

اقراء IQRA

43RD
ANNUAL ISSUE



ISLAMIC SOCIETY
OF SEYCHELLES
PUBLICATION

IQRA' stands for right guidance. Read IQRA' and learn about Islam

JUNE 2024 - DHUL HIJJAH 1445

The Pillars of Islam

الشهادة

Shahada

صلاة

Salah

زكاة

Zakat

صوم

Sawm

الحج

Hajj

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- Community Updates
- Contributed articles
- Youth Spotlight

Foreword

As we gather to celebrate Eid al-Adhā, one of the most significant events in the Islamic calendar, it is a time for reflection, gratitude, and recommitment to our faith. Eid al-Adhā, the "Festival of Sacrifice," commemorates the unwavering faith and obedience of Prophet Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and his son Ismail عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام to Allah's command. This sacred occasion offers us profound lessons that are deeply relevant to our lives today and the challenges we face as an Ummah. Political instability continues to plague many Muslim-majority countries, with conflicts and wars displacing millions and creating humanitarian crises of unprecedented scale.

The celebration of Eid al-Adhā fosters a sense of unity and brotherhood within the Muslim community. As we come together for prayers, feasts, and communal activities, we are reminded of our shared faith and collective identity. Thus, we cannot overlook that in Gaza, the relentless cycles of violence have left countless families bereaved, homes destroyed, and communities in despair. The humanitarian situation remains dire, with limited access to basic necessities such as clean water, food, and medical care. In Sudan, the conflict has created a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions, with widespread displacement and suffering. These situations call for urgent international attention and concerted efforts towards peace and rebuilding.

Eid al-Adhā encourages us to express gratitude for the blessings we have received and to approach life with humility - to serve Almighty Allah and our community. This gratitude should inspire us to live modestly and to always seek ways to help others in the country of our birth, Seychelles!

As we celebrate this blessed occasion, let us carry forward the lessons of faith, sacrifice, unity, gratitude, and reflection. May these values guide us in our daily lives and inspire us to build a more compassionate and just world. On this joyous day, let us also remember those who are suffering and extend our prayers and support to them, embodying the true spirit of Eid al-Adhā.

Finally, I extend my deepest gratitude to the contributors, readers, and supporters who continue to make this IQRA' Annual publication possible. Your unwavering commitment and passion are the driving force behind our mission to preserve our legacy. Let us remain steadfast in our efforts, drawing strength from our faith and from one another, as we work towards a brighter and more equitable future for the Ummah.

May Almighty Allah accept our sacrifices, forgive our shortcomings, and bless us with peace and prosperity, āmīn.

My family joins me in extending Eid Mubārak to all our readers.

Abul Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim, Ph.D. (Temple University, Philadelphia, USA)
Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
17 May 2024/09 Dhū al-Qa'dah 1445 Hijrī.

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Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the IQRA' Editorial Team or the Islamic Society of Seychelles.

**IQRA' stands for right guidance.
Read IQRA' and learn about Islam.**

**Please handle this publication with
care and respect, as it contains
verses from the Holy Qur'an.**



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List of Arabic honorifics used throughout this publication, and their meanings:

- سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى (subḥānahu wa-ta'ālā) - Glorified and Exalted; used after mentioning the name of Allah.

- صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (ṣallā -llāhu 'alayhī wa-sallam) - Peace and blessings of God be Upon him; used specifically after uttering the name of Prophet Muhammad.

- عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام (Alay-hi 's-salām) - Peace be upon him; applies to the Angels as well as any other Prophets.

- عَلَيْهَا السَّلَام (Alay-hā 's-salām) - Peace be upon her; applies to pious ladies preceding Prophet Muhammad.

- رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ / رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا (Raḍiya 'llāhu 'an-hu/ Raḍiya 'llāhu 'an-hā) - May Allāh be pleased with him/her; applied to companions of Prophet Muhammad.

- رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ (Raḥmatu 'llāhi 'alay-hi) - May Allah's mercy/ blessing be upon him; Applies to highly revered scholars.

Message from the President of the Islamic Society of Seychelles

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,

It brings me great joy to extend my warmest greetings to all the esteemed readers of IQRA' Magazine as we mark the release of our 43rd Annual edition.

I commend the relentless efforts of the IQRA' Editorial Team for their dedication in disseminating valuable knowledge throughout the year. The publication of three separate newsletters, covering a diverse range of topics, reflects our commitment to educating and enlightening our community.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated volunteers who have contributed tirelessly to the success of IQRA' Magazine. Your commitment to skill development and capacity building is truly commendable, and I have no doubt that you will continue to inspire others in the pursuit of knowledge.

As we reflect on the core pillars of Islam, let us reaffirm our commitment to seeking knowledge and understanding. The timeless teachings of our faith serve as a beacon of guidance in every era, reminding us of our duty as Muslims to continuously learn and grow.

I am delighted to announce the launch of the Islamic Society of Seychelles' website (www.iso Seychelles.org), providing our readers with greater accessibility to our publications and fostering a sense of community in the digital age. I am confident that this new platform will pave the way for even greater engagement and interaction among our members.

As we celebrate the blessed occasion of Eid-ul-Adha, I pray that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى accepts our sacrifices and grants us abundant blessings. May this auspicious occasion strengthen our faith and deepen our commitment to serving humanity with compassion and kindness.

On behalf of the Islamic Society of Seychelles, I extend my warmest wishes to all our readers. Your continued support and feedback are invaluable to us, and we remain committed to enhancing our publications to better serve your needs.

Wassalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,

Imtiaz Umarji
President, Islamic Society of Seychelles



Message from the Imam of The Islamic Society of Seychelles

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and may the blessings of Allah be upon our Master and Prophet, Muḥammad ﷺ, and his pure progeny

We stand as sorrowful witnesses to the brutal actualities that are currently occurring in the world today. We are not unaware of the brutalities that our brothers and sisters are facing on the other side of the globe, specifically, the barbarity that the people of Palestine must endure daily, day in and day out. My dear brothers and sisters, this unpleasant phenomenon should be a wakeup call for the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ not only to straighten your affairs but to understand how Islam teaches us to go about the mixed feelings that we have with regards to what is happening in the world. Hope is not lost for the oppressed. I urge you to wake up from the slumber that you have been comfortably revelling in and turn back to the origin of our religion. Islam teaches us that there can be no justice when injustice plagues the world. Consequently, Muslims are advocates for justice, we have an innate need to stand against any form of injustice that we witness occurring. It is important for us to know where we should dispose of all of the affairs that worry us as our Prophet ﷺ left behind the Deen of Islam with much clarity and such is proven in the following hadith.

It was narrated from 'Abdur-Rahman bin 'Amr As-Sulami that:

He heard Al-'Irbad bin Sariyah say: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) delivered a moving speech to us which made our eyes flow with tears and made our hearts melt. We said: 'O Messenger of Allah. This is a speech of farewell. What did you enjoin upon us?' He said: 'I am leaving you upon a (path of) brightness whose night is like its day. No one will deviate from it after I am gone but one who is doomed. Whoever among you lives will see great conflict. I urge you to adhere to what you know of my Sunnah and the path of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and cling stubbornly

to it. And you must obey, even if (your leader is) an Abyssinian leader. For the true believer is like a camel with a ring in its nose; wherever it is driven, it complies."

Grade: Sahih

Reference : Sunan Ibn Majah 43

It is the responsibility of our Ummah to follow the merited path of victory to be victors.

Allah's ﷻ help to the Muslims against their disbelieving enemies who wage war on them is something real and true. Allah ﷻ may He be exalted, has promised that to the believers, and has told them that it is near, and that He only delays it for certain significant reasons. The one who has strong faith and true certainty will realise that it is indeed near as the Lord, may He be exalted, has told us.

The help of Allah ﷻ that is near is not for everyone who claims to believe or claims to be a Muslim; rather it is only for those who truly believe in their hearts and carry out their duties as enjoined by Islam.

If the people are sincere in their belief in their Lord and their establishing His laws, that is indicative of how they will be when Allah ﷻ may He be exalted, gives them power in the land. These are the ones to whom Allah ﷻ may He be exalted, has promised His help and support.

I pray that Allah ﷻ blesses our Ummah to turn back to our deen in the way we have been ordained. I pray that Allah ﷻ liberates our oppressed Palestinian brothers and sisters, and may He impede the success of the enemies of Islam.

A pleasant Eid Mubarak to all my fellow Muslims, taqaballah minna wa minkum, wa kullu aamin wa antum bikhair.

Imam Abdur Rahman Heneka

Masjid Sheikh Muhammad Bin Khalifah Al-Nahyan (Victoria)

Editorial

Assalaamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuhu

Dear respected readers,

The IQRA' Editorial Team is pleased to present the 43rd Annual edition of the IQRA Magazine, marking the end of the 1445 Hijri calendar.

Throughout the year, we managed to produce 3 separate Newsletters on various other subjects to educate the community. We are especially proud of our Palestine newsletter (March 2024) which was released to raise awareness on the history and importance of Palestine in Islam. Despite the global political landscape on the subject matter, it is vital that we continue to advocate the truth and have trust in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى give the Palestinians success from their oppressors, Aameen.

Our team of volunteers consisted of several that led the various newsletters as part of skill development and capacity building, namely **Samia Alloo**, **Izen Ali**, and **Ramlah Heneka**. It is with great pleasure to announce that this Annual Magazine was also led by another junior member of our team, **Na'eemah Pillay**, under the guidance of the incumbent Editor. In Sha Allah, these individuals will one day take the mantle of IQRA' Editor to continue spreading the message of Islam.

"The key purpose of IQRA is to seek and gain knowledge. That search for understanding should begin with the core pillars that make up the religion of Islam, which is the main reason behind choosing such topic as the theme of this year's magazine. As the deen of Islam does not change with time, much importance is placed on reiterating the teachings as the years go by. I urge our readers to keep studying, keep reading and keep asking questions as it is the duty of a Muslim to learn about his/her religion."

– **Na'eemah Pillay (Junior Editor)**

We are excited for the future of IQRA', now that the Islamic Society of Seychelles has launched its very own website (www.isoseychelles.org). Our readers may expect to see more regular content through the digital platform, enabling easier access to our upcoming publications. We are pleased to announce that all our recent publications, including this Annual Magazine, are available to all for digital download on the ISOS website.

As always, we look forward to hear from our readers, and are open to suggestions and comments to help us improve our publications. We take this opportunity to thank our writers, readers, sponsors, and all who continue to support us by one way or another.

On behalf of the IQRA' Editorial Team, I wish you all a blessed Eid-ul-Adha.
تَقَبَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنَّا وَمِنْكُمْ.

Ijlal Ibrahim Afif
Editor, IQRA' Editorial Committee

اقرا IQRA



The Deen of Islam

Compiled by Bashaair Bastienne

Islam is the religion taught in its fundamentals by all the Prophets. It is the religion that the first human being was instructed to follow. It is the religion of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and all other Prophets throughout the existence of human beings. Allah سبحانه و تعالى says:

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ.

“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him]” (Surah Ash-Shūraā 42:13)

Islam is the religion that was given to Adam, the first man and the first Prophet of Allah, and it was the religion of all the prophets sent by Allah to mankind. The name of God's religion Islam was not decided upon by later generations of man. It was chosen by Allah Himself and clearly mentioned in His final revelation to man. In the final book of divine revelation, the Qur'an, Allah states the following. Allah سبحانه و تعالى says:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.” (Surah Al-Maa'idah 5:3)

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

“If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allah (God)) never will It be accepted of Him.” (Surah Al Imran 3:85)

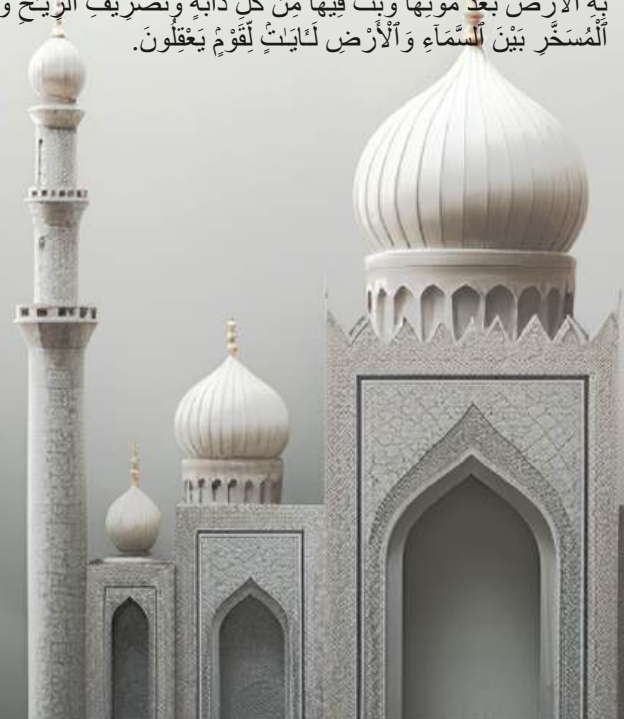
The sound of the Quran is the first and last sound that a Muslim hears in this life. As the direct Word of God and the embodiment of God's Will, the Quran is considered as the guide par excellence for the life of Muslims. It is the source of all Islamic doctrines and ethics. Allah سبحانه و تعالى says:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

“Surely this Quran guides to what is most upright, and gives good news to the believers—who do good—that they will have a mighty reward. And ‘it warns’ those who do not believe in the Hereafter ‘that’ We have prepared for them a painful punishment.” (Surah Al-Isra 17:9-10)

The Quran refers, in a language-rich in its varied terminology, to the importance of seeing, contemplating, and reasoning about the world of creation and its diverse phenomena.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفَلَكَ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَع النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ.



“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth; the alternation of the day and the night; the ships that sail the sea for the benefit of humanity; the rain sent down by Allah from the skies, reviving the earth after its death; the scattering of all kinds of creatures throughout; the shifting of the winds; and the clouds drifting between the heavens and the earth - ‘in all of this’ are surely signs for people of understanding”. (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:164)

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ. الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطِيلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ.

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the day and night there are signs for people of reason. ‘They are’ those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth ‘and pray’, “Our Lord! You have not created ‘all of’ this without purpose. Glory be to You! Protect us from the torment of the Fire. (Surah Ali ‘Imran, 3:190-191)

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“Say, ‘Travel through the land and observe how He began creation. Then Allah creates the final creation. Indeed Allah, over all things, is competent.” (Surah Al-Ankabut, 29:20)

Islam places the gaining of knowledge as the highest religious activity, one that is most pleasing in God's eyes.

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

“Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do.” (Surah Al-Mujadila, 58:11)

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

“Say, ‘O Prophet, Are those who know equal to those who do not know? Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding.” (Surah Al-Zumar, 39:9)

THE PILLARS OF ISLAM

According to a famous saying of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Islam consists of five pillars which are as follows: affirmation of the faith (shahadah), that is, witnessing that La Ilaha Illa Allah (There is no divinity but Allah) and Muhammadun Rasul Allah (Muhammad is the

Messenger of Allah); the five daily prayers (al-salat) which Muslims perform facing Makkah; fasting (al-sawm) from dawn to sunset during the month of Ramadan; making the pilgrimage to Makkah (al-hajj) at least once in a lifetime if one's financial and physical conditions permit it, and paying a 2.5% tax (al-zakat) on one's capital which is used for the needs of the community.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

" بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ وَحَجِّ الْبَيْتِ وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ "

'The superstructure of) al-Islam is raised on five (pillars), testifying (the fact) that there is no god but Allah, that Muhammad is His bondsman and messenger, and the establishment of prayer, payment of Zakat, Pilgrimage to the House (Ka'ba) and the fast of Ramadan'. (Sahih Muslim :Book 1, Hadith 21)

Allah سبحانه وتعالى says:

أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

“Or were you, witnesses, when came to Yaqub [the] death, when he said to his sons, “What will you worship from after me?” They said, “We will worship your God and (the) God (of) your forefathers, Ibrahim and Ismail and Ishaq – God One. And we to Him (are) submissive.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:133)

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي ۖ وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

“Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “This is my way. I invite to Allah with insight - I and those who follow me. Glory be to Allah, and I am not one of the polytheists – those who join gods with Allah.” (Surah Yusuf 12:108)

Muslims are also commanded to exhort others to perform good acts and to abstain from evil. Ethics lies at the heart of Islamic teachings and all men and women are expected to act ethically towards each other at all times. Allah سبحانه وتعالى says:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

“And who (is) better (in) speech than (one) who invites to Allah and does righteous (deeds) and says, Indeed, I am of those who submit?” (Surah Fussilat 41:33)

Understanding the essence of Islam is to understand the very essence of human existence itself. Islam offers a

complete, comprehensive, and balanced way of living. Its principles and teachings can be used to provide sensible and fair solutions to the problems faced by the individual in particular and the society in general.

A religion generally tends to cover the spiritual aspects of one's beliefs. However, being a perfect religion, Islam goes above and beyond that. It covers social, economic, political and even diplomatic aspects of human life. Humanity, as a whole, is in need of a mechanism that allows it to balance and channel all of its activities towards something fruitful.

Within the central principle of Islam and its definition (the surrender of one's will to God) lie the roots of Islam's universality. Whenever man comes to the realization that God is one and distinct from His creation, and submits himself to God, he becomes a Muslim in body and spirit and is eligible for paradise.

أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا
وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ.

“Do they desire a way other than Allah's - knowing that all those in the heavens and the earth submit to His Will, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they will 'all' be returned” (Surah Ali 'Imran 3:83)

قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

“Say, “I have been commanded to be the first to submit and not be one of the polytheists.” (Surah Al-An'am 6:14)

Allah سبحانه و تعالى says:

وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَادِي الْعُمَى عَنْ ضَلَالَتِهِمْ إِنْ تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“And not (can) you guide the blind from their error. Not you can cause to except (those) who believe in Our Signs so they (are) those-who-submit/Muslims.” (Surah An-Naml 27:81)

RATIONALITY REQUIRES BELIEF IN GOD

It is a common perception in the Christian world that 'faith' or 'belief' is irrational; that a matter of faith is one for which there is little or no evidence. To the Muslims, this seems quite absurd. In Islam people who disbelieve in Allah سبحانه و تعالى and in the prophethood of Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم can only

do so out of ignorance or out of willful denial of what is evident to them as clear as seeing: Allah سبحانه و تعالى says:

وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَاهُمْ الْكِتَابَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَمِنْ
هَؤُلَاءِ مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا الْكَافِرُونَ

“Similarly- to earlier messengers - , We have revealed to you a Book - O Prophet .-The faithful of - those to whom We gave the Scriptures believe in it, as do some of these - pagan Arabs. And none denies Our revelations except the - stubborn - disbelievers.” (Surah Al-'Ankabut 29:47)

وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَادِي الْعُمَى عَنْ ضَلَالَتِهِمْ إِنْ تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“And not (can) you guide the blind from their error. Not you can cause to except (those) who believe in Our Signs so they (are) those-who-submit/Muslims.” (Surah An-Naml 27:81)

The core of all value and purpose to existence is commonly known by the name Allah or God. He is the ultimate purpose of existence and the achievement of what is morally good equates to getting closer to Him. Allah سبحانه و تعالى is more than we can ever fully understand in order to have morally good thinking.

It is essential to believe in Allah سبحانه و تعالى in some sense whatever name we use for Him. As a result of God's signs to mankind through the ages combined with His revelation through His Prophets, all mankind has been given a chance to recognize the one and only true God. Allah سبحانه و تعالى says:

وَهَذَا صِرَاطُ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيمًا قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَذَكَّرُونَ

“And this (is the) way (of) your Lord – straight. Certainly, We have detailed the Verses for a people who take heed.” (Surah Al-An'am 6:126)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وََعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

“Indeed, the believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabians¹—whoever 'truly' believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good will have their reward with their Lord. And there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:62)



The Shahada

By Naila D'acambra

The Shahada is simple yet profound:

أشهد أن لا اله الا الله و أشهد أن محمداً رسول الله

“I bear witness that there is no God worthy of worship except Allah سبحانه وتعالى and I bear witness that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is the last Messenger of Allah”.

With these words, one enters into the fold of Islam, affirming belief in the oneness of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and prophethood of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

In the vast tapestry of human existence, the journey towards faith is a profound and deeply personal one. For those who choose Islam, the shahada marks a pivotal moment of commitment and spiritual awakening.

At its core, the shahada reaffirms the fundamental Islamic doctrine of Tawhid, by declaring that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah سبحانه وتعالى. This declaration underscores the indivisible unity of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and serves as a constant reminder of His sovereignty over all creation.

The shahada serves as a source of solace and comfort during times of adversity. In moments of trial and tribulation, the belief in the oneness of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and His mercy provides us with inner peace and resilience.

The second part of the shahada acknowledges Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم as the final Messenger of Allah سبحانه وتعالى. His teachings exemplified in the Quran and his traditions (Hadith and Sunnah), serves as a beacon of guidance for muslims in all aspects of life, including worship, morality and interpersonal relations. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم also inspires the believers to emulate his exemplary character and conduct.

The Shahada is recited in various acts of worship including our daily prayers (salah), the call to prayer (adhan) and the initiation of reverts. It is also uttered in moments of distress, joy and reflection, serving as a source of strength.

For reverts to Islam, the journey towards embracing the Shahada is often marked by a series of contemplation, inquiry and spiritual exploration. As they strive to live according to the teachings of Islam, reverts find guidance

and strength in the words of the Quran and from the example of the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The decision to recite the Shahada is often accompanied by a sense of liberation, peace and purpose - a feeling of coming home to one's true self and finding solace in the embrace of faith. As a revert myself, I can relate to that.

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ٢٦
إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِينِ ٢٧

And remember when Ibraheem said to his father and his people: “Verily, I am free from all that you worship – except for He who created me and verily He will guide me.” And He made it a statement that will endure among his offspring that they may turn back to. (Qur'an 43:26-27)

Serving as a unifying force, binding believers from diverse backgrounds and cultures, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or social status, the shahada fosters a sense of accountability and responsibility amongst Muslims towards one another and society at large.

The principles embedded within the shahada promote social cohesion, mutual respect, and the pursuit of common good. By affirming our belief in the teachings of Islam, we are reminded of our duty to uphold justice, compassion and righteousness in our interactions with others.

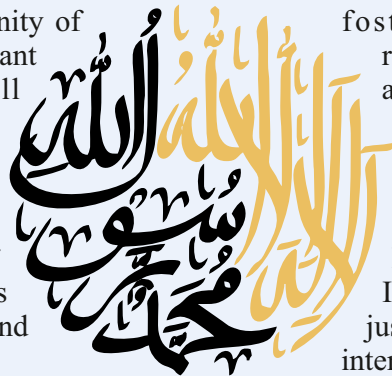
The journey of the shahada is a testament to the power of faith to transform lives and illuminate hearts. It is a reminder that no matter one's background, circumstances or past mistakes, the door to Islam is always open to those who seek truth, guidance and salvation.

In embracing the shahada, we affirm our beliefs in the oneness of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and our commitment to living a life of righteousness and compassion.

How long has it been since you said the Shahada out loud?

“Ash-hadu an la ilaha illa Allah, Wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasulu-Allah”.

And watch how something inside you heals, feel the peace in your chest. Now, your heart is at ease because you just reminded yourself of your creator, who takes care of all affairs, the most Forgiving.





The Essence of **SALAH:** *Beyond Rituals* Compiled by Izen-e-Ali

Salah (different spellings include salaah, swalah, salat, etc), or in some cultures referred to as namaz, is a fundamental form of worship performed by Muslims. It holds immense significance in Islam and is considered one of the Five Pillars of Islam. The Islamic practice of prayer is much more than a ritualistic act of worship. It is a spiritual journey that connects Muslims with their Creator, promotes discipline, and nurtures the soul. Let's explore the essence of Salah.

DEFINITION

Salah refers to the ritual prayer that Muslims offer to Allah ﷻ. It is a direct communication with the Almighty, a way to express devotion, seek forgiveness, and maintain a spiritual connection. The term "Salah" encompasses both the physical actions (standing, bowing, and prostrating) and the recitations during the prayer.

The essence of Salah in Islam lies at the core of a Muslim's spiritual journey and relationship with Allah ﷻ. It encompasses several fundamental aspects that make it a profound and transformative practice:

1. Connection with the Divine: Salah is the primary means through which Muslims establish and maintain a direct connection with Allah ﷻ. It serves as a personal dialogue between the worshipper and the Divine, providing a

sacred space for communication, supplication, and reflection. Through Salah, Muslims express their love, gratitude, and devotion to Allah, seeking His guidance, mercy, and forgiveness.

2. Submission and Surrender: At the heart of Salah is the principle of submission (Islam) to the will of Allah ﷻ. Through the physical acts of bowing, prostration, and recitation, Muslims demonstrate their humility, obedience, and surrender to the Divine. Salah serves as a reminder of the fundamental relationship between the servant and the Master, reinforcing the belief in the sovereignty and omnipotence of Allah ﷻ.

3. Spiritual Cleansing and Purification: Salah is not merely a ritualistic practice but a spiritual purification process. It provides a means for Muslims to cleanse their hearts and souls from sins, distractions, and negative influences. Through the remembrance of Allah ﷻ and sincere devotion in Salah, individuals strive to attain inner peace, tranquility, and spiritual clarity.

4. Discipline and Focus: Salah instills a sense of discipline, orderliness, and focus in the life of a Muslim. It is performed at specific times throughout the day, serving as a constant reminder of one's spiritual duties and obligations. The regular practice of Salah cultivates habits of punctuality, consistency, and

mindfulness, guiding individuals towards a balanced and purposeful life.

5. Communal Unity: While Salah is an individual obligation, it also serves as a unifying force within the Muslim community. Muslims often gather in mosques to perform Salah collectively, especially during congregational prayers such as Friday prayers. This fosters a sense of unity, brotherhood, and solidarity among believers, transcending social, cultural, and linguistic barriers.

6. Continuous Remembrance of Allah: Salah is a manifestation of the continuous remembrance (dhikr) of Allah prescribed in Islam. Through the recitation of Quranic verses, supplications, and praises, Muslims constantly remember and glorify Allah ﷻ in their daily lives. Salah serves as a means of spiritual nourishment, renewing one's faith, devotion, and connection with the Divine.

In essence, Salah encapsulates the essence of faith, devotion, and spiritual growth in Islam. It is a sacred act of worship that embodies the core principles of submission, purification, discipline, and unity, guiding believers towards a life of righteousness, fulfillment, and closeness to Allah. Through Salah, Muslims seek to fulfill their ultimate purpose of worshiping and serving Allah ﷻ, the Most Merciful and Compassionate.

THE FIVE DAILY PRAYERS

In Islam there are five obligatory daily prayers. These prayers are performed at specific times throughout the day and night. They are:

- **Fajr:** The dawn prayer, performed before sunrise.
- **Dhuhr:** The midday prayer, performed after the sun passes its zenith (highest point).
- **Asr:** The afternoon prayer, performed in the late afternoon.
- **Maghrib:** The evening prayer, performed just after sunset.
- **Isha:** The night prayer, performed after the twilight has disappeared until midnight.

The importance of these five daily prayers is highlighted in both the Quran and the Sunnah (teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ).

QURANIC IMPORTANCE

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ۚ ٢٣٨

Quran 2:238: "Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient."

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَى الْبَارِ وَزُلْفَا مَنْ أَلِيلَ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرٌ لِلذَّكِّرِينَ ١١٤

Quran 11:114: "And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember."

SUNNAH IMPORTANCE

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emphasized the significance of Salah in numerous Hadiths (sayings and actions of the Prophet):

In a famous Hadith narrated by Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, the Prophet ﷺ said,

"The first thing for which a person will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection will be his Salah. If it is found to be perfect, he will be safe and successful, but if it is lacking in any respect, he will be unfortunate and a loser." (Sunan At-Tirmidhi)

Another Hadith narrated by Abu Huraira states,

"The Prophet ﷺ said: 'The covenant between us and them is prayer. Whoever abandons it is a disbeliever.'" (Sunan Ibn Majah)

COMPONENTS OF SALAH

Intention (an-Niyyah) for Prayer:

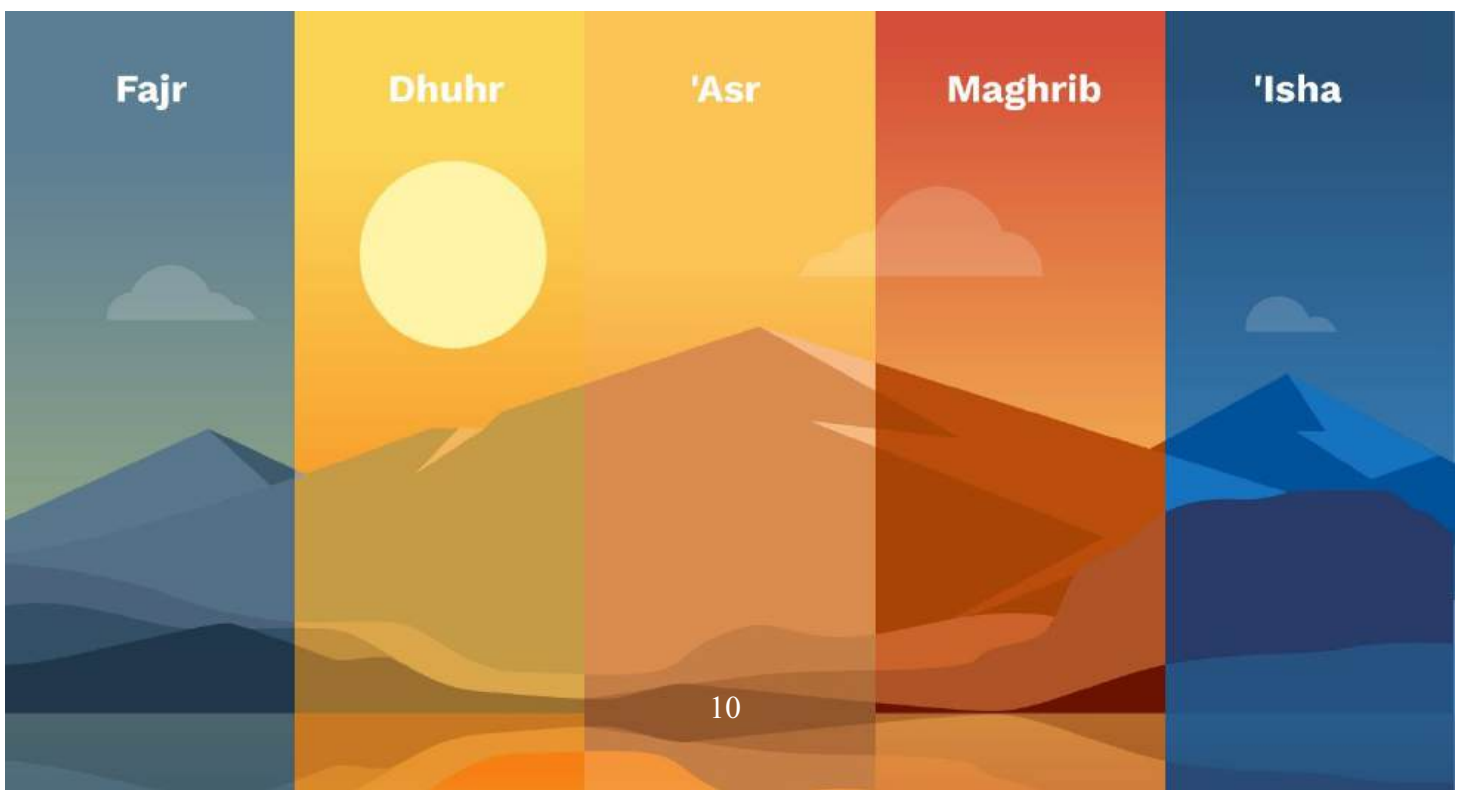
The person who is going to pray must have in their heart the intention to pray that particular Salah. Prophet Mohammad ﷺ used to say: "All actions are by intention, and every person shall have what they intended".

Purification (Taharah): Ensure that your body, clothes, and the place (ground on which you're offering Salah) are clear from all kinds of impurity before starting the prayer.

Ablution (Wudu): Ablution is part of purification. It is essential to perform Wudu correctly before Salah.

Covering the Private Parts: Men must cover their entire bodies and private parts, including their shoulders. Women should cover their entire bodies except for their faces and hands.

Facing the Kabah / Qibla: Facing towards the Qibla (Kabah) is a crucial condition for performing Salah. Wherever you pray, ensure you face the Qibla. As Allah says in the Quran: "So turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it [in prayer]" (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:144).



STEPS FOR PERFORMING SALAH

Standing: Stand erect, facing the Qibla.

Takbir: Begin with the Takbir (saying “Allahu Akbar”).



Recitation of Al-Fatihah: Recite Al-Fatihah (the opening chapter of the Quran).

Ruku (Bowing): Bow down, saying “Subhana Rabbiyal Adheem” (Glory be to my Lord, the Almighty).



Sujud (Prostration): Prostrate, saying “Subhana Rabbiyal ala” (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High).



Tashahud (Sitting): Sit and recite the Tashahud (testimony of faith).



Salam: Conclude the prayer with the Salam (greeting of peace).



SALAH A GIFT FROM ALLAH

سبحانه و تعالى

Indeed, Salah (prayer) is considered a divine gift from Allah to the believers, bestowed during the miraculous event of Isra and Miraj. During the night of Isra and Miraj, Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was taken on a journey from Masjid Al Haram to Masjid Al Aqsa, and from there, he ascended to the heavens¹. This journey was filled with many significant events and divine encounters.

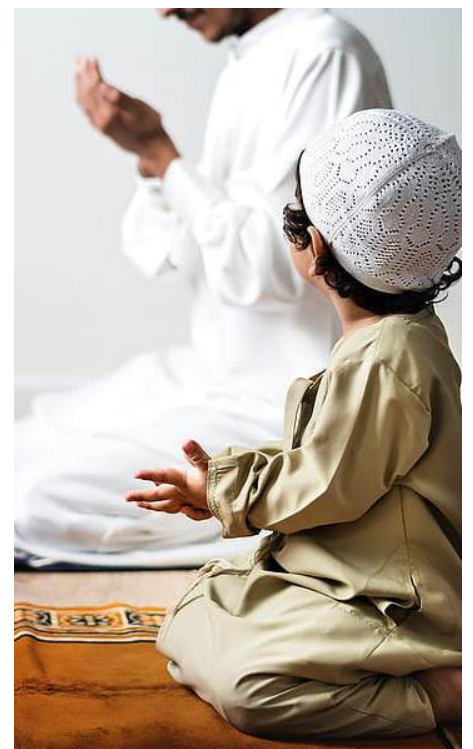
One of the most significant gifts given during this journey was the obligation of the five daily prayers (Salah). Initially, Allah made 50 prayers obligatory for the Prophet’s Ummah in one day and night. However, upon the advice of Prophet Musa (عليه السلام), Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم requested Allah to reduce the number of obligatory prayers¹. After several such requests, the number was finally reduced to five.

Despite this reduction, Allah سبحانه و تعالى promised that these five prayers would carry the reward of the original fifty. This means that each prayer is rewarded tenfold. This divine decree was a mercy from Allah سبحانه و تعالى, making it easier for the Ummah to fulfill their obligations.

Therefore, Salah is not just a ritual but a divine gift from Allah, providing believers with a direct link to communicate with Him. It serves as a means for spiritual purification, moral elevation, and a constant reminder of our purpose in life. It’s through Salah that believers can attain closeness to Allah سبحانه و تعالى and seek His mercy and blessings.

CONCLUSION

Salah is a fundamental pillar of Islam, serving as a constant reminder of the believer’s faith and submission to Allah سبحانه و تعالى. It is a spiritual practice that provides structure to the day, fostering discipline, mindfulness, and a sense of peace. Salah strengthens the bond between the believer and Allah, سبحانه و تعالى purifies the heart, and helps the believer avoid wrongdoing. It is not merely a ritual, but a comprehensive form of worship that encompasses all aspects of life. Through Salah, Muslims seek guidance, mercy, and the ultimate reward of Jannah (Paradise). It is a beautiful expression of faith, a daily commitment, and a journey of spiritual growth and self-improvement. Thus, the importance of Salah in a Muslim’s life cannot be overstated.





ZAKAAT:

The Neglected Pillar of Islam

Compiled by Ijlal Afif

Zakaat is the third pillar of Islam. It is an obligatory act of charity amounting to 2.5% of a Muslim's annual savings. Zakaat is intended to purify our wealth, not only physically, but also spiritually. It purifies our heart against selfishness as well as ensuring that society's poorest are protected against hunger and destitution.

There are a couple of misconceptions about Zakaat. This leads to many Muslims unknowingly neglecting one of the five pillars of Islam. Before getting into the details of how Zakaat is paid, it is important to understand the other acts of charity in Islam that are commonly confused with Zakaat.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ZAKAAT AND SADAQAH

Zakaat and **Sadaqah** are different forms of charity in Islam. Zakaat is a mandatory act that has specific requirements while Sadaqah is a voluntary act of charity that is highly encouraged and has no minimum level of specific period

of fulfilment. In essence, Zakaat is a type of Sadaqah, but Sadaqah does not automatically count as Zakaat.

Sadaqah also goes beyond giving charity to the poor or needy. All actions of righteousness in Islam are considered as Sadaqah. These include visiting the sick, attending a funeral, assisting someone in need (example helping an elderly person across the road), or saying a good word to someone.

Abu Dhar narrated that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Do not disdain a good deed, (no matter how small it may seem) even if it is your meeting with your brother with a cheerful face (smiling)." (Sahih Muslim).

Sadaqah Jaariyah refers to an ongoing charity which benefits both the recipient and the giver for years. For example, by planting an apple tree, that tree will grow and provide sustainable fruits for years to come, as well as shade for those that sit beneath it.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: Sadaqah Jariyah (a continuous charity), or knowledge from which benefit is gained, or a righteous child who prays for him'. (Sahih Muslim)



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ZAKAAT AND ZAKAAT-UL-FITR

Zakaat-ul-Fitr, also known **Fitra** or **Sadaqat-ul-Fitr**, is a contribution that Muslims give at the end of **Ramadh**aan before **Eid-ul-Fitr**. Zakaat-ul-Fitr is compulsory upon every self-supporting adult Muslim who has food in excess of their needs, on behalf of themselves and their dependants.

All Muslims must pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr regardless of their age or financial status (unless they honestly do not have the means to do so, as they could be eligible to receive Zakaat-ul-Fitr or Zakaat themselves).

"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordained Zakaat-ul-Fitr to purify the fasting person from indecent actions (committed during Ramadhaan), and to provide food for the needy. It is accepted as Zakaat-ul-Fitr for the person who gives it before the Eid prayer; but it is a mere Sadaqah for the one who gives it after the prayer." [Abu Dawud and Ibn

Majah]

The purpose of Zakaat-ul-Fitr is to provide assistance to the poor and needy at the time of Eid, and to promote a sense of community and equality among Muslims. The amount of Zakaat-ul-Fitr depends on the value of a specific amount of food, such as dates or grains. In the context of Seychelles, Zakaat-ul-Fitr is worked out to be equivalent to **2.5 kilograms of rice per person**.



THE RULES FOR CALCULATING AND PAYING ZAKAAT

The obligation of Zakaat itself (also known as Zakaat-ul-Maal) is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, emphasizing the responsibility of those with wealth to share it with those less fortunate. One's financial standing and assets primarily determine zakat obligation. Allah ﷻ says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

‘Establish prayer and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and bow down with those who bow down.’ (Qur'an 2:43)

A person must pay Zakaat if, firstly, they are an adult Muslim of sound mind, and secondly, they have possessed the minimum amount of wealth, known as **Nisaab**, for one lunar year. From this minimum threshold, **2.5%** is paid as Zakaat.

The Nisaab is set at the rate equivalent to 87.5 grams of gold or 612.4 grams of silver. Today, this is usually the equivalent value in your local currency. The value of gold and silver changes daily, so the Nisaab rate will constantly vary. In the context of Seychelles, the Nisaab equivalent is calculated to be **SCR 25,200*** at the time of writing; therefore the 2.5% of this threshold amount that is actually paid as Zakaat would be **SCR 630**.

Nisaab must be maintained for **one lunar year** for Zakaat to be required and must be paid as soon as it is due. Your Zakaat year therefore starts on the date your wealth first equalled or exceeded the Nisaab and should be calculated on that date for each subsequent year. For example if an individual currently possesses the nisaab amount in his savings at a given time, Zakaat will only be incumbent upon them if they manage to maintain this minimum threshold (nisaab) for one additional lunar year.

Zakaat is not just paid on the savings in your bank account. You need to pay Zakaat on other types of wealth, such as:

- Gold and silver
- Cash held at home or in bank accounts
- Stocks and shares owned either directly or through investment funds
- Money lent to others
- Business stock in trade and merchandise
- Agricultural produce
- Livestock animals such as cows, goats and sheep
- Pensions
- Property owned for investment purposes



WHO CAN RECEIVE ZAKAAT?

To be eligible to receive Zakaat, the recipient must be poor and/or needy. A poor person is someone whose property, in excess of his basic requirements, does not reach the Nisaab threshold. The recipient must not belong to your immediate family; your spouse, children, parents and grandparents cannot receive your Zakaat. Other relatives, however, can receive your Zakaat. This restriction intends to ensure that Zakaat fosters a sense of community and assists those not directly responsible for the individual giving Zakaat. It is a means of





strengthening the bonds between different Muslim community members.

Zakaat is typically distributed among eight distinct categories, as outlined in the Qur'an:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمَلِينَ
عَلَيْهَا وَالْمَوْلَفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ
وَالْغَرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْنَ السَّبِيلِ
فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

“The alms are only for the Fuqara (the poor), and Al-Masakin (the needy) and those employed to collect (the funds); and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free captives; and for those in debt; and for Allah's cause, and for the wayfarer (a traveller who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allah. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise.” (9:60)

1. The Poor (Al-Fuqara): Those who do not possess enough wealth to meet their basic needs.

2. The Needy (Al-Masakin): Individuals face financial hardship but have some resources that are insufficient to cover their necessities.

3. Those Employed to Administer Zakaat (Al-Aamileen): Individuals employed to collect, manage, and distribute Zakaat.

4. Those Whose Hearts are to be Reconciled (Al-Mu'allafat al-Quloob): Individuals who are inclined towards Islam or those whose hearts need to be softened towards the Muslim community.

5. Those in Bondage (slaves and captives) (Fir-Riqab): To help free individuals from slavery or captivity.

6. Debtors (Al-Gharimeen): Those in debt who cannot settle their debts with their current resources.

7. In the Cause of Allah (Fi Sabilillah): Individuals engaged in activities that benefit the broader Muslim community, such as scholars, educators, and those defending the Muslim community.

8. The Wayfarer (Ibn Sabil): Travellers or strangers who are in need while away from their homes.

pertaining to the importance of Zakaat.

1. Helps in Building the Society – The first benefit of Zakaat is that it helps those in the society who are less fortunate. If one class of society keeps on gathering all the money and does not provide anything to anyone else, then the rest would stay in the same plight and the society would be distributed in sections. Therefore, when the wealthy ones of the society give Zakaat, it means that the ones, who are non-wealthy, get a chance to enjoy a better lifestyle.

2. Circulation of Money – The second thing that Zakaat brings to the table pertaining to its being an obligation is the fact that it leads to the circulation of money. Zakaat is a form of charity and any charitable deed means that the money gets out of the hands of the wealthy. Thus, this way the money gets out of the circle of a few people and circulates in the whole economy.

3. Develops a Sense of Sacrificing – Zakaat gives and teaches the message of sacrifice. Wealth is perhaps one of the major elements which people love the most. Therefore, when a person gives from his or her wealth, it actually means that he or she loves the Order of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى more than their personal liking and they are willing to sacrifice the thing they love for the order of Allah the Magnificent.



THE IMPORTANCE OF ZAKAAT

Besides the fact that Zakaat is an obligation and fulfilment of it leads to a Muslim getting reward from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى there are other reasons which one can find



SHOULD I BE PAYING MY MISSED ZAKAAT?

It can be easy to forget to pay or to miscalculate our Zakaat or we may even be new to recognising this pillar of Islam. However, it's never

too late to pay off our Zakaat from previous years. Missed Zakaat would be calculated in the same way you calculate your current Zakaat - however, you would use the Nisaab from the missed Zakaat year, as opposed to the current Nisaab value.

May Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** guide us to pay our Zakaat correctly, and to provide to those who are in need in our community. May He bless us all with success in this world and in the hereafter, Aameen.

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** The Nisaab equivalent was calculated by obtaining the average buying price of 1 gram of gold (24 carat) at JPL Seychelles over a period of several months. Nisaab rates are subject to change.*

	ZAKAAT	ZAKAAT UL-FITR	SADAQAH
Meaning	Purification of wealth	Purification of breaking the fast	Charity given voluntarily
Purpose	Obligatory charity on accumulated wealth	Obligatory charity at the end of Ramadhan	Highly encouraged voluntary act of kindness
Payment	2.5% of one's wealth annually	2.5kg of food or its monetary value is given annually	A variety of actions that range from financial support to a simple smile
Eligibility	Applicable to Muslims who have accumulated wealth above the Nisaab (minimum threshold) amount for a full lunar year	Applicable to every Muslim who has food in excess of their needs at the end of Ramadan	Applicable to anyone according to their capacity of what they are able to give
Recipients	Eight distinct categories of people listed in the Qur'an	The poor and needy, are typically distributed to local communities or charitable organizations	Anyone is eligible to receive any act of Sadaqah, even if they are not a Muslim
Time	Any time during the year	During the month of Ramadan before the prayer of Eid ul-Fitr	Any time



SAWM

By Shahiíd Melanie

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, is a time of spiritual significance and communal bonding for Muslims worldwide. Lasting either 29 or 30 days, it is observed with rigorous fasting from dawn till sunset, abstaining from food, drink, and other physical needs. Beyond the physical act of fasting, Ramadan is a multifaceted journey encompassing self-discipline, spiritual reflection, and acts of charity.

At the heart of Ramadan lies fasting, known as "sawm" in Arabic. Muslims fast during daylight hours as a means of purifying the soul, practicing self-restraint, and empathizing with the less fortunate.

Fasting is not merely about abstaining from food and drink; it also involves controlling one's thoughts, speech, and actions. It serves as a reminder of the importance of spiritual nourishment and the short-lived nature of worldly desires.

Furthermore, Ramadan encourages a deep sense of compassion and empathy towards those who are less fortunate. Through fasting, Muslims are reminded of the hunger and thirst experienced

by millions around the world daily. This realization inspires acts of charity and generosity, with many Muslims engaging in philanthropic endeavors such as feeding the needy, supporting orphanages, and organizing community iftars (breaking of the fast meals).

In addition to fasting, Ramadan is a time for increased devotion and spiritual reflection. Muslims devote more time to prayer, recitation of the Quran, and engaging in acts of worship. The night prayers, known as Taraweeh, are particularly significant during this month. These prayers, performed in congregation at mosques and Islamic centers offer an opportunity for spiritual rejuvenation, seeking forgiveness and self-improvement.

Muslims reflect on their actions, seek forgiveness for past mistakes, and strive to become better individuals. It is a period for breaking bad habits, cultivating virtues such as patience and gratitude, and strengthening one's connection with Allah سبحانه و تعالی.

Ramadan is the time for strengthening bonds within the Muslim community. The daily ritual of breaking the fast,

known as iftar, is often shared with family, friends, and neighbors. These gatherings promote solidarity, unity, and a sense of belonging. It is a time for reconciliation, forgiveness, and fostering goodwill towards others.

Ramadan practices transcends cultural and geographical boundaries, uniting Muslims from diverse backgrounds in a shared spiritual experience. It is a time when mosques and Islamic centers are buzzing with activities, with worshippers coming together for prayers, Quranic recitation, and meals. The spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood prevails, as Muslims join hands to support one another in their spiritual journey.

In conclusion, Ramadan is much more than a month of fasting; it is a sacred journey of self-discovery, spiritual growth, and community solidarity. It is a time for deepening one's faith, cultivating virtues, and fostering compassion towards others. As Muslims embark on this spiritual odyssey each year, they are reminded of the timeless values of patience, empathy, and devotion that lie at the heart of Islam.



THE ORIGINS OF HAJJ

By Danielle Onezia

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam and considered as a profound spiritual experience and the most significant manifestation of Islamic faith and unity in the world. Every able-bodied Muslim must perform this pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime.

The Hajj pilgrimage takes place in Makkah, one of the holy sites in Islam and the birthplace of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Makkah is also the place where Prophet Muhammad ﷺ received the first revelation of the Qur'an.

The rituals of Hajj originated during the time of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام when, by Allah's command, Ibrahim عليه السلام left his wife and his son Ismail عليه السلام alone in the desert of Makkah with little food and water that they soon used up. Makkah was then an uninhabited place. In search of water, Ibrahim's wife, Hajar عليها السلام, desperately ran back and forth seven times between the two

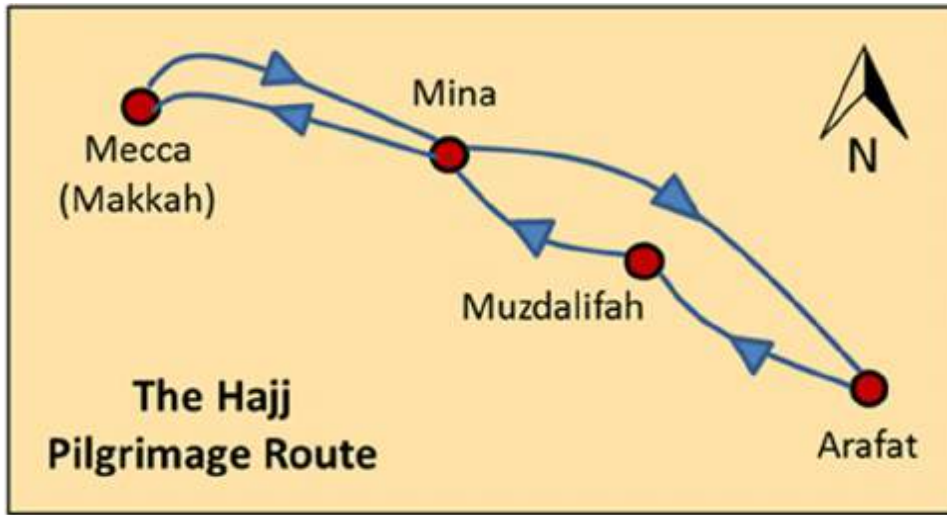
hills of Safa and Marwa but found none. Back in despair to Ismail, she saw the baby scratching the ground with his leg and a water fountain underneath, because of the water, tribes started to settle in Makkah. This is the well of Zam Zam, and it still flows to this day.

Prophets Ibrahim and Ismail عليه السلام thereafter built the Ka'bah. This cubic black silk-clad stone structure located at the heart of the Grand Mosque in Makkah (Masjid al-Haram) is considered the most

holy site in Islam and is where millions of Muslims gather to perform Hajj.

The existing methodology of Hajj was established by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the 10th year of Hijri. At the direction of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Abu Bakr led 300 Muslims to the pilgrimage in Makkah where Ali delivered a sermon stipulating the new rites of Hajj and abolishing the pagan rites. In the following year, shortly before his death,





Prophet Muhammad ﷺ performed Hajj with a large number of his followers, and taught them the rites of the Hajj and how it should be performed. In the plain of Arafat, he delivered a speech known as the farewell sermon. From then, Hajj became one of the five pillars of Islam.

Hajj lasts for 5 to 6 days depending on the sighting of the moon, it begins by purifying yourself to enter **Ihram** – a pilgrim's sacred state. This occurs when crossing the outer boundaries of Makkah, called **Meeqat**. To enter the state of ihram a Muslim must wear plain loose-fitting garments applicable for both men and women. Pilgrims then perform the **tawaf**, which means circling the Kaaba in an anti-clockwise direction seven times,

and **Sa'i**, which refers to running between the Safa and Marwa hills.

After that, the pilgrim travel by foot



on pilgrim paths or take a bus to journey to **Mina**, a tent city just outside Makkah. Pilgrims spend the day in Mina, setting out the next morning at dawn. Most of the time in Mina is spent in prayer and

remembrance to Allah. This concludes Day 1 of Hajj. Day 2, is referred to as the **Day of Arafat**, considered one of the most important days, not just of Hajj, but of the Islamic calendar. Pilgrims spend the day at Mount Arafat in prayer, where Prophet Muhammad ﷺ delivered his last sermon. This is known as Wuquf – the act of standing before Allah سبحانه و تعالى from noon to sunset. For the Muslims around the world not performing Hajj, it is highly recommended to fast on this day.



After the sun sets, the pilgrims move to **Muzdalifah** to spend the night under the stars. Pilgrims take this time to collect 49 pebbles for the next day's rites, for which they will depart again just before sunrise. On Day 3 of Hajj pilgrims celebrate **Eid al-Adha**, a day celebrated around the world and known as the greater of the two Muslim holidays. On this day Muslims should also sacrifice an animal, known as nahr. A camel or a lamb is most suitable and the meat should be distributed to the needy.

Leaving Muzdalifah, Muslims return to Mina before dawn to perform the first rite referred to as **Rami**, throwing seven pebbles at the largest of three columns known as Jamarat al-Aqaba. This act is a symbolic stoning of the devil, based on historical tradition, Muslims believe that Allah سبحانه و



صلى الله عليه وسلم told Ibrahim عليه السلام to sacrifice his son as proof of his faith. At this location in Mina, Shaitaan appeared and tried to dissuade Ibrahim عليه السلام from following Allah's command; Ibrahim عليه السلام responded by throwing stones to chase him away.



The act of throwing stones is repeated for the next two days, pelting the three pillars using seven pebbles each in order by starting

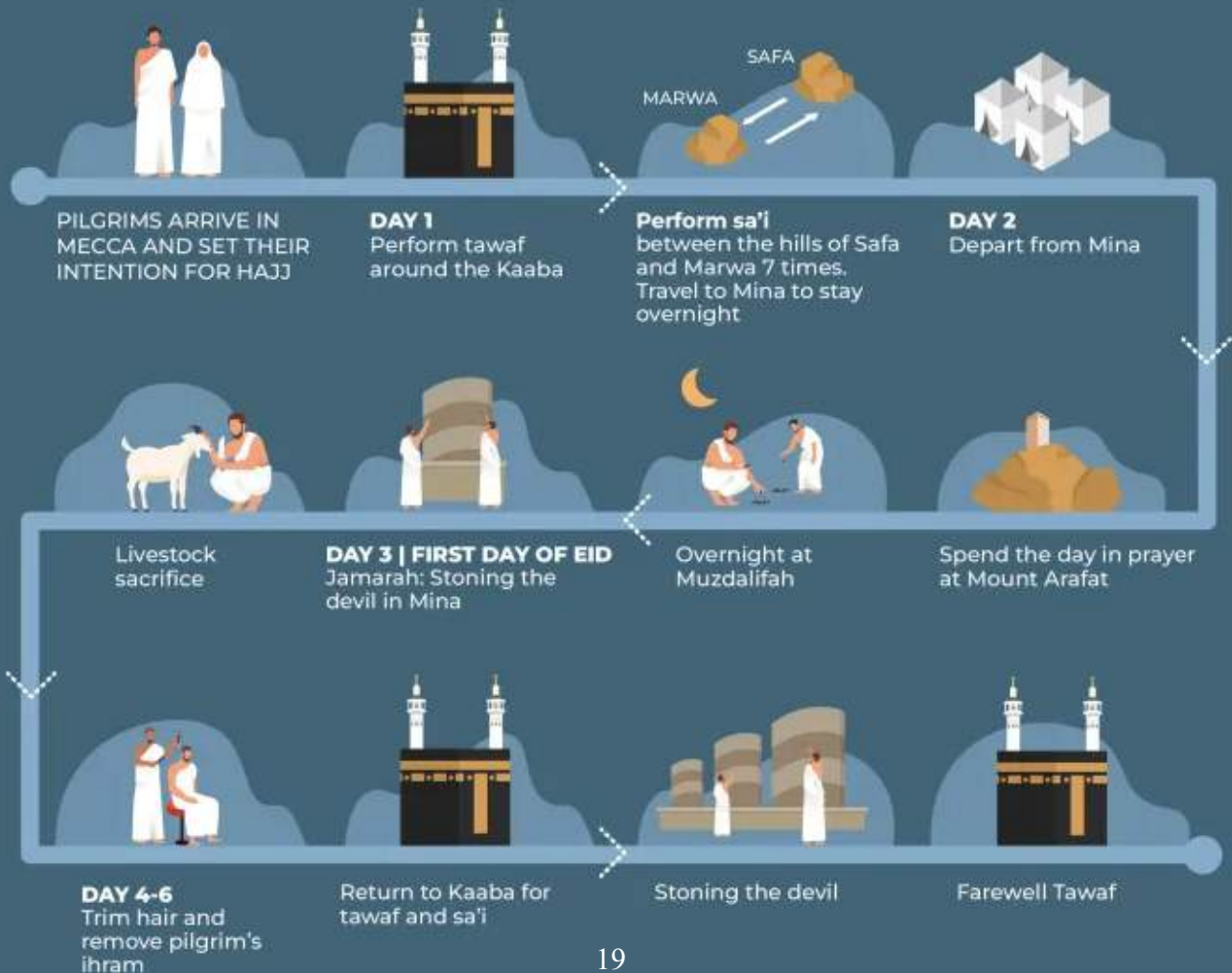
with **Jamarat al Ula** (the small pillar), then **Jamarat al-Wusta** (the middle pillar) and finally **Jamarat al-Aqaba** (the largest pillar). This thus completes day 4 and 5 of the Hajj pilgrimage.

Upon completion of rami, on the 12th day of Dhul-Hijjah, the men shave their heads and women can trim their hair by the length of a fingertip, this is referred to as the **Halq** for men and **Taqsir** for women. Pilgrims can now discard their ihram clothes - many choose to proceed to Makkah to perform Tawaf and Sa'i again. When that is done, they return to their campsite in Mina, this marks the completion of Hajj.

Many pilgrims also visit Madinah, the second holiest city in Islam during this time. Madinah, though not part of the pilgrimage, is where

Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is buried with his closest companions.

There is great spiritual and historical importance to performing Hajj. It is the surest way to keep your faith and connect with Allah سبحانه وتعالى. The reward of an accepted Hajj is all of one's sins will be wiped away, and one's book of deeds will be blank as the day they were born. Millions of Muslims from around the world unite together in peaceful gatherings to perform this pilgrimage, teaching us patience, self-restraint and endurance and it is evidence that through faith anything can be endured. We pray that Allah accepts the Hajj of those that receive the opportunity to perform it, and that we are given the opportunity to fulfill this pillar of Islam, Aameen.



Developments from the National Muslim Council of Seychelles

The **National Muslim Council of Seychelles** (NMCS) functions as the primary authority overseeing vital national affairs for Seychelles' Muslim community. Its mandate revolves around fulfilling crucial obligations (Fard e Kifayah), including Janazah prayer and burial arrangements, organising Eid prayers, and promoting Halal awareness alongside religious education. NMCS prioritises initiatives aimed at upholding religious traditions, fostering community cohesion, promoting unity, and strengthening cultural bonds.

NMCS extends appreciation to sponsors who made available Ramadan Iftar nationally, a unifying event bringing together Seychellois Muslims and individuals from diverse backgrounds in a show of solidarity. Esteemed Imams from Libya, Tanzania and South Africa were present to lead Tawaveeh prayers at various Masjids, enriching the spiritual experience and nurturing stronger cultural connections with the various countries.

Collaborating with the National Sports Council of Seychelles (NSC), NMCS facilitates gatherings in various open-air locations across the country, acknowledging the NSC's provision of spaces for the Seychelles Muslim community to convene for prayers.

Despite financial challenges for Eid festivities, NMCS remains steadfast in fostering community spirit and exploring future events, such as the Eid Fiesta, which will particularly be beneficial for young Muslim families and children.

NMCS closely collaborates with SeyHa, Seychelles' sole Halal body, to raise awareness and educate Muslims and food suppliers, ensuring the availability of genuine Halal products for consumption.

Moreover, NMCS has initiated efforts to secure Seychelles' Hajj quota in partnership with Saudi Arabian authorities, aiming to streamline the pilgrimage process and enable Seychellois individuals to undertake Hajj at their discretion.

In essence, NMCS serves as a beacon of Islamic unity and integrity in Seychelles, addressing critical issues such as community engagement, religious education, social welfare initiatives, and interfaith dialogue. Through improvements in organisational structure, governance, and impact within Seychelles, NMCS exhibits unwavering dedication to effectively serving the community's needs and advancing its objectives.



The Islamic Society of Seychelles is an active member of NMCS, working for the betterment of Muslim affairs on a national level.

Activities of The Islamic Society of Seychelles



HAJJ GROUP 2023/1444 AH **Tuesday 20th June to 5th July 2023**

Through invitation by the United Arab Emirates via the National Muslim Council of Seychelles (NMCS), a group of 25 Seychellois were given the opportunity to perform Hajj last year. NMCS liaised with both the Islamic Society of Seychelles (ISOS) and the Quran Sunnah Society (QSS) to prepare selected individuals for the blessed journey. The groups were led by Imam Idris Yusuf, Imam Abdu-Rahman Heneka, and Sheikh Abu Anas Servina. May Allah accept the Hajj of all those that took part in performing the 5th pillar of Islam.



For this year's Hajj season of 2024, NMCS has once again received Hajj invitations through UAE. NMCS continues in its efforts for Seychelles to secure its own independent Hajj quotas which may soon be a reality in the coming years, in sha Allah.

EID-UL-ADHA PRAYERS **Wednesday 28th June 2023**

The National Muslim Council of Seychelles organised Eid prayers that were held across several locations on Mahe, Praslin, and La Digue.

MADRASAH TEACHERS EDUCATIONAL RETREAT

Tuesday 15th August 2023

The Daarul Eemaan Madrasah staff attended a retreat at L'Escale Resort. The aim of the event was to strategize their teaching plans for the Madrasah, and to participate in team building activities. One of the highlights of the event was a live interaction with Dr Bilal Philips conducted via online video conference; Dr Bilal Philips delivered a talk on teaching methods, and gave advice on how to improve the Madrasah teaching standards. Other members of the ISOS Executive Committee and subcommittees were also in attendance.



ISOS Annual General Meeting 2023

Sunday 29th October 2023

The Islamic Society of Seychelles held its 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) at Masjid Shiekh Muhammad Bin Khalifah Al-Nahyan (Victoria). The Executive Committee presented updates for the past year to the paying members in attendance.

During elections that were held during the AGM, the following persons were elected to the Society's Executive Committee for the period 2023 to 2026: Mr Imtiaz Umarji (President); Mr Vali Ismael Chaka (Vice-President); Mr Ijlal Afif (Secretary); Mrs Aneesa Toorawa (Treasurer); Mr Abdu-Rahman Heneka (Member); Mr Ma'ruf Bastienne (Member); Mr Abdullah Bastienne (Member). The outgoing Executive Committee members were thanked for their sacrifices, contributions and efforts over the past few years - may Allah reward them all abundantly, Ameen.



MADRASAH FUN DAY **Sunday 31st December 2023**

Prior to the beginning of the 2024 academic year, the Daar-ul-Eemaan Madrasah organized a 'Fun Day' on Sunday 31st December 2023 for its students. The students spent the day entertained by a variety of outdoor activities, while being chaperoned by their teachers. The activity was spearheaded by the Madrasah Parents-Teachers Committee.



MADRASAH 2024 INDUCTION **Saturday 20th and 21st January 2024**

The Daarul Eeman Madrasah commenced its academic year for 2024. New students at entry and lower levels attended their first day of classes on Saturday 20th January. All returning students in higher students resumed their classes on Sunday 21st January. A total of 122 students were registered for the start of the new term.



MADRASAH AWARD CEREMONY Sunday 28th January 2024

To recognise and reward student performance during the academic year of 2023, the Daarul Eeman Madrasah organised an award ceremony in the presence of parents, teachers, and invited guests. Students were presented certificates for those that excelled in various categories such as best behaviour, best attendance, and best performance. As a special appreciation, the teachers were presented with certificates and tokens to recognise their efforts at the Madrasah, including two teachers that earned long-service awards.



Tokens of recognition were also awarded to Mr Mahmad Ally Sheik Rawa and Mrs Rookshana Bibi Rawa - the Mauritian couple that were providing Madrasah consultancy services for the past year. Mr and Mrs Rawa returned to Mauritius in February 2024 at the end of their contract with ISOS. The Daarul Eeman Madrasah thanks them abundantly for their service provided during their stay in Seychelles.



TARBIYAH PROGRAM Saturday 17th February to Sunday 18th February 2024

The Education & Dawah sub-committee organised a tarbiyah program at the Masjid, with the theme of Preparation for the month of Ramadhaan.



TALK ON WOMEN'S HEALTH – MENOPAUSE **Saturday 24th Febraury 2024**

A lecture session in collaboration with An Nisaii Association was held at the Masjid. A guest speaker, Mrs Nounie Daman – a professional mid-wife, was invited to give a talk on the subject menopause and women's health.

PRE-RAMADHAAN PRAYER HALL CLEANING **Saturday 9th March 2023**

Ahead of the Holy month of Ramadhaan, the Ladies League organised a special cleaning of the Ladies Prayer Hall to ensure a conducive environment for ibaadat in the blessed month.

RAMADHAAN OPERATIONS **Tuesday 12th March 2023 – Tuesday 9th April 2023**

Throughout the month of Ramadhaan, Iftar and dinner were served at Masjid Sheikh Muhammad Bin Khalifah Al-Nahyan (Victoria). The meals were generously donated by the UAE Embassy, and were also distributed at other Islamic Centres in Seychelles as well (namely Quran and Sunnah Society, Islamic Foundation of Seychelles Au Cap & Praslin). A team of youngsters were present every evening to facilitate Iftar logistics and other preparations – the team were part of the Youth Mentoring Program organised the by Education & Dawah subcommittee.



Cartons of dates were regularly distributed to the Musallis throughout the holy month, particularly after Jumu'ah prayer. These were donated by the UAE Embassy, and from Sheikh Suroor Bin Mohammad Bin Khalifah.



Taraweeh prayers were led by two Libyan Imams - Sheikh Mussa Salem Hamd Mohamed and Sheikh Mohammed Alnafati Abdullah Meelad. Both Imams were presented with a certificate of appreciation at the end of Ramadhaan. During the last 10 days of Ramadhaan, Qari Ziyaad Patel of South Africa was also present to lead the salaah.



EID-UL-FITR PRAYERS 1445 **Wednesday 10th April 2024**

The National Muslim Council of Seychelles organised Eid prayers that were held across several locations on Mahe, Praslin, and La Digue.



IQRA' ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION – PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY **Sunday 21st April 2024**

The IQRA' Editorial Team held a prize giving ceremony for individuals that took part in the IQRA Essay Writing Competition. The competition was launched in January 2024, and is the 3rd iteration organised by the current IQRA' team.

Of the age group of 13 to 17 years, **Sister Amirah Lebon** achieved first place; **Sister Hind Fawzi** earned second place. Of the age group of 18 to 25 years, **Br Ashim Bresson** was the winner by default being the only eligible participant for his respective category.

The ceremony was conducted at an assembly of the Daarul Eeman Madrasah to inspire the students to partake in future competitions. An Eid lunch was held after the ceremony for all in attendance. The winning articles of each category are featured in this Annual Magazine (*see pages 29 to 31*).



TALK ON MEN'S HEALTH – PROSTATE CANCER AND CIRCUMCISION **Saturday 18th May 2024**

A talk on Prostate Cancer and the Indications of Circumcision was delivered by Dr Joshua Gopal at the Masjid. Gents and ladies in attendance were given the opportunity to ask pertinent questions on the subject matter and gained valuable insight from Dr Gopal, who is a urologist working at the Seychelles Hospital. The event was organised by Sister Nazreen Alibhaye in conjunction with the Education & Dawah subcommittee.



IQRA' PUBLICATIONS

The IQRA Editorial Team published the following newsletters throughout the Hijri year 1445:

- Preparing for Ramadhan (February 2024)
- Palestine (March 2024)



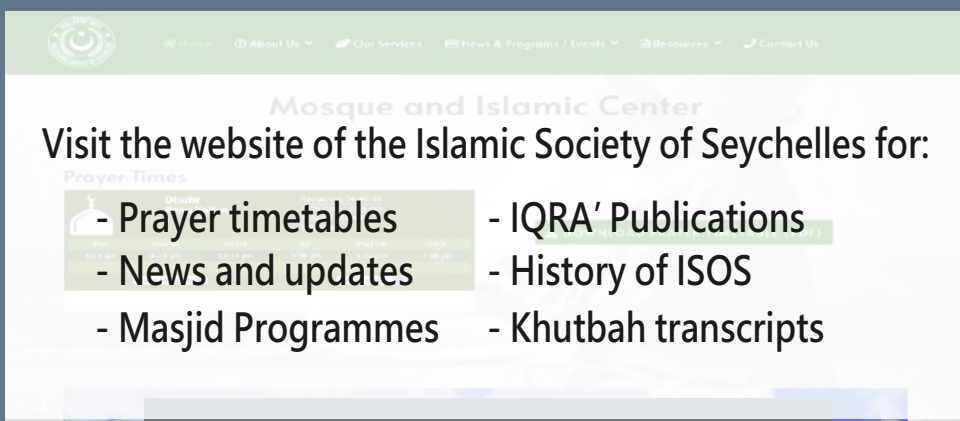
A third newsletter on the topic of Dhul Hijjah is in production at the time of writing, and is to be released prior to the start of the month of Dhul Hijjah.

In addition, the IQRA' team launched the website of the Islamic Society of Seychelles (www.isoseychelles.org) on Friday 24th May 2024. The website itself was developed by Br Idris Afif. **All recent IQRA' publications are available in digital format on the website.**

WE'VE LAUNCHED OUR WEBSITE



www.isoseychelles.org



IQRA' held its third Essay Writing Competition since 2019. For the year 2024, different age categories were setup for varying essay titles. The articles that follow feature the winning essay for its respective age category.

IQRA' Essay Competition Age Category: 13 to 17 years

The Quran and its Blessings

Winner: Amira Lebon

The Quran was revealed to the last Prophet Muhammad ﷺ over 1,400 years ago, as a guidance to mankind to the right path and warning for those who stray. Its purpose in the daily lives of Muslims is crucial.

Muslims worldwide are continuously upholding the practices of the Holy Quran either through memorization, recitation, healing purposes, and even in giving out lessons. Furthermore it is often read by people of other faiths when they are planning to consider reverting to the peaceful religion of Islam.

Moreover, for people who read the Quran with understanding of its meaning, they follow the righteous path and will be successful in this life and the hereafter. Allah tells us that the Quran is a medicine to our hearts. It brings peace to our soul sometimes stressful and troubled mind when we listen or recite the words of Allah. It protects us from the constant whisperings of shaitan and keeping the words of Allah alive in our homes and keeps the bad jinns away.

When reciting the Quran we should be in a state of humbleness and have the certainty that Allah the Almighty is aware of everything we do and He knows best of our intentions.

In surah Al-Hash [59:21] 2 Allah says

“Had we not sent down this Quran on a mountain, you would surely have seen it humbling itself and rending a sunder by the fear of Allah. Such are the parables which we put forward to mankind that they may reflect”

The Quran not only humble us and increase our piety for none other than Allah the almighty however, it changes our lifestyle in such a way that we would always want to please our creator so that He may shower us with an abundance of mercy that we might eternally abide in paradise.

Furthermore, when such closeness is gained towards the Almighty we believers find the need to prostrate

during the night and perform Qiyaam-Al-Layl (night prayers before fajr).

It is stated in the hadeeth narrated by 'Abd-Allah ibn and 'Amr' ibn al - A'as (may Allah be pleased with them both) in which the prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessing be upon him) said:

"Whoever recites ten aayat (verses) in qiyaam will not be recorded as one of the forgetful. Whoever recites a hundred aayat in qiyaam will be recorded as one of the devout, and whoever prays a thousand aayat (verses) in qiyaam will be recorded as one of the muqantareen(those who pile up good deeds)."

The above paragraph not only shows us the blessing of which Allah has favoured us with but it also makes us understand and ponder about the fact that certain people would rather sacrifice their sleep to perform good deeds as they should always be thankful to their Creator.

It should be pointed out that attaining the blessing of the Quran should be done not just in the month of Ramadan, the month of fasting as we should always be on the righteous path as we know not our time of death.

Allah Almighty says in the Quran:

"The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong)"[Quran al - Baqarah 2:185]

Furthermore, It is also reported that in Al Bukhaari 5; Muslim 4268:

Angel jibreel used to come to the Prophet (may peace and blessing be upon him) every night in Ramadaan and study the Quran with him hence the salaf used to read the Quran a great deal during Ramadan, following the example of the prophet (May peace and blessings be upon him)

Additionally, majority of the people in this world reading the Quran does not know how to read Arabic thus they have to start from the beginning and learn Arabic which can take a couple of years to reach reading the Holy book.

In Al-Bukhaari and Muslim it is said that:

"Verily the one who recites the Quran beautifully, smoothly and precisely he will be in the company of the noble and obedient angels. And as for those who recites with difficulty, stammering or stumbling through its verses, then he will have Twice that reward."

This shows us that Allah grants ease for his or her servants as our Creator does not burden a soul for more that it can bear. Consequently, whoever read a letter from the book of Allah, he will have a reward and that reward will be multiplied by ten. **I am not saying that "Alif, Laam, Meem" is a letter, rather i am saying that "Alif" is a letter "Laam" is a letter and "meem" is a letter. So increase your recitation of the Quran to gain these merits [At-Thirmittee]**

To conclude, for those who reject the Quran and signs of Allah and become among those of ignorance will surely go to hellfire thus, in an authentic hadith found in At Tabaraanee, on the authority of Abduaah Ibn Mas'ood said that

"the Quran is an intercessor, which means something given permission to intervened, and it is rightfully believed in whoever put it in front of him, it will lead him to paradise; whoever puts it behind him, it will steer him to

the hellfire".

Moreover, the Prophet (may peace and blessing be upon him) said that there is such a soorah that its thirty verses will intercede for us on the day of judgment until we will be forgiven. The name of this beautiful surah is called surah Mulk and it is very important that we try to learn it to the best of our abilities.

Finally, living in such a world whereby humans are easily deluded by this worldly life we should not put the Quran aside for worldly trivial matters as a Muslim status is raised by the Quran - the more he recites, follows its commandment and makes Quran part of his or her life, the more Allah will elevate his or her status in this life and hereafter.



IQRA' Essay Competition Age Category: 18 to 15 years

Cultivating Taqwa

Winner: Ashim Bresson



“And if the people of the towns believed and had Taqwa, certainly We should have opened for them blessings from the heavens and the earth.” (Quran, 7:96) Salvation from the Fire: Allah says that: “Then We will save the ones who had taqwa”(Quran, 19:72).

Taqwa, an essential concept in Islam, refers to the state of having a heightened awareness and consciousness of Allah in all aspects of life. It involves having fear, reverence, and love for the Almighty, and striving to act in accordance with His commands.

As a devout Muslim and a Seychellois, cultivating my taqwa is of utmost importance to me. Despite living in a predominantly Christian community, I have found unique opportunities to nurture my faith and strengthen my taqwa as a Seychellois.

Living in the Seychelles, a breathtaking island nation with diverse natural beauty, I am constantly reminded of the magnificence and power of Allah's creations. The turquoise blue waters, palm-fringed beaches, and lush greenery surrounding me serve as a constant reminder of His bounties. In the midst of this natural paradise, I am filled with awe and gratitude for the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon us. Reflecting on the beauty and abundance of nature helps me recognize His presence and strengthens my taqwa.

Additionally, Seychelles has a rich cultural and religious diversity that has allowed me to interact with people from different faiths and backgrounds. This diversity has shaped me into a more understanding and tolerant individual, reinforcing the importance of respect and acceptance in my practice of taqwa. The spirit of unity and harmony in our society encourages me to uphold the values of compassion and justice, which align with the principles of Islam.

Although Islam is a minority religion in Seychelles, the local Muslim community has worked diligently to establish mosques and Islamic organizations that play a vital role in nurturing our faith. The mosques serve not only as places of worship but also as centers for learning and spiritual growth. Attending congregational prayers and engaging in religious activities at these mosques, surrounded by fellow Muslims, strengthens the bonds of brotherhood and fosters a sense of community. This sense of belonging and the support of fellow worshippers motivate and inspire me to deepen my understanding of Islam and strive for greater taqwa.

The guidance and teachings of knowledgeable imams also contribute significantly to cultivating my taqwa. Their sermons and lectures provide valuable insights into the principles and practices of Islam,

reminding me of my duty to Allah and the importance of staying on the righteous path. These learned individuals serve as a source of inspiration and encouragement, guiding us to strive for spiritual excellence and reminding us of the essential attributes of taqwa.

In conclusion cultivating taqwa is a deeply personal and meaningful journey. Despite being a minority within my community, the natural beauty of the Seychelles; the cultural diversity; the harmony among different faiths; and the presence of mosques and scholars have all contributed to my spiritual growth. By recognizing Allah's presence in the breathtaking landscapes, interacting with people of different faiths, and seeking knowledge from religious scholars, we must continuously striving to strengthen my taqwa and lead a life in accordance with the teachings of Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam.



REPENTANCE

By Na'eemah Pillay

The Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم said "All the sons of Adam are sinners, but the best of sinners are those who repent often." Related by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

We're taught that our final destination relies greatly on the actions that we do in this life. For the believers who honour their parents, live in obedience, do good deeds and take care of the needy and the orphans, jannah (heaven) is attainable. Does that ultimately imply that whoever engages in wrongful acts are destined to go to jahannam (hell)?

A crucial aspect of the faith of Islam is the act of tawbah (repentance). Unlike the Angels, Allah سبحانه وتعالى created human beings with free will, the ability for them to make their own decisions. With this ability, the possibility of making the wrong or right decision is always balanced out, 50 50. The teachings of the Qu'ran and Sunnah act as a moral compass, instructing us of the correct ways of handling the tests that we're put through in this life.

However, for whatever reason, despite the guidance given, we sometimes succumb to temptations and

partake in the wrong actions. It can be easy to let ourselves believe that there is no possibility of regaining ourselves after we have sinned. But Allah سبحانه وتعالى, with all of his mercy, never leaves us without a solution for the troubles of life. He gave us a remedy to cleanse the negative effects of transgression - repentance.

Guilt is a feeling that gets lodged into our hearts after sinning. It can also come when you feel like you are not doing enough. Not praying enough, doing the absolute minimum, not putting enough effort to be a better Muslim. The bittersweetness of such an aching feeling is that guilt is also a sign of imaan (faith). Acknowledging that you are in the wrong and feeling remorse for it is the first step to making amends with Allah سبحانه وتعالى.

Whatever actions we take to ask for forgiveness for our wrongdoings must be founded on sincerity. Without it, our efforts would be in vain. To ask for forgiveness, salaah al-Tawbah can be performed. While it is not an obligation to do so, it is highly encouraged.

It has been reported that Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said

"There is no one who commits a sin, then purifies himself and stands in salah and offers two raka'at and seeks forgiveness, except that Allah will forgive him."

Therefore, to perform salaah al-tawbah one must;

- Perform ablution (wudhu)
- Make the intention to pray salaah al-Tawbah.
- Pray 2 raka'ats and ask Allah سبحانه وتعالى for forgiveness for the sin committed.

Asking for forgiveness is not limited to performing salat al-tawbah. Making sincere dua is also viable.

A crucial part of repentance that is sometimes overlooked is the fact that, while asking for forgiveness, one must be adamant in never committing the sin again. While it may be easy to fall into old patterns and habits, a person must not let that be an excuse that he believes will rationalise his persistence in committing the sin.

In Surah An-Nisa, verse 110, it states:

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝ ١١٠

Whoever commits evil or

wrongs themselves then seeks Allah's forgiveness will certainly find Allah All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Repentance is a gift given to mankind from Allah سبحانه و تعالى. He is aware that He

created humans imperfect, bound to make mistakes and fall into sin. For that exact reason, he also gave us a way out of the darkness. The attitude that we should have after sinning is being aware that we need to turn back to our Creator. However

miniscule or grand the sin may be, it is never out of the reach of the mercy of Allah سبحانه و تعالى. Indeed, Allah loves those who repent.

The War in Palestine

By Yusuf Suleman

The ongoing clash between Israel and the Palestinians has been going on for decades, and it is seen to be a very complex issue. However, the conflict must be looked at from three angles:

1. It is NOT a war between Jews and Muslims but rather between two belligerent groups i.e. Hamas and Zionists.
2. The Palestinian people have always been under occupation by the Zionists and now with a totally far-right government in Israel, matters have become even more intolerable.
3. Most present-day Israelis are not indigenous to Israel. They are descendants of European Jews who suffered the holocaust of Hitler whereas most of the Palestinian people can trace their origins to Palestine from centuries ago.

In response to the recent retaliations by Hamas on 7th October 2023, the actions being taken by the Israeli government are now being seen as far too excessive and beyond human comprehension. Unfortunately, in these indiscriminate attacks on the Palestinians, it is the innocent civilians especially defenceless women and children who pay the heaviest price!

Eighty years ago, Hitler and his Nazi gang committed acts of genocide on the European Jews. The Allied forces made up of the USA, UK and some European nations allied together to exterminate Hitler and the Nazis. Today, history is repeating itself in that the Zionists are committing the same kind of genocide against the innocent Palestinian people while the same Western powers made up of USA, UK and European Union are giving their FULL support and blessings to these Zionists to commit these same acts of genocide! How does one explain that?

Even the International Court of Justice has ruled that Israel must limit their attacks against innocent civilians and allow humanitarian aid to reach them, yet, the Israeli government turns a blind eye and deaf ear knowing that nobody will be able to stop them! Even many Muslim nations are voiceless! Are we really living in the 21st century where people are expected to be more educated, sophisticated, civilised, compassionate, and tolerant? It is indeed a very sad situation that the Palestinians are facing. Allah سبحانه و تعالى knows best.

We make duas and beg Almighty Allah to relieve the Palestinians from such cruelty and sufferings, and to clear the path for them to Jannah, Ameen.

The Books of Revelation

By Arfan Ali-Jinna and Faaris Ernesta

Believing in the heavenly books is one of the pillars of the Islamic creed. Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ءَامِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي
أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ
وُرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا

“O you who believe! Believe in Allah, and his Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) and the Book (the Qur'an) which he has sent to His Messenger and the Scripture which He sent down to those before (him), and whosoever disbelieves in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. And on the last Day, then indeed he has strayed far away.” (An-Nisa 4:136).

When Jibreel (عليه السلام) (descended as a man) and asked Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) about the pillars of imaan, the Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

“It is to believe in Allah, His angles, His books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in divine destiny be it good or bad.” Reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

So it is important for the Muslims to believe and know about the Books that were revealed.

These books are as follows:

The first holy book was given to Ibrahim (عليه السلام). Known as Suhuf (scrolls of Abraham), it is now lost. The Qur'an mentions it several times, for example in (Qur'an 87:18-19), the Scriptures of Abraham, as Allah ﷻ says:

(صُحُفَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى)

“The Scriptures of Ibrahim (عليه السلام) (Abraham) and Musa (عليه السلام) (Moses).” (Al-A'Ala 87:19).

The Tawrat (the Torah) was revealed to Musa (عليه السلام), it's the main Jewish holy book. Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا
النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبِّيُّونَ
وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا
عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ ۚ فَلَا تَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ وَأَخْشَوْنَ اللَّهَ
تَشْتَرُوا بِإِيمَانِكُمْ قَلِيلًا ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا
أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

“Lo! We did reveal the Torah wherein is guidance and a light, by which the prophets who surrendered(unto Allah) judged

the Jews, and the rabbis and the priests (judged) by such of Allah's Scripture as they were bidden to observe, and the thereunto were they witnesses. So fear not mankind. But fear me and my revelations for a little gain. Whoso judgeth not by that which Allah hath revealed: such are disbelievers. (Al-Ma'idah 5:44).

The Qur'an says it contains the “judgment of Allah” (Qur'an 5:43)

The Zabur revealed to Dawud (عليه السلام) (David) as Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ
مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ
وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ ۚ وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا

'And to Dawud (عليه السلام) (David) we gave the Zabur (Psalms).’ (An-Nisa 4:163) but many Muslims believe that the original has been corrupted, perhaps beyond recognition.

The Injeel (The Gospel) revealed to Isa (عليه السلام) as Allah ﷻ says:

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ عَائِلِهِمْ بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا
لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ ۚ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ
هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ
وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

“And in the footsteps, we sent Isa (عليه السلام) (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), confirming the Tawrat(Torah) that had come before him, and we gave him the Injeel(Gospel) in which was guidance and light...”
(Al-Ma'idah 5:46).

ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ عَائِثِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَىٰ
ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَعَزَّيْنَاهُ الْإِنجِيلَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي
قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً وَرَهَابَانِيَّةً
ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ
رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا فَآتَيْنَا
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ
فَاسِقُونَ

“Then we caused Our messengers to follow in their footsteps; and we caused Jesus (عليه السلام), son of Mary, to follow, and gave him the Gospel, and placed compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him, but monasticism they invented- we ordained it not for them -only seeking Allah's pleasure, and they observed it not with right observance. So we give those of them who believe their reward, but many of them are evil-doers.”(Al-Hadid 57:27).

The Pages (scripture) revealed to Musa (عليه السلام) as Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:
أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبِّأْ بِمَا فِي صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ

“Or is he not informed with what is in the Pages (Scripture) of Musa (عليه السلام).”(An-Najm 53:36) some of the interpreters of the Qur'an said that the pages of Moses are in the Torah.

The Qur'an, which is the Last and Greatest of the heavenly Books

which abrogated all previous books. It was revealed to the greatest Prophet Muhammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) remained in Mecca for thirteen years, during which the Qur'an used to be revealed to him; and he stayed in Medina for ten years (Narrated by Aisha رضي الله عنها and Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه). It was sent down on the sacred Month of Ramadhan.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى
لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ

“Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and Judgement (between right and wrong)” (Al-Baqarah 2:185).

Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ تَنْزِيلًا

Verily! It is We Who sent down the Qur'an to you (O Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) by stages.”(Al Insan 76:23.).

The Qur'an is the word of Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. It is the most important holy book. It's a complete and accurate record of Allah's exact words to Muhammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), as Qur'an (An-Najm: 10-11) describes:

“He revealed to his Servant what he revealed. The Prophet's (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (mind and) and heart in no way falsified that which he saw.”

The Qur'an allows mankind to know Allah. In the Qur'an, Allah tells Muslim what they need to know and how to lead their lives to

please him. Muslim try to live according to its guidance. This helps them be awarded by Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and to get Paradise (Jannah).

The Qur'an has a universal applicability. This means that its teachings are suitable and useful everywhere in the world and at all times. Its text is incorruptible because Almighty Allah has taken it upon Himself to protect it. The Qur'an says,

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

“Indeed, we have sent the reminder (i. e. The Qur'an), and We will assuredly guard it.” (Al-Hijr, 15:9).

Narrated by Abu Huraira رضي الله عنه: The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

“Every Prophet was given miracles because of which people believed, but what I have been given, is Divine Inspiration which Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has revealed to me. So I hope that my followers will outnumber the followers of the other Prophets on the Day of Resurrection.”(Volume 6, Book 61, Number 504)

The Value of PARENTS IN ISLAM

BY RAMLAH HENKA

In Islam the importance of treating one's parents with love, respect, and kindness are expressed greatly in the holy Quran and Hadith. Doing right by one's parents is not only a moral and ethical duty but also a means to attain righteousness and blessings in this world and the Hereafter. In fact, parents have the next highest status after Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and his prophets. As children we can never repay our parents for all their time and effort except by showing gratitude and kindness.

وَقَضَىٰ رَبِّيَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ
وَالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ
أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفْ وَلَا
تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ٢٣

وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذَّلِيلِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ
وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا ٢٤

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one or both of them attain old age in your care, never say to them even ‘ugh,’ nor yell at them. Rather, address them respectfully. And lower unto them wing of submission and humility through mercy and say ‘My Lord! Bestow on them your mercy as they did bring me up when I was small’” (Surah Al-Isra: 17:23-24)

The ultimate reward for honoring one's parents is not limited to this world; it extends to the Hereafter. The Prophet Muhammad **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** spoke of the benefits of fulfilling the rights of parents, including a higher status in paradise and Allah's pleasure. Disobedience or mistreatment of parents is considered a grave sin in Islam. On the Day of Resurrection, Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** will turn away from those who cause their parents to weep, identifying them as among the three whom He will not look upon favorably.

“There are three at whom Allah will not look on the Day of Resurrection: The one who disobeys his parents, the woman who imitates men in her outward appearance, and the cuckold. And there are three who will not enter Paradise: The one who disobeys his parents, the drunkard, and the one who reminds people of what he has given them.” (An-Nasai: 2562)

The promise of obeying one's parents has been articulated in

another hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas: “If any Muslim obeys Allah regarding his parents, Allah will open two gates of the Garden for him. If there is only one parent, then one gate will be opened. If one of them is angry, then Allah will not be pleased with him until that parent is pleased with him.” He was asked, “Even if they wrong him?” “Even if they wrong him” he replied.

Throughout our entire lives, our parents have always been the ones who treated us with endless patience and acceptance, a selfless form of love that is unmatched anywhere else. Sometimes, it is all too easy to undervalue the importance our parents play due to our own ignorance. We fail to put ourselves in their position to witness the sacrifices that made our



lives pleasant and at ease, and understand that every choice they made revolved around our own well-being. When our parents say something we would prefer not to hear, we quickly slip into never-ending attitudes and easily forget the times they put up with our rowdy looks and less than graceful comments. But, when life gets hard and we feel all alone, who do we call? Without a doubt, we pick up the phone and call our parents to open up to them about our problems, thinking that they will put everything aside, console us, and at times even take on our problems as if they were their own. It is evidence of the love that parents have for their children.

A mother's role in Islam is monumental. They are cherished and elevated in their status. There are numerous verses in the Quran and hadith that repeatedly emphasise the significance of mothers.

As reported by Abu Huraira, when a man asked the Messenger of Allah who deserved his companionship and good treatment the most, the Prophet replied, "Your mother." The man asked "Then who?" and the Prophet repeated, "Your mother." The man asked again "Then who?" and the Prophet responded once more, "Your mother." It was only after the fourth inquiry that the Prophet said, "And then your father."

This hadith illustrates the elevated status of mothers in Islam and the obligation to care for and respect them.

With their unconditional love, tireless dedication and boundless sacrifices, mothers shape a significant part of our lives and

society. They are not only the primary caregivers but also the first teachers and guides in a child's life. Through their words, actions and interactions, they teach important life lessons, values and morals.

In the time of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ a man asked permission to go on a military expedition. The Prophet asked the man if he had a mother, when he replied yes, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Stay with her because Paradise lies beneath her feet". But what exactly does 'paradise lies beneath her feet' mean? It means that the gates to paradise are open to those who love and cherish their mothers.

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَلَدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهَنًا
عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفَصَّلَتْهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي
وَلِوَلَدِكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرَ ١٤

"And we have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship..." (Quran 31:14)

Throughout our childhood up till today, without a doubt, our mothers always put our needs before theirs, they deal with our meltdowns, our tantrums, they wipe our tears and are able to put the biggest smiles on our faces. They knew when we were hungry or upset or tired. They sacrificed everything for us and did everything in their power to give us all the happiness in the

world.

Once a person came to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and complained about his mother being ill-tempered, the Prophet responded with "She was not ill tempered when she kept you in her womb for nine months. She was not ill tempered when she used to keep awake the whole night for your sake and fed you" The man replied, "I have recompensated all the favors of my mother." The Prophet then asked "How have you recompensated her?" He replied, "I have helped her perform Hajj by putting her on my shoulders." After hearing this, the Prophet put a question to the complainant, "Can you recompensate the painful pangs your mother bore at the time of your birth?"

In Islam, countless remarkable mothers have emerged, embodying unwavering faith, dedication and love. These extraordinary women stand as beacons of strength, guidance, and compassion, inspiring mothers throughout history and today. One such exemplary mother is Maryam عليها السلام the mother of Prophet Isa عليه السلام. Her



story is beautifully depicted in the Quran, showcasing her deep devotion, humility, and unwavering trust in Allah's plan. Despite facing societal challenges, Maryam remained steadfast and raised Prophet Isa عليه السلام with utmost love and care, imparting upon him the wisdom and teachings of Islam.

The mother of Musa عليه السلام and Harun عليه السلام is another shining example of a mother's incredible strength, faith and courage. At a time when baby boys were being hunted by Fir'aun, she made the difficult decision to place her infant son Musa عليه السلام in a basket and set him adrift in the river, putting her trust entirely in Allah's protection to keep him safe. Her act of sacrifice and faith serves as a powerful reminder of a mother's unwavering love and commitment to her child.

Likewise, Hajar عليها السلام the mother of Prophet Ismail عليه السلام displayed profound faith, resilience and trust in Allah's plan. Despite enduring immense challenges in the barren desert, she demonstrated remarkable courage by running between the hills of Safa and Marwa in search of water. Her unwavering determination led to the miraculous discovery of the well of Zamzam. Hajar's story teaches us the virtues of patience, trust and resilience, reminding us to rely on Allah سُبحَّانَهُ وَتَعَالَى during times of hardship. Her devotion and sacrifices for Ismail عليه السلام exemplify the boundless love and unwavering dedication of a mother.

These remarkable women are just a few of the many inspiring

mothers in Islam and provide us with profound lessons and examples to follow. However, as much as the importance of mothers in Islam fathers still play a large role in the raising of a child. In fact it has been said:

"Allah's pleasure comes from the pleasure of the father and Allah's displeasure comes from the displeasure of the father"
Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (1821).

In Islam, fathers are significant because they were commanded by Allah سُبحَّانَهُ وَتَعَالَى to provide physical, educational, psychological and spiritual needs of a child. They are not just breadwinners but also mentors, educators, and role models for their children.

Once a man complained to the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ about his father who took his belongings whenever he liked. The Messenger of Allah called for his father, who was a very old man, and asked him the details of the matter. The father said, "O, Messenger of Allah, a time was when my son was weak and helpless and bare handed while I had strength and wealth. I never hesitated to give him my belongings whenever he needed them. Today I am weak and bare handed while he is rich and now he keeps his belongings from me." Hearing this, tears came to the eyes of the Holy Prophet and he said to the son: "You and your belongings belong to your father. You

and your belongings belong to your father."

The importance of parents in Islam cannot be overstated. Let us pray to Allah سُبحَّانَهُ وَتَعَالَى that He guide us to be respectful, kind, and obedient to our parents, and that we continue to show them humility so that Allah سُبحَّانَهُ وَتَعَالَى may be pleased with us, and may He bless and reward us, both in this world and in the Hereafter. Let us remember the words of the Prophet Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and strive to fulfill the rights of our parents, saying:

رَبِّ أَرْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا ٢٤

"My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up when I was small." (Qur'an 17:24)

Ameen.



Misconceptions about Islam

By Shamine Fernandez

Islam is one of the world's largest religions yet it is one of the most misunderstood by non-Muslims. This is due to the fact that some misconceptions are sometimes spread maliciously to mislead others and other times unintentionally by individuals who lack proper information and knowledge about Islam. Like gossip, these misconceptions are then believed to be true and hence creating a negative image of Islam.

These are just a few of the most common misconceptions about Islam:

“Islam promotes violence and terrorism”

Let me ask you “Are all the prisons world-wide filled with Muslim inmates only?”

Regardless of our faiths, “All the sons of Adam are sinners, but the best sinners are those who repent often.” Narrated by Timidhi & Ibn Majah.

The Quran is explicit in its message recognising the sanctity of all human lives: to kill one person it is as though all of mankind has been killed. (Quran 5:32).

The Quran further forbids Muslims from creating disorders in the world: do not commit abuse on the earth spreading corruption. (Quran 29:36).

“Islam oppresses women”

It is important to understand that in Islam women are not restricted of their rights and freedom. Including their choice of husband, career etc. Islam addresses women in the same way as a man, with no privilege for any of them over the other except for doing good and being mindful to Allah. (Quran 49:13)

Men are seen as protectors and providers of their family, so surely the ones being protected and provided for are special indeed. One should not depend solely on some manifestations of injustice towards women committed by people who are largely influenced by their local and traditional culture and customs.

“Hijab is oppressive”

Women wearing hijab does not symbolise suppression, oppression and silence. Rather, it is a guard against degrading remarks, unwanted advances and unfair

discrimination. So the next time you see a Muslim woman, know that she covers her physical appearance and not her mind or intellect.

“Muslims worship a different God called Allah”

In simple terms, “Allah” means God. It indicates the only entity in existence who truly possesses the qualities of divinity and Lordship, the Creator and Sustainer of heavens and earth. It is the name of the only being worthy of worship, the one upon whom all creations depend on at every moment. “Indeed your Lord is One. (Quran 37:4)

“Muslim men can have many wives”

The Quran is very clear on this subject, that monogamy is the basis for normal relationships, but polygamy should be practised by men who can manage it successfully, and demonstrate an uncompromising certainty that they will treat their wives equally. (Surah An-Nisa 4:129)

There is only one truth and the truth lies in the Holy Quran. Instead of believing in misconceptions it is better to approach someone who knows the teachings of the Quran and learn the truth about Islam. Do not be misled into accepting misconceptions and false understanding about Islam. And confound not truth with falsehood, nor hide the truth, knowingly. (Quran 2:42)



Angels & Jinns

BY SAMIA ALOO

Angels and Jinn play significant roles in Islamic theology, each with distinct characteristics and purposes. Angels are celestial beings created from light, serving as messengers of God and guardians of the divine order. In contrast, Jinn are beings crafted from smokeless fire, possessing free will and the ability to choose between good and evil.

ANGELS IN ISLAM

Angels are pivotal in Islam, as they are considered sinless and obedient beings carrying out Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** commands. Among the archangels, Jibreel (Gabriel) is prominent, serving as the messenger between Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and Prophets. He played a crucial role in delivering revelations, including the Quran, to Prophet Muhammad **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ**.

Other angels include Mikha'il (Michael), responsible for sustenance and nourishment, and Israfeel, who will blow the trumpet signalling the Day of Judgment. Angels are constantly in worship of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** with their actions reflecting divine virtues.

The Guardian Angels, also known as Raqib and Atid, record human deeds, keeping a meticulous account of every action. On the Day of Judgment, these records will be presented, determining an individual's fate in the afterlife.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ANGELS

1. They are Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** creation.

One may think, with the status ascribed to them, that angels are not God's creation. Christians have fallen victim to this very misconception and supposed that the Holy Spirit is not God's creation, but rather a part of God Himself. As such, they have ascribed divinity to it. But Islam purports that the idea of angels being uncreated is false. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** declares:

أَمْ خَلَقْنَا الْمَلَائِكَةَ إِنَاثًا وَبِمِ شَاهِدُونَ

Did we create the Angels females while they were witnesses?
(Surah al-Saffat, Ch.37: V.150)

2. They cannot be seen by the naked eye.

Man cannot behold angels in their original forms with his physical eyes. If he does see them with his eyes, he will see them manifested in a new form, meaning that physical eyes will not suffice to see them [in their original form], but rather one needs spiritual eyes to do so....

Hence, Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** states:

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ مَلَكًا لَجَعَلْنَاهُ رَجُلًا وَلَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَا يَلْبَسُونَ

"And if we had appointed (as

Messenger) an angel, we would have made him (appear as) a man; and (thus) we would have made confused to them what they are (themselves) confusing. (Surah al-An 'am, Ch.6: V.9)"

3. They have no gender.

One must remember that they [Angels] are neither male nor female. The above-mentioned verse alludes to this:

أَمْ خَلَقْنَا الْمَلَائِكَةَ إِنَاثًا وَبِمِ شَاهِدُونَ

Did we create the Angels females while they were witnesses?
(Surah al-Saffat, Ch.37: V.150)

Here, Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** did not declare that Angels are actually males; rather, He stated that these people claim that angels are females. What do they know, what they [Angels] are? Were they present when Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** created the Angels? To state that Angels are male or female is incorrect. Gender relates only to physical beings, not to spiritual entities.

4. They are of three ranks.

The angels have three ranks. They all do not belong to the same rank. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** states:

الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا فَاغْفِرْ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ

“Those who bear the Throne, and those who are around it, glorify their Lord with (His) praise, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe, (saying): ‘Our Lord, Thou dost comprehend all things in (Thy) mercy and knowledge. So, forgive those who repent and follow Thy way; and protect them from the punishment of Hell.” (Surat Ghafir, Ch.40: V.7)

This verse reveals three categories of Angels, two of those from dalaalatun-nass [proven through textual evidence] and the third from ishaaratun-nass, [indicated through text]. As stated that the first category is of those Angels who bear Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Throne and the second category is of those Angels who encircle His Throne.

Thus, there are the Angels who bear Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Throne, and then there are those Angels who are subservient to them and act as their assistants, whilst still muqarrab [close] to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**

ANGELS MENTIONED BY NAME

Several Angels are mentioned by name in the Quran, with a description of their responsibilities:

Jibreel (Gabriel): The Angel in charge of communicating Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** words to His prophets.

Israfeel (Raphael): He is in charge of blowing the trumpet to mark the Day of Judgment.

Mikhail (Michael): This Angel is in charge of rainfall and sustenance.

Munkar and Nakeer: After death, these two Angels will question souls in the grave about their faith and deeds.

Malak Al-Maut (Angel of Death): This character is in charge of taking possession of souls after death.

Malik: He is the guardian of hell.

Ridwan: The Angel who serves as the guardian of heaven.

Other Angels are mentioned, but not specifically by name. Some Angels carry Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** throne, Angels who act as guardians and protectors of believers, and Angels who record a person's good and bad deeds, among other tasks.

JINNS IN ISLAM

Jinn, on the other hand, are sentient beings created from smokeless fire. Unlike Angels, Jinn possess free will and can choose their path, either following Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** command or succumbing to temptation. Iblis, once a devout worshiper, became a rebellious Jinn after refusing to bow to Adam, earning himself the title Shaytaan (Satan).

Jinn can be benevolent or malevolent, and their influence extends to the human realm. Possession and supernatural occurrences are often attributed to the actions of Jinn. Islam emphasises seeking refuge in Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** from the mischief of these beings.

INTERACTIONS WITH HUMANS

While Angels primarily serve as messengers and guardians, their

interactions with humans are often limited to delivering divine messages or protecting individuals. Jinn, however, can have direct interactions, and their presence may be felt in various ways, including dreams or possession.

Islam encourages believers to seek protection through prayers and supplications to guard against the harm of malevolent Jinn. Additionally, maintaining a strong connection with Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** is believed to safeguard individuals from the influence of both Jinn and negative forces.

TYPES OF JINN

Jinns are divided into different varieties and types. Some have wings and fly in the air, some exist as snakes and dogs, and some Jinn are earthbound beings who live and attach themselves to people and objects in our world. Disbelieving Jinn (Shayateen) whisper evil thoughts into people's minds and constantly try to divert man from the path of righteousness. Some Jinn constantly instills doubts in human minds. Jinn can make humans think certain thoughts, leading them to misidentify these thoughts as their own notions. Jinn can make us dream certain things. The strongest, evillest variety of Jinn is called Ifrit, and they are rare.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF JINN

The word Jinn literally means something hidden or veiled from sight. Jinns are a species of invisible beings. A short Qur'anic chapter is named after them, and in it, we learn that a band of Jinn listened to Prophet Muhammad **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** and some became believers.

قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا
إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْءَانًا عَجَبًا

Say, 'O Prophet, ' "It has been revealed to me that a group of jinn listened to the Quran, ' and said to their fellow jinn': 'Indeed, we have heard a wondrous recitation. (Surah Al-Jinn Ch.72: V.1)

يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا
أَحَدًا

It leads to Right Guidance so we believed in it, and we will never associate anyone with our Lord in worship. (Surah Al-Jinn Ch.72: V.2)

From this, we understand that Jinn are conscious beings charged with Divine obligations. They were created before Adam and Eve and were responsible for cultivating and improving the world. Although Allah سُُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى later superseded them with us, He did not exempt them from religious obligations.

Like Angels, Jinns move extremely fast and are not bound by the time and space constraints within which we normally move. However, since the spirit is more active and faster than Jinns, a person who lives at the level of the spirit's life and who can transcend what we know as limits of matter and the confines of time and space, can be quicker and more active than them.

Nothing is difficult for Allah سُُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. It is as easy for Him to create the universe as it is for Him to create a tiny particle. He has provided Human beings, Jinns, and Angels with the power and strength appropriate for their functions or duties. As He uses angels to supervise the movements of celestial bodies, He allows humanity to rule the earth, dominate matter, build civilizations, and produce technology.

ROLE IN THE DIVINE PLAN

Angels and Jinns are integral to the fulfilment of Allah's سُُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

divine plan. Angels execute Allah's سُُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى commands flawlessly, ensuring order and carrying out tasks ranging from guidance to protection. Jinns, with their free will, contribute to the test of human beings, as their temptations and influences provide opportunities for individuals to choose between right and wrong.

CONCLUSION

In Islam, the realms of Angels and Jinns illustrate the multifaceted nature of the spiritual world. Angels serve as messengers and protectors, embodying divine virtues, while Jinns, with their free will, present challenges and opportunities for human beings to demonstrate faith and righteousness. Understanding the roles of Angels and Jinn is essential for believers, as it enhances their comprehension of the intricate tapestry of the Islamic worldview.



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LEARNING THE DEEN



By Shahiid Melanie

In Islam, knowledge holds a very high importance and is considered a core fundamental aspect during one's faith and spiritual development. The first verse that was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was "IQRA" which means "Read" or "Recite." Thus, emplacing the significance of seeking beneficial knowledge and education, as it is also an act of worship.

And by acquiring beneficial knowledge, we will be able to understand the purpose of our existence and how to navigate through this dunya. It is the responsibility of each Muslim, male and female, to seek knowledge in order to benefit themselves and those around them thus benefiting the communities.

While acquiring knowledge is important, our mentality and conduct is also important. Knowledge should not be confined to theoretical learning only but should be implemented in practical aspects of life. We are encouraged to use our knowledge for good and the betterment of society, alleviate suffering, to promote justice, and contribute positively to our communities.

Our Islamic knowledge should be apparent in our Akhlaq (mannerism). We should not be boastful or arrogant but act with wisdom and knowledge.

Many Hadiths speak about the superiority of people with knowledge over those without. Portraying the distance between the two groups. While worshiping with faith is good and praiseworthy, it cannot be compared with one who understands things clearly and then acts upon it.

The value of the latter is vastly superior. In fact, people with knowledge cannot be compared to any other groups of people.

Allah سبحانه وتعالى says:

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ٩

“Say, are those who know equal to those who do not know?” Only those who possess intellect take admonition”

Quran 39:9

And Islam is one of the religions that places a great emphasis on acquiring knowledge.

It is sad to see while there are many, many reverts, the thirst for knowledge is not there. Some may argue that we can find Islamic knowledge online but how interactive is this online knowledge or even how authentic are they?

Everyday in the world, we see that Muslims are willing to fill the streets for a protest, but in the Masaajids are only a few. The lack of knowledge is a very dangerous aspect for a Muslim as you can ruin your deen by practicing or sayings certain things that removes one from the fold of Islam, for example the wearing of amulets; a form of minor shirk or praying to the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم while he is dead instead of Allah سبحانه وتعالى who dies not.

Parents are encouraged to seek knowledge themselves as they are the first teachers to their children. Introducing children to Islamic knowledge at an early stage, even as simple as saying bismillah before eating can help them develop a love and understanding of Islam in their lives.

As much effort as we put in their secular education the same should be put in their Islamic education.

In conclusion, acquiring knowledge is highly valued in Islam and is a means of spiritual growth, personal development, and societal progress. We are encouraged to seek knowledge, reflect upon it, and use it to fulfill our duties towards Allah سبحانه وتعالى and humanity.

COMMUNITY ACHIEVERS

During the year, various individuals from the community completed different milestones of various achievements. Here are a few highlights from some individuals identified by the IQRA' team:

Faaris Ernesta – 17

I am a past student of Belonie Secondary school, and I completed my studies in 2023 bi'idnillah.

I studied English as a first language, french, maths, physics, and history. Alhamdulillah I am now studying at the Seychelles Advanced Level Studies, for two years. I'm currently doing English language and Geography. After the two years in sha Allah I aim to go to the Seychelles Institute of Teacher's Education for further studies. I aspire to pursue a career in teaching, but my ultimate goal is to study the deen. My advice to my fellow Muslim brothers and sisters currently doing their IGCSEs is to first prioritise the deen. Keep fulfilling your obligations and making dua. Allah will reward you with success in this dunya and the akhirah. ان شاء الله.



Arfan Ali-Jinna - 17

I was a student at Belonie Secondary School and last year I finished school. I did 7 IGCSE subjects, namely - Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Geography, ICT, Maths (Extended) and English First Language and الحمد لله I attained 3A's, 3B's, and 2C's respectively. Currently I'm in SALS studying doing Biology, Physics, Chemistry, and I wish to venture in the field of medicine. ان شاء الله.

My advice for my brothers and sisters doing IGCSEs this year is "Work hard, study ahead and mostly do past papers from now on. And of course, have trust in Allah because everything is written to happen. No matter the outcome."

Ishmael Sidonie - 17

I come from Belonie secondary school where I studied Maths, Physics, Chemistry and English Second Language, all Extended level.

Geography, and ICT. I am now completing my studies at the School of Advanced Level Studies, and my aim is to study something in architecture or engineering later in the future. شاء الله.

I advise any current student to study ahead of the teacher and use past papers as practice to get familiarised with the general questions that Cambridge might include in the paper. Additionally, always make sure to make time for your studies.



Na'eemah Pillay – 20

I recently graduated from the Seychelles Business Studies Academy with a distinction in Diploma in Accounting and Finance. I was named the most outstanding academic performer in the school for my cohort of 2021-2023. I will be heading to university soon where I will be studying for a first degree in Business and Finance. It is my aim to pursue a career in the field of finance, preferably something along the lines of becoming an economist.

My general advice to the youth is to keep persevering for whatever it is that you want to achieve. Put in the work, stay consistent, pray, and watch how everything falls into place. Always remember that the sky is never the limit when Allah is above it.



Ammar Muna - 18

Last year I completed my studies at the School of Advanced Level Studies. I took up Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Computer Science as subjects, scoring a B for all except Physics, which I scored an A in.

To fulfil my aim of becoming an aerospace engineer, I aspire to finish my degree in mechanical or aerospace engineering.

My advice to the youth: "Always have trust in Allah, ask dua - especially during tahajjud, and then give it your all by working hard, the outcome will be wonderful In Shaa Allah."

Hafiz Mouhoussoune - 16

I come from Pointe Larue Secondary School where I studied maths, physics, biology, geography, ICT and English. I am now studying at the Seychelles Maritime Academy and my aspiration for the future is to become a captain.

My advice for the youth is to stay focused on your studies, start to revise 2 to 3 months before the start of the IGCSE exams. Pray and make dua for Allah to guide you in your studies.



Bashaair Bastienne - 17

I did IGCSE for maths, physics, biology, chemistry, english as a second language - extended, ICT and french B1.

I am currently attending the National Institute of Health and Social Studies - NIHSS, studying pharmaceutical sciences. In Shaa Allah after completing my 3 years, I would like to become a pharmacist.

Some advice I will give to the S5 students who are going to sit for their exams, "Allah is above all and always comes first. Friends will always come and go, don't tarnish your relationship with the almighty to prioritise worldly relationships. Read the Quran when you are feeling discouraged or you want to give up. Focus on your studies and your future. Avoid bad company, there is much peer pressure in the world. A good advice one of my close friends told me was to study 2 or 3 months before the exam. It will make a huge difference."

The IQRA team applauds the achievers for their success, and may Allah SWT keep blessing and rewarding them, especially in the journey that they choose to embark upon next.

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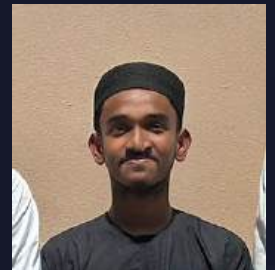
Youth Imamate Program

A group of Madrasah students have been participating in an Imamate Youth program. The main goal of such arrangement was to influence the youngsters to be better Muslims and to cultivate their iman by establishing an educational and Islamic environment, away from the fitnah of the secular educational system.

The program was first initiated last year during Ramadan of 2023 where the youngsters were given the chance to lead congregational prayers in the Masjid. To further improve their ability to lead the prayers in the appropriate manner, these individuals sat through Quran recitation classes conducted by Sheikh Mousa on Thursdays and Fridays. Additionally, they also followed Islamic lessons with Imam Abdu Rahman, which enabled them to obtain an in-depth understanding of the book "Gateway to Understanding Aqidah, Fiqh, Sirah and Tafsir" by Shaikh Haytham Ibn Mohammad Sarhan. Another individual that contributed to the apprenticeship of this group of boys is Br Ahmadou, who conducted Arabic classes when he came here for vacation.

While most of the training they received were centred around gaining Islamic knowledge, these boys were also given other activities to do. They had the privilege to sleep in Masjid on weekends and help with the upkeep and maintenance of the compound by cleaning and sweeping.

Arfan Ali Jinna (17) - "It was a great experience and I still remember the first salah I led. It was Isha and I read surah az-Zalzalah and Al-Qariah. It was overwhelming at first but after leading many other salah I became more confident and overcame my fear and anxiety. I learned to improve my recitation of The Qur'an with better Tajweed. The other lessons were very useful too. It provided much clarification and made me strong in deen. The great thing about the program is that I became attached to the maasjid. My advice for the people is to be more serious about your Akhirah as it is your eternal place. Work hard for it".



Abu Bakr Omar (18) - "Firstly, the program enabled me to become better at memorising the Quran and improving my Tajweed. It teaches me how to become more disciplined and helps to reduce the fear of standing in front of people for public speaking. We learned many things that we had no prior knowledge of. Overall, it's a great program and it really taught me how to deal with criticism.

Ibrahim Moise (16) - "The program grooms us to be better people, better Muslims. It makes me become more serious and revise the Quran. It's not just about leading salah in front of people, it's all about personal character development, especially in an Islamic manner. You improve for your own betterment, not to impress other people."



Ahmed Melie (18) – "Being in the program motivates me to learn more about the Quran. It made me get the experience of leading a crowd in something as critical as salah and my advice for the young generation, especially the younger boys in Madrassah, is to continue to read Quran so that you can get a chance to be able to lead prayers and to show what you have learned, to showcase your talent, and your hard work."

Advice from our Madrasah Students: *“Why Do I Pray?”*



Allah told us to pray. That is why I pray.
Rayan Rosalie

When I pray, Allah will forgive my sins.
Raheem Mousmie

I pray because I want to go to Jannah.
Halil Anisa



By praying, I can talk to Allah. I pray to show my obedience to Allah.
Shahila Germaine

If I do not pray, I will be punished in the day of judgement.
Mamadou Bah

I pray because I want to thank Allah for everything he has given to us.
Shifa Cesar





I want to see Allah. If I don't pray, I can't go to Jannah.
Without going to Jannah, I can't see Allah.
Anishia Albert



Prayer is a gift from Allah. Without praying, I can't enter
Jannah. If I do not pray, I will not be a muslim. The
difference between a believer and a non believer is prayer.
Firdaus Fahmi Ali Zamzam



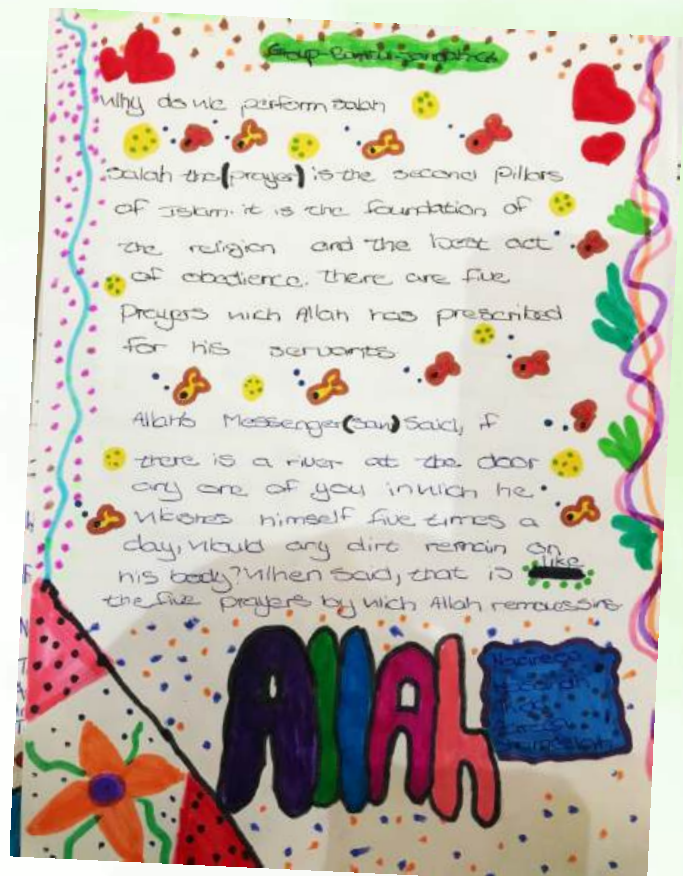
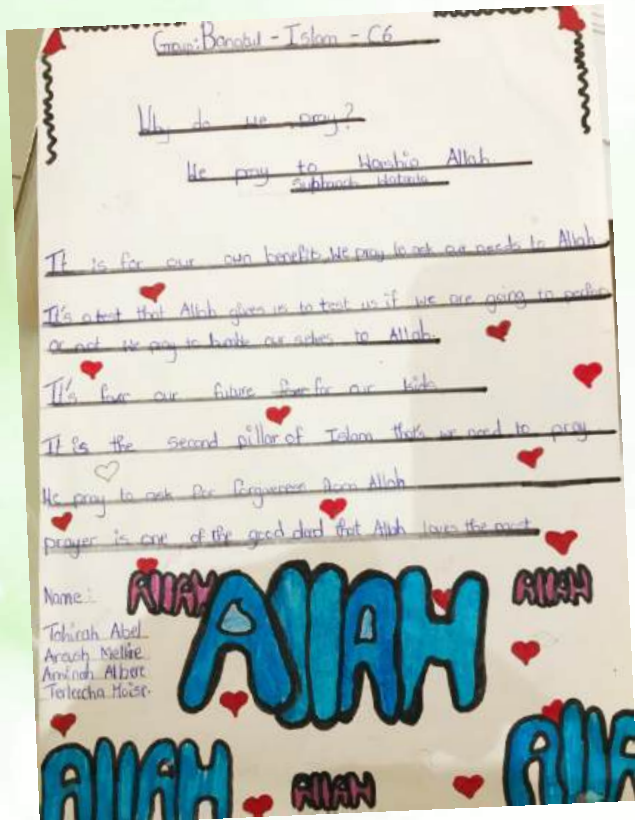
I pray because I want Allah to be happy with me. By
praying I can be closer to Allah.
Tahaanii Heneka



I pray because it is a command from our creator.
Ashaadiyah Esther

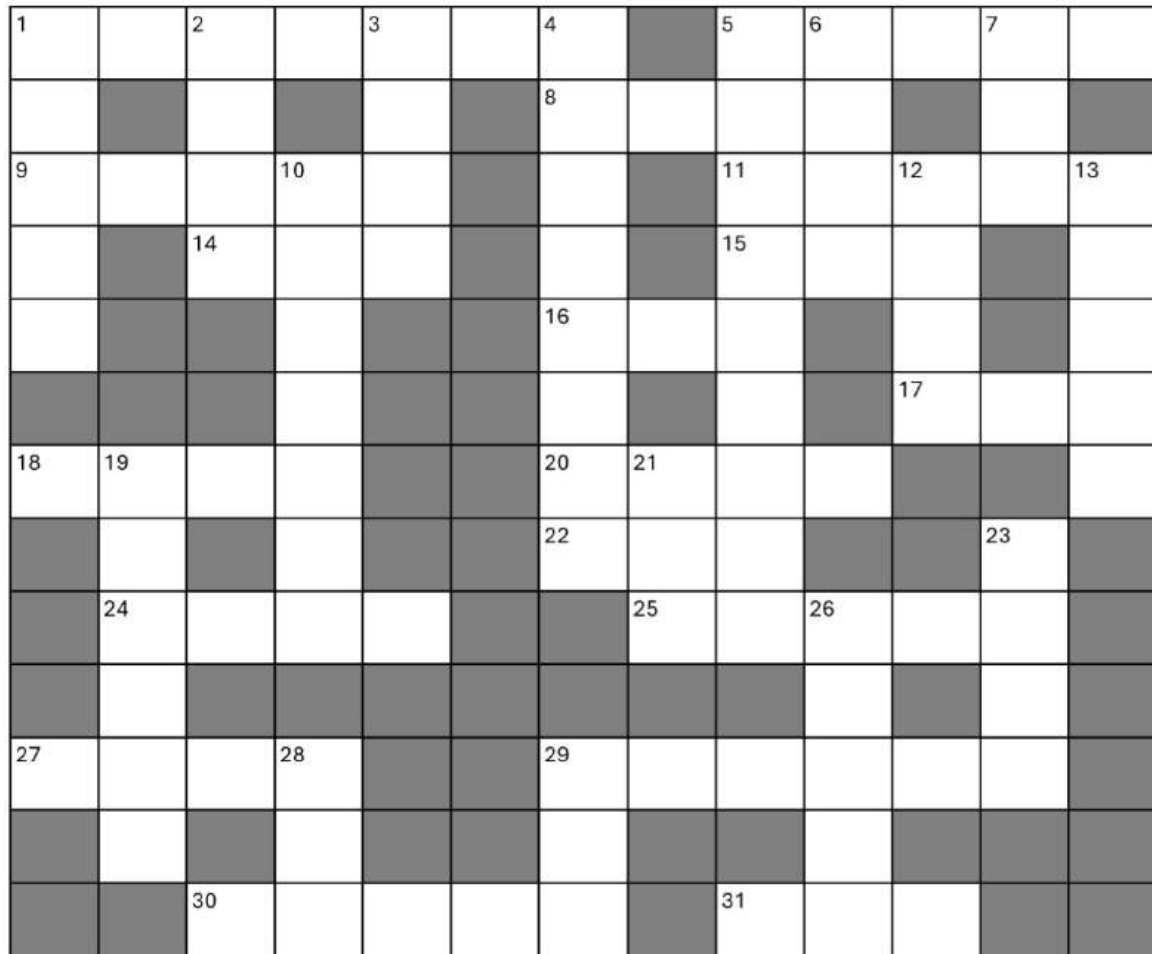






IQRA' Crossword

Compiled by Nazir Ebrahim



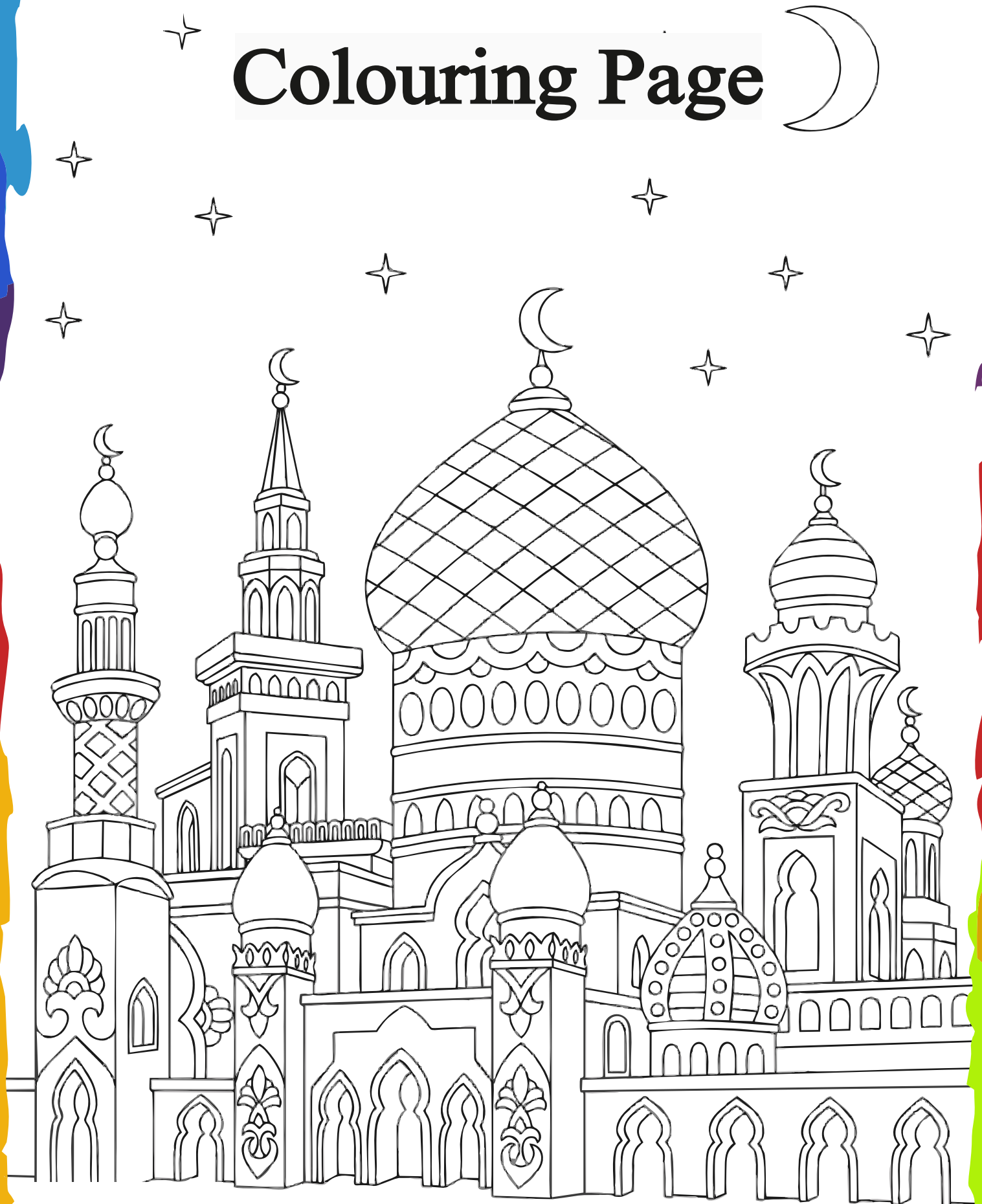
ACROSS

1. According to a Hadith, this is lawful but is disliked by Allah
سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى (7)
5. Ship of the desert (5)
8. Apparatus for weaving (4)
9. A Qur'aanic surah (5)
11. Fermented drink made from apple juice (5)
14. Hinged or removable cover (3)
15. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is _____ (3)
16. A Qur'aanic surah is named after this Prophet عليه السلام (3)
17. Digit of the foot (3)
18. A Muslim country (4)
20. Although it belongs to me, others are making use of it more than I (4)
22. "Trust in Allah, but _____ your 'No. 5 Across'" (3)
24. "_____ knowledge from the cradle to the grave."
[Hadith] (4)
25. If we do this while fasting, our fast will become void (5)
27. A Qur'aanic surah is named after this city (4)
29. 'No. 10 Down' is _____ (6)
30. A Qur'anic surah is named after this (5)
31. Opposite of 'No. 30 Across' (3)

DOWN

1. "Increase the remembrance of _____" [Hadith] (5)
2. We Muslims can eat this as long as it is Halal (4)
3. The meaning of the first word revealed to Prophet Muhammad
وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ صَلَّى (4)
4. A Qu'ranic surah is named after this animal (8)
5. The world's largest nut (4, 2, 3)
6. A title of the Prophet Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, "Al
_____ " (4)
7. Time just before an event (3)
10. "The best reply to a fool is _____" (7)
12. "A martyr shall be pardoned for every fault but
_____ " [Hadith] (4)
13. A bird (5)
19. Capital of 'No. 18 Across' (6)
21. Help (3)
23. Largest organ of the body (4)
26. The biggest Muslim minority stays in this country (5)
28. It was this caliph of Islam who said 'No. 10 Down' (3)
29. Obtain (3)

Colouring Page



Children's Story

The lost sheep

By Samia Aloo

Once upon a time, in a beautiful meadow, lived a shepherd named Khalid. Khalid had a flock of sheep that he cared for dearly. Each day, he would lead them to graze in the meadows and ensure they were safe and well-fed.

One day, as Khalid was counting his sheep, he noticed that one of them was missing. He searched high and low but could not find the lost sheep anywhere. Feeling worried, Khalid remembered the teachings of Islam about caring for every living being. He knew he had to find the lost sheep and bring it back to the flock.

After hours of searching, Khalid finally found the lost sheep trapped in a thicket, unable to free itself. With gentle hands, Khalid carefully untangled the sheep and carried it back to the flock. The other sheep bleated joyfully, welcoming their lost companion back.

Khalid felt relieved and grateful for finding the lost sheep safe and sound. That evening, Khalid shared the story with his family, emphasizing the importance of compassion and caring for every living being, just as Allah cares for all of us.

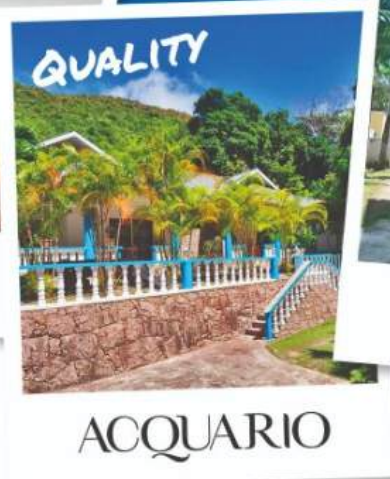
Moral of the Story: This story teaches children the importance of compassion, care, and responsibility in Islam. It highlights the value of helping those in need and the importance of treating every living being with kindness and respect.



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