TIRYAQ-E-ILAH, a major component of which was opium. Not only he, but others in his Jama'at were also

congratulate each other for being able to observe the fast. The great day begins by gathering in mosques and other places reserved for the occasion and offering prayers to mark the auspicious day. In many Muslim countries and where there is a significant Muslim population, the houses may be decorated with lights, or flowers for the occasion. After the prayers, traditionally, people visit the cemetery to remember their departed near and dear ones. The rest of the day is spent visiting friends and relatives to greet each other and to share snacks or even a meal. Exchanging gifts are allowed but not compulsory. In some cultures children receive Eid money from their elders. In any case, we are not supposed to go out of our way in a mad rush to

using this medicine for sexual energy, amongst them Hakeem Nuruddin, the 1st Successor and Mirza Basheeruddin Mahmood, Mirza's son and his 2nd Successor.

A combination of mental sickness, wine and opium is enough for anyone to become "God." Hence it was not surprising that the sudden emotional trauma due to his father's death when he was around 37 years old, precipitated acute psychotic illness with auditory and visual hallucinations and delusions of grandeur. He thought that he was inspired by God Almighty!

Mirza claimed to be a recipient of revelation through angels called Teechee Teechee and Ail. His revelation informed him that God has named him after all the previous Holy Prophets. Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya became the book of God and whomsoever did not accept his prophethood were labeled by him as Children of Prostitute, considered to be disobedient to Allah and the Holy Prophet (pbuh), out of the fold of Islam and doomed to Hell.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian claimed to be the Promised Messiah, Mahdi, Prophet, Messenger, and Second Advent of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), ALL IN ONE, who has come again to propagate Islam! Now that he claimed to be none other than the Holy Prophet himself, his followers became Sahaba, his family assumed the title of Ahle Bait and his wife was addressed as Ummul-Mu'mineen!!

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad boasted that his claims were based on (his own distorted interpretation of) the Holy Qur'an and his own rev-

buy expensive gifts.

Muslims have no equivalent of Santa Claus or the Christmas tree. No carols are sung either, Eid does not represent an occasion to celebrate the birth of the Son of God. As Muslims we are strictly forbidden from setting up partnerships with Allah: "Verily, Allah does not forgive that partners should be set up with Him in worship..." (4:48), and also: "He begets not, nor is He begotten" (112:3). Eid day marks plain gratitude from the creation in the court of The Creator. The tradition set by the Prophet (pbuh) for this day is that of unity amongst the believers, humility and moderation. Any form of celebration of this day beyond his tradition would be contrary to what is expected of the followers of Islam.

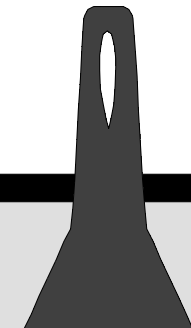
elation. He announced: "Like a waste paper, I discard all those Hadiths which are contradictory to my Revelations and Claims" (Zamima Nuzool-e-Maseeh, Roohani Khazain, Vol 19, p.140).

His 80 books, collected and published as Roohani Khazain by the Ahmadiyya Movement, illustrate his heretical views and provide an insight into the personality of this man. Although the Ahmadiyya Movement claims to have printed the Holy Qur'an with their own (altered and distorted) translation in 120 different languages, it is surprising that the books written by this so-called Promised Messiah and Mahdi have hardly been translated into English! Request by us for permission to translate and print these books were turned down by the Ahmadiyya Movement's HQ in London!

Perhaps the Ahmadiyya Movement does not like to bring to light the personality of its founder and his real beliefs, lest their fraud be exposed.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad established the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in 1889. His followers were called Ahmadis. By his edict, all those who did not follow him were out of the fold of Islam. Ahmadis were forbidden to pray behind a Muslim Imam, offer funeral prayer of other Muslims or intermarry with other Muslims (because everybody else was a Kafir except Ahmadis!). He abrogated Jihad and declared that loyalty to the British Raj is the religious responsibility of every Muslim and whoever lifts a sword against them is disobedient to Allah and His Prophet (pbuh).

The Ahmadiyya Movement continued to flourish under the benevolent patronage of British rulers and Muslims could do little to obliterate the advances of Mirza Ghulam's heretical doctrines. However, one of his fiercest opponents, Molvi Sanaullah Amratsari, pestered him so much that in 1907 he invited him for a prayer duel. He advertised his supplication to Allah Almighty pleading Him to annihilate the liar amongst the two in the lifetime of the truthful one, by cholera or plague. He considered them to be the sign of divine anger and punishment. Mirza died of cholera within one year! Ironically, his dead body was carried from La-



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(Kafirs) and out of the fold of Islam by religious scholars of all schools of Fiqh (Sunni, Ahle Hadith, Shiite, etc.).

[To be continued in the next issue].

Dr. Rashid graduated in Medicine, received his Post graduate training in UK earning MRCP from the Royal College of Physicians of UK is presently working in UAE in the Ministry of Health. He has been involved in an awareness campaign about the fraud of Ahmadiyya Movement in the name of Islam since 1989. For more info on the subject, visit the following address.

<http://alhafeez.org/rashid/>

Kids' Korner

RAMADHAN

On December 20th over 250,000 Metro-Toronto Muslims start the holy and peaceful month of Ramadhan which will continue until Jan. 18th 1999.

During the month of Ramadhan healthy Muslims must abstain from food, drink, smoking and other sensual pleasures during the daylight hours (dawn to dusk) as a lesson in discipline and to foster conscienceness of God.

The beginning and the end of the holy month depend on the sighting of the new moon.

Ramadhan is the 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar, which is 11 days shorter than the solar year. Therefore it travels backward around the year making a full turn every 33 years.

Muslims are lucky this year as the days are short and cold. Seventeen years from now it will be in the month of July with long and hot days.

Ramadhan marks God's revelation of the Holy Qur'an (the Muslims' holy book) to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) about 1400 years ago. Among

the last 10 nights of the month there is a holy night called the "Night of Power," during which the doors of Heaven will be open and the doors of Hell will be closed. Muslims are encouraged to spend the whole night in prayer and supplication.

During Ramadhan, it is recommended that Muslims provide generously to the poor and orphans, spend their time in contemplation, read their holy book and other supplications. Muslims must abstain as well from any form of backbiting, lying, hurting others, and must be patient and good to others.

Soon after sunset, Muslim families gather to break fast together. In many occasions they go to the mosque for a group dinner and group prayer.

At the end of the month, Muslims celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr to thank God for allowing them to pass the exam of patience and discipline. As well, they must donate some money, food or clothes to the poor in a show of thanks to the Almighty.

Newsroom

IEIE shares Islamic views with mainstream

On November 5, Dorothy De Haas of the McMichael Canadian Art Committee brought 47 keen and eager artists to the Islamic Art Foundation. A lecture on Islamic Art was given by Muhammad Salem Shaikh of the Islamic Education and Information Exchange (IEIE).

On November 24, Scarborough General Hospital invited IEIE to speak on Surah Fatihah and Muslim prayers for the sick to a group of people from different religions who are involved in doing lay pastor visiting work.

On November 27, Scarborough General Hospital hosted a well-attended event called "Celebrating our Diversity." Muslims were represented by members of the Islamic Foundation and by the Islamic Education and Information Exchange.

Bowmanville School invites Muslim speaker

The Boy Scouts in Bowmanville invited IEIE's representative, Mr. Junaid Shaikh to give a lecture on the Fundamentals of Islam and distributed Islamic literature.

Hampton Junior Public School in Bowmanville invited IEIE to give a presentation on Islam to its Grades 4, 5, and 6 classes. Parents, teachers, and a trustee attended this presentation. Special thanks should go to Principal Sharon Trbovich for hosting and arranging it. The children in attendance had some very good questions and showed a lively interest.

Ottawa regional police lay arson charge in the burning of busses at the Ottawa Islamic School

On March 8, 1998, shortly after midnight, two school buses at the Ottawa Islamic school in Nepean were destroyed by fire, and a third was damaged extensively. Several youths were seen running from the area.

Through a co-operative effort of the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Hate Crime Section, the Race Relations Section, the Ottawa Muslim Association, the Islamic Schools Federation of Ontario, and the Crime Stoppers program, the investigation has been successfully resolved.

On November 9, 19-year-old Mihajlo Borojevic-Kos of Nepean was arrested and charged with Arson, Section 434 of the Criminal Code.

In concluding the investigation, Detective David Nurse of the Hate Crime Section stated: "Although the investigation revealed there was no hate motivation, we have been able to allay fears of hundreds of members of the Muslim Community in Ottawa-Carleton after this disturbing incident.

The Muslim community and the neighbouring residents were understandably anxious about the incident and provided significant co-operation in resolving the case."

Ottawa Muslim leaders have expressed their thanks and the Canadian Islamic Congress has sent a letter of appreciation to Brian Ford, Chief of Police, Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service.

ISSRA says 'Fi Aman Allah' (bye) to the founders.

by our staff reporter

On November 7th, a selected group of invited guests attended a farewell dinner given for Shaikh Abdullah Hakim Quick and Sister Kareema Quick.

This dinner was delightfully catered on behalf of I.S.S.R.A. by the El-Zahra Restaurant located at Birchmount and Elessmere in Scarborough.

It was an emotional time of farewell to the two founders of I.S.S.R.A. who would soon leave for South Africa with their family. Many expressions of esteem and affection were expressed to them by the guests present.

At this occasion, Dr. Quick, known among the community as Br. Abdullah, also gave a short speech in which he stressed the need for the Islamic Social Services & Resources Association to continue growing and responding to the need of the community. He said although he is going to another land, he would always be with us on-line and could be reached anytime.

As a token of appreciation for their services to the community and their involvement in I.S.S.R.A., Br. Abdullah and Sr. Kareema were presented with a plaque commemorating their hard work on behalf of the Islamic community.

A very pleasant evening was spent by all at this delightful restaurant, sharing memories of times gone by and hope for the on-going work of ISSRA.

Success Stories Around Us

President of CIC, Professor Mohamed Elmasry honoured

The Canadian Islamic Congress' president, Professor Elmasry (Ph.D., P.Eng., FCAE, FIEEE, FRSC), an engineer, researcher, academic scholar, community leader, philanthropist, and social activist is among 57 scholars across Canada joining the ranks and becoming a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada at a ceremony in the House of Commons, Ottawa, on Friday, November 20, 1998. Considered "Canada's senior academic accolade to which scholars aspire," membership is awarded to those "deeply committed to excellence within their chosen fields."

His citation reads in part: "Professor Mohamed Elmasry has

been well known for his world class leadership in the area of Digital Integrated Microchip Design for the last 30 years. His pioneering original research in the design, computer-aided design, fabrication and testing of new microchip circuits for telecommunication is influential. His research results have been applied in the design of microelectronic systems by industry leaders in Canada and abroad."

Elmasry has been a professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering and director of the VLSI (microchip) Research Group at the University of Waterloo since 1974. He holds 9 patents, and is author and co-author of 12 books and

more than 250 scientific publications. He has served on many professional organisations in different positions, and received many prestigious Canadian and international awards. He is a founding member of several national and international conferences, and is a consultant to many Canadian and international microelectronics industry leaders, and has been cited in many Who's Who publications.

Professor Elmasry is the author of ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY and the best seller 1,000 QUESTIONS ON ISLAM which is published in English and Arabic. He was an invited speaker in over 35 countries.

Candle Light Vigil At the U.S. Consulate

On Friday, December 18, 1998, a candle-light vigil was carried out by the Canadian Students' Federation and people from the Muslim community at the US Consulate in protest of the recent US bombings in Iraq.

It was very well-attended and for the first time there was a decent gender balance with entire families marching and chanting slogans. For the first time since the bombing, the Muslim community was actively involved in the protest along with other communities.

Also encouraging was the fact that many by-passers and cars honked in our favour. Thank you all for participating physically and spiritually.

The Stranger

Continued from page 1
or cry as I watched.

He was like a friend to the whole family. He took Dad, Yusuf and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see movies and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several famous people.

The stranger was an incessant talker. Dad didn't seem to mind, but sometimes Mom would quietly get up, while the rest of us were enthralled with one of his stories of faraway places, and go to her room to read the Qur'an.

I wonder now if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave. You see, my dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But this stranger never felt an obligation to honour them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our house, not from us, from our friends, or adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used occasional four letter words that burned my ears and made Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted. My dad was a tea-drinker who didn't permit alcohol in his home, not even for cooking.

But the stranger felt like we

needed exposure and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often.

He made cigarettes look tasty, cigars manly, and pipes distinguished. He talked freely (probably much too freely) about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing.

I know now that my early concepts of the man-woman relationship were influenced by the stranger.

As I look back, I believe it was Allah's Mercy that the stranger did not influence us more. Time after time he opposed the values of my parents.

Yet he was seldom rebuked and never asked to leave. More than thirty years have passed since the stranger moved in with the young family on Morningside Drive.

He is not nearly so intriguing to my Dad as he was in those early years. But if I were to walk into my parents' den today, you would still see him sitting over in a corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures.

His name you ask?
We called him TV.

Anglicans warmly welcomed at the Islamic Foundation

Sister Wilma, Staff Reporter

On October 1, 1998 at 6:30 p.m., a group of well-behaved boys and girls trooped into the Islamic Foundation with their parish priest, Rev. Juan Quevedo, a Cuban Anglican priest, and their teacher Mr. Peter Catt. They were there on the invitation of Br. Muhammad S. Shaikh of the Islamic Education and Information Exchange (IEIE).

Br. Shuja Syed welcomed them on behalf of IEIE and introduced the speaker, Br. Muhammad. Nine-year-old Zuhair Syed, son of Shuja Syed, recited the Qur'an and then gave the English translation as well.

Br. Muhammad's relaxed style of lecture contributed in no small way to enable the boys and girls to ask pertinent questions. His topic dealt with the basics of Islam. While they were at the mosque, the children were able to observe the prayers (Salat) and talk to Muslims. They were also given an explanation and demonstration of how to make ablution (Wudu). A tour of the mosque was also given to them which led to further questions that were ably answered by the Muslims present. These young students had many excellent questions, among which was a question on why Muslims don't buy lottery tickets or gamble.

Light refreshments were served which were enjoyed by all that came and the group left with a positive feeling towards Islam and the Islamic Foundation.

Inter-faith gathering at Mission Centre

An inter-faith gathering was held at the Scarborough Mission Centre, 2685 Kingston Road. Its focus was on media coverage. The topic was "The Good, the Bad, the Ugly." People from many faith communities were present. Many members of the World Inter-Faith Education Association (WIFEA) attended this event.

Media coverage was analysed from a Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist point of view. The speaker for the event was Haroon Siddiqui of The Toronto Star. Mr. Paul McKenna, a writer for a Catholic magazine was the MC. Members of IEIE attended this function along with other members of the Muslim community.

It was a well-attended event and typical Christian hospitality was shown, with a lovely lunch served.

FMW concerned at the distribution of the anti-Islamic literature

The Federation of Muslim Women has written to Bob White, President of the Canadian Labour Congress expressing concern at the distribution of anti-Muslim literature at its recent anti-racism conference in Montreal.

Also, the Peel based Workers of Colour Caucus which includes racial minority trade unionists from the Canadian Auto Workers, United Steel Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers and the Communication, Energy and Paper workers, unanimously passed a motion at its meeting last week to write to the CLC President expressing solidarity with the Muslim trade unionists who protested the distribution of the anti-

Muslim literature in Montreal.

It must be pointed out that only two of the 25 members present were Muslim, the rest were Hindus, Christians, and Sikhs. This type of solidarity was very touching and reassuring.

In particular, Michael Heaton of CAW and Jay Nair of the UFCW took the lead role and deserve our thanks for their courage. In addition, the Chinese Advisory Committee of the NDP has also passed a motion expressing their complete solidarity with their Muslim brothers and sisters who were humiliated in Montreal.

Doug Hum, Annie Chow and Sungee John deserve our gratitude and thanks.