



# THE ISLAMIC BULLETIN

Issue 14

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## HAPPY RAMADAN!

Dear Readers of the Islamic Bulletin,

With this issue we will endeavor to inform, inspire, unite, and excite our readers for the promotion and encouragement of Islam. We hope that with Allah's help we will be able to increase the knowledge of new members to Islam, as well as provide continued learning and inspiration to those born to Islam.

To the best of our abilities, we seek to provide examples and explanations of the five pillars of Islam and various aspects of Islamic belief and practice in every issue of the Bulletin. To this end we offer such features as **Teachings of the Prophet, Qur'anic Miracles, Qur'anic Sciences**, and **Hadith** for your reading pleasure.

We strive to keep abreast of current affairs that directly or indirectly affect the Muslim world and its peoples through **Islamic World News**. This includes local, national, and international events. Our newsletter focuses strictly on Islamic issues and does not make political statements.

**Kids' Corner** is designed for the interest and learning of children as well as parents. You'll also find topics of general interest such as: **Women in Islam** which focuses on women's issues and experiences, **Cooks' Corner** to share with readers delicious recipes contributed by our staff and in accordance with Islamic traditions, and **Why I Embraced Islam** to express the awe and gratitude for Allah's mercy of those not born to Islam but allowed to accept the beauty of Islam into their lives.

Our many thanks to Allah for allowing us the opportunity to make this newsletter possible. It has become popular here in the United States and read in many foreign countries. At an Islamic School in London, England, the Bulletin is used as part of their earning curriculum. In addition, permission was given to a publisher in India to translate the Bulletin into other languages.

We currently mail approximately 700 copies of the newsletter free of subscription charges to prison inmates throughout the United States, and the number of Muslim converts in prison continues to increase. This is a very important aspect of the newsletter, as it may be the only access some of these Muslims have to information about Islam. Our newsletter has become very popular as a means of *dahwa* (invitation) to Islam.

We realize that we have been remiss in a consistent publication of the newsletter; not due to lack of enthusiasm but only because of financial difficulties. All of the writers and editors work voluntarily to spread and teach Islam. We therefore ask our readers who wish to remain subscribers to please send in their \$20 subscription fee which covers printing and postage costs. As we update our mailing list for 1997 we want you to be included, so please send in any change of address along with your \$20 fee.

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## BIOLOGY

The Muslim scientists made considerable progress in biology especially in botany, and developed horticulture to a high degree of perfection.

They paid greater attention to botany in comparison to zoology. Botany reached its zenith in Spain. In zoology the study of the horse was developed almost to the tank of a science. Abu Ubaidah (728 - 825 A. D.) who wrote more than 100 books, devoted more than fifty books to the study of the horse.

Al-Jahiz, who flourished in Basra is reputed to be one of the greatest zoologists the Muslim world has produced. His influence in the subject may be traced to the Persian 'Al-Qazwini' and the Egyptian 'Al-Damiri'. His book 'Kitab al Hayawan' (book of animals) contains germs of later theories of evolution, adaptation, and animal psychology. He was the first to note changes in bird life through migrations. He described the method of obtaining 'ammonia from animal fat by dry distilling'.

Al-Damiri, who died in 1405 in Cairo and who was influenced by Al-Jahiz is the greatest Arab zoologist. His book Hayat Al Hayawan (Life of animal) is the most important Muslim work in zoology. It is an encyclopedia on animal life containing a mine of information on the subject. It contains the history of animals and preceded Buffon by 700 years.

Al-Masudi has given the rudiments of the theory of evolution in his well known work Meadows of gold. Another of his works Kitab al-Tanbih wal Ishraq advances his views on evolution namely from mineral to plant, from plant to animal and from animal to man.

In botany Spanish Muslims made the greatest contribution, and some of them are known as the greatest botanists of mediaeval times. They were keen observers and discovered sexual difference between such plants as palms and hemsps. They roamed about on sea shores, on mountains and in distant lands in quest of rare botanical herbs. They classified plants into those that grow from seeds, those that grow from cuttings and those that grow of their own accord, i.e., wild growth. The Spanish Muslims advanced in botany far beyond the state in which it had been left by Dioscorides and augmented the herbology of the Greeks by the addition of 2,000 plants. Regular botanical gardens existed in Cordoba, Baghdad, Cairo, and Fez for teaching and experimental purposes. Some of these were the finest in the world.

The Cordovan physician, Al-Ghafiqi (D. 1165) was a renowned botanist, who collected plants in Spain and Africa, and described them most accurately. According to G. Sarton he was the greatest expert of his time on simples. His description of plants was the most precise ever made in Islam; he gave the names of each in Arabic, Latin, and Berber. His

outstanding work Al Adwiyah al Mufradah dealing with simples was later appropriated by Ibn Baytar.

Abu Zakariya Yahya Ibn Muhammad Ibn Al-Awwan, who flourished at the end of 12 century in Seville (Spain), was the author of the most important Islamic treatise on agriculture during the mediaeval times entitled 'Kitab al Filahah'. The book treats more than 585 plants and deals with the cultivation of more than 50 fruit trees. It also discusses numerous diseases of plants and suggests their remedies. The book presents new observations on properties of soil and different types of manures.

Abdullah Ibn Ahmad Ibn al-Baytar, was the greatest botanist and pharmacist of Spain--in fact the greatest of mediaeval times. He roamed about in search of plants and collected herbs on the Mediterranean littoral, from Spain to Syria, described more than 1,400 medical drugs and compared them with the records of more than 150 ancient and Arabian authors. The collection of simple drugs composed by him is the most outstanding botanical work in Arabic. This book, in fact is the most important for the whole period extending from Dioscorides down to the 16th century. It is an encyclopedic work on the subject. He later entered into the service of the Ayyubid king, al-Malik al-Kamil, as his chief herbalist in Cairo. From there he traveled through Syria and Asia Minor, and died in Damascus. One of his works Al-Mughani-fi al Adwiyah al Mufradah deals with medicine. The other Al Jami Ji al Adwiyah al Mufradah is a very valuable book containing simple remedies regarding animal, vegetable and mineral matters which has been described above. It deals also with 200 novel plants which were not known up to that time. Abul Abbas Al-Nabati also wandered along the African Coast from Spain to Arabia in search of herbs and plants. He discovered some rare plants on the shore of Red Sea.

Another botanist Ibn Sauri, was accompanied by an artist during his travels in Syria, who made sketches of the plants which they found. Ibn Wahshiya, wrote his celebrated work al-Filahah al-Nabatiyah containing valuable information about animals and plants.

Many Cosmo graphical encyclopedias have been written by Arabs and Persians, which contain sections on animals, plants and stones, of which the best known is that of Zakariya al-Kawini, who died in 1283 A. D. Al-Dinawari wrote an excellent book of plants and al-Bakri has written a book describing in detail the 'Plants of Andalusia'.

Ibn Maskwaih, a contemporary of Al-Beruni, advanced a definite theory about evolution. According to him plant life at its lowest stage of evolution does not need any seed for its birth and growth. Nor does it perpetuate its species by means of the seed.

The great advancement of botanical science in Spain led to the development of agriculture and horticulture on a grand scale. "Horticulture improvements" says G. Sarton, "constituted the finest legacies of Islam, and the gardens of Spain proclaim to this day one of the noblest virtues of her Muslim conquerors. The development of agriculture was one of the glories of Muslim Spain."

## SAYINGS OF THE PROPHET (S.A.W.)

**TRUST** - Trust in God - but tie your camel first.

**THE WORLD** - Treat this world as I do, like a wayfarer, like a horseman who stops in the shade of a tree for a time, and then moves on.

**OBJECTS** - It is your attachment to objects which make you blind and deaf.

**SLEEP** - Sleep is the brother of death.

**REFLECTION** - The faithful are mirrors, one to the other.

**WOMEN** - Women are the twin-halves of men.

**PRIVACY** - Whoever invades people's privacy corrupts them.

**WIVES** - A virtuous wife is the best treasure any man can have.

**OPPRESSION** - When oppression exists, even the bird dies in its nest.

**LOVE** - Do you think you love your Creator? Love your fel-low-creature first.

**DISTRIBUTION** - God it is who gives: I am only a distributor.

**HELPING OTHERS** - I order you to assist any oppressed person, whether he is a Muslim or not.

**MONKISHNESS** - No Monkery in Islam.

**THE PIOUS** - My back has been broken by 'pious' men.

**CURSING** - You ask me to curse unbelievers. But I was not sent to curse.

**TEACHING** - One hour's teaching is better than a whole night of prayer.

**DAY AND NIGHT** - The night is long: do not shorten it by sleep. The day is fair: do not darken it with wrongdoing.

**HUMILITY** - Humility and courtesy are themselves a part of piety.

**ENVY** - Envy devours good deeds, as a fire devours fuel.

**THE LEARNED** - Whoever honors the learned, honors me.

**POVERTY** - My poverty is my pride.

**DEATH** - Die before your death.

**THE TONGUE** - A man slips with his tongue more than with his feet.

**DESIRE** - Desire not the world, and God will love you. Desire not what others have, and they will love you.

**PRIDE AND GENEROSITY** - Pride in ancestry is really a property -interest. Generosity is a variety of piety.

**PRACTICE** - Who are the learned? Those who put into practice what they know.

## CHICKEN CURRY

Contributed by Ayesha Buksh

### Ingredients:

- 1 cut-up chicken (3-4 lbs)
- 1 medium chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons crushed garlic
- 1 tablespoon crushed ginger
- 1/2 tablespoon black pepper
- Crushed chili
- Salt to taste
- 2 medium chopped tomatoes
- 3 tablespoons oil

### Preparation:

1. Fry onion in oil until light brown.
2. Add ginger & garlic, fry 1 minute.
3. Add chicken and rest of seasoning & tomatoes.
4. Cook on medium heat until chicken is done.
5. Add 1/2 cup of water.
6. Garnish with cilantro.

Serve over rice.



**KINDNESS** - Whoever has no kindness has no faith.

**PRINCES AND SCHOLARS** - The best of princes is one who visits the wise. The worst of scholars is one who visits princes.

**THE JUDGE** - A man appointed to be a judge has been killed with-out a knife.

**STRUGGLE** - The holy warrior is him who struggles with himself.

**INK AND BLOOD** - The ink of the learned is holier than the blood of the martyr.

**CONTEMPLATION** - An hour's contemplation is better than a year's worship.

**UNDERSTANDING** - Speak to everyone in accordance with his degree of understanding.

**FOOD** - Nobody has eaten better food than that won by his own labor.

**WORK** - I am a worker.

**ACCUSATIONS** - Anyone reviling a brother for a sin will not himself die before committing it.

**PARADISE** - I will stand surety for Paradise if you save yourselves from six things: telling untruths, violating promises, dishonoring trust, being unchaste in thought and act, striking the first blow, taking what is bad and unlawful.

**TASKS** - Whoever makes all his tasks one task (i.e. the Hereafter), God will help him in his other concerns.

**POETRY** - In some poetry there is wisdom.

**LIES, PROMISES, TRUST** - He is not of mine who lies, breaks a promise or fails in his trust.

**THOUGHTS** - Good thoughts are a part of worship.

**VISION OF THE FAITHFUL** - The Faithful see with the light of God.

**SOME BEHAVIOR** - I am like a man who has lighted a fire, and all the creeping things have rushed to burn themselves in it.

**THE QUR'AN** - The Qur'an has been revealed in seven forms. Each verse has inner and outer meaning.

**OBLIGATION TO LEARN** - The pursuit of knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim.

**THE YOUNG IN PARADISE** - Old women will not enter Paradise: they will be young and beautiful first.

**A JOURNEY** - On a journey, the lord of a people is their servant.

**RECOGNITION** - Souls which recognize one another congregate together; those which do not, argue with one another.

**TRUTH** - Speaking the truth to the unjust is the best of holy wars.

**KNOWLEDGE** - Journey even as far as China seeking knowledge.

**THE TIME WILL COME** - The time will come when you are divided into 72 sects. A group among you will be my people, the people of Salvation.

**THE BEQUEST** - I have nothing to leave you except my family.



A woman's economic rights are taken for granted today. However, such rights are fairly new in much of the world.

Women in Arabia before the time of Muhammad (PBUH) were considered chattel. Infant girls were often buried alive to spare the family's honor, and widows were inherited along with other items of property. Indeed, this was the common lot of women around the world.

In Persia, women were under the complete authority of men, and could be bought and sold; in India, a faithful wife was one who served her husband as if he were a god, addressing him as "lord," eating his leftovers, and upon his death being burned alive atop his corpse; and even in Rome, whose law was regarded as more civilized, a woman was forced to remain financially dependent all her life, with no separate or independent right.

The beginning of the Islamic era ushered in a revolutionary change in the status of women. Islam decreed a right of which woman was deprived, not only in the pre-Islamic era, but up until quite recently even in the West: the right of independent ownership.

According to Islamic law, a woman has full rights in her money, real estate, and other assets. These rights undergo no change when she gets married, and she retains her full rights in buying, selling, and mortgage, as well as in the signing of contracts for rent, enterprise, etc.

Islam regards the married woman's role as wife and mother as the most essential one, and a woman is entitled to financial maintenance by her husband. However, a woman may also work and earn an income if there is an economic need. Since there is nothing in Islamic law that forbids a woman to work, she may do so when there is a necessity for it. This is especially so in the case of occupations needed most by society, such as teaching and medicine, although there is no restriction on benefitting from a woman's scarce talents in any field. Indeed, although a woman's occupying the position of judge has been seen by many people as unsuited to a woman's nature, we see some early Muslim jurists finding nothing wrong with it.

In addition, whereas prior to the institution of Shariah (Islamic law) a woman could be inherited, Shariah forbade this practice and gave her instead the right to inheritance. Her share is completely hers, and no one, including her husband, can take it away from her.

**"Unto the men (of the family) belongs a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, and unto women a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, whether it be little or much - a legal share." (Qur'an 4:7)**

## THE WISDOM IN ISLAM

Dear Readers,

'Wisdom In Islam' encompasses in its radiant words the true goals that all of us must strive for. Its bounty of mercy, forgiveness, and guidance is stunning in its clarity. If perhaps each of us would make the commitment to practice these principles for even one day we would feel the power and grace of Allah working in our lives. Imagine using this wonderful guidance on a regular basis? It is especially important during this month of Ramadan to endeavor to practice and then to invite others to practice these beautiful words of wisdom.

Khalid ibn El Waleed narrated the following hadith:

A Bedouin came one day to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and said to him, "O, Messenger of Allah! I've come to ask you a few questions about the affairs of this life and the Hereafter."

- **Ask what you wish.**

- I'd like to be the most learned of men.

- **Fear Allah, and you will be the most learned of men.**

- I wish to be the richest man in the world.

- **Be contented, and you will be the richest man in the world.**

- I'd like to be the most just man.

- **Desire for others what you desire for yourself, and you will be the most just of men.**

- I want to be the best of men.

- **Do good to others and you will be the best of men.**

- I wish to be the most favored by Allah.

- **Engage much in Allah's praise, and you will be most favored by Him.**

- I'd like to complete my faith.

- **If you have good manners you will complete your faith.**

- I wish to be among those who do good.

- **Adore Allah as if you see Him. If you don't see Him, He seeth you. In this way you will be among those who do good.**

- I wish to be obedient to Allah.

- **If you observe Allah's commands you will be obedient.**

- I'd like to be free from all sins.

- **Bathe yourself from impurity and you will be free from all sins.**

- I'd like to be raised on the Day of Judgment in the light.

- **Don't wrong yourself or any other creature, and you will be raised on the Day of Judgment in the light.**

- I'd like Allah to bestow His mercy on me.

- **If you have mercy on yourself and on others, Allah will grant you mercy on the Day of Judgment.**

- I'd like my sins to be very few.

- **If you seek the forgiveness of Allah as much as you can, your sins will be very few.**

- I'd like to be the most honorable man.

- **If you do not complain to any fellow creature, you will be the most honorable of men.**

- I'd like to be the strongest of men.

- **If you put your trust in Allah, you be the strongest of men.**

- I'd like to enlarge my provision.

- **If you keep yourself pure, Allah will enlarge your provision.**

- I'd like to be loved by Allah and His messenger.

- **If you love what Allah and His messenger love you will be among their beloved ones.**

- I wish to be safe from Allah's wrath on the Day of Judgment.

- **If you do not lose your temper with any of your fellow creatures, you will be safe from the wrath of Allah on the Day of Judgment.**

- I'd like my prayers to be responded.

- **If you avoid forbidden actions your prayers will be responded.**

- I'd like Allah not to disgrace me on the Day of Judgment.

- **If you guard your chastity, Allah will not disgrace you on the Day of Judgment.**

- I'd like Allah to provide me with a protective covering on the Day of Judgment.

- **Do not uncover your fellow creatures faults, and Allah will provide you with a covering protection on the Day of Judgment.**

- What will save me from sins?

- **Tears, humility and illness.**

- What are the best deeds in the eyes of Allah?

- **Gentle manners, modesty and patience.**

- What are the worst evils in the eyes of Allah?

- **Hot temper and miserliness.**

- What assuages the wrath of Allah in this life and in the Hereafter?

- **Concealed charity and kindness to relatives.**

- What extinguishes hell's fires on the Day of Judgment?

- **Patience in adversity and misfortunes.**

Imam El Mustaghfiri said: "I have never heard a tradition more comprehensive of the beauties of religion, and more beneficial than this hadith. It collects all the good things of Islam but not put to use." (Related by Imam Ibn Hambal)





## ASMAA BINT ABU BAKR

Asmaa bint Abu Bakr belonged to a distinguished Muslim family. Her father, Abu Bakr, was a close friend of the Prophet (pbuh) and the first Khalifah after his death. Her half-sister, Aishah, was a wife of the Prophet. Her husband, Zubayr ibn al Awwam, was one of the special personal aides of the Prophet (pbuh). Her son, Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr, became well-known for his incorruptibility and his unswerving devotion to Truth.

Asmaa herself was one of the first persons to accept Islam. Only about 17 persons including both men and women became Muslims before her. She was later given the nickname, Dhat an-Nitaqayn (the One with the Two Waistbands), because of an incident connected with the departure of the Prophet (pbuh) and her father from Mecca on the historic hijrah to Madinah.

Asmaa was one of the few persons who knew of the Prophet's plan to leave for Madinah. The utmost secrecy had to be maintained because of the Quraysh plans to murder the Prophet (SAW). On the night of their departure, she prepared a bag of food and a water container for their journey. She did not find anything though with which to tie the containers and decided to use her waistband. Abu Bakr suggested that she tear it into two. This she did and the Prophet (SAW) commended her action. From then on she became known as "the One with the Two Waistbands".

When the final emigration from Mecca to Madinah took place soon after the departure of the Prophet (pbuh), Asmaa was pregnant. She did not let her pregnancy or the prospect of a long and arduous journey deter her from leaving. As soon as she reached Quba on the outskirts of Madinah, she gave birth to a son, Abdullah. The Muslims shouted in happiness and thanksgiving because this was the first child to be born to the muhajireen in Madinah.

Asmaa became known for her fine and noble qualities and for the keenness of her intelligence. She was an extremely generous person. Her son Abdullah once said of her, "I have not seen two women more generous than my aunt Aishah and my mother Asmaa. But their generosity was expressed in different ways. My aunt would accumulate one thing after another until she had gathered what she felt was sufficient and then distributed it all to those in need. My mother, on the other hand, would not keep anything even for the morrow."

Asmaa's presence of mind in difficult circumstances was remarkable. When her father left Mecca, he took all his wealth, amounting to some 6,000 dirhams, and did not leave any for his family. When Abu Bakr's father, Abu Quhafah heard of his departure he went to his house and said to her: "I understand that he has left you no money after he has abandoned you." "No, grandfather," replied Asmaa, "in fact he has left us much money." She took some pebbles and put them in a small recess in the wall where they used to put money. She

threw a cloth over the heap and took the hand of her grandfather—he was blind—and said, "See how much money he has left us." Through this stratagem, Asmaa wanted to allay the fears of the old man and to forestall him from giving them anything of his own wealth. This was because she disliked receiving any assistance even if it was her own grandfather.

Asmaa had an attitude and was not inclined to compromise her honor and her faith. Her mother, Qutaylah, once came to visit her in Madinah. She was not a Muslim. Her mother brought her gifts of raisins, clarified butter and qaraz (pods of a species of tree). Asmaa at first refused to admit her into her house or accept the gifts. She sent someone to Aishah to ask the Prophet (pbuh), about her attitude to her mother and he replied that she should certainly admit her to her house and accept the gifts. On this occasion, the following revelation came to the Prophet (pbuh):

"God forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: For God loves those who are just. God only forbids you with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances), that do wrong." (Qur'an Al-Mumtahanah 60: 8-9)

For Asmaa and indeed for many other Muslims, life in Madinah was rather difficult at first. Her husband was quite poor and his only major possession to begin with was a horse he had bought. She described these early days: "I used to provide fodder for the horse, give it water and groom it. I would grind grain and make dough but I could not bake well. The women of the Ansar used to bake for me. They were truly good women. I used to carry the grain on my head from az-Zubayr's plot which the Prophet (pbuh) had allocated to him to cultivate. It was about three farsakh (about eight kilometers) from the town's center. One day I was on the road carrying the grain on my head when I met the Prophet (pbuh) and a group of Sahabah. He called out to me and stopped his camel so that I could ride behind him. I felt embarrassed to travel with the Prophet (pbuh) and also remembered Zubayr's jealousy—he was the most jealous of men. The Prophet (pbuh) realized that I was embarrassed and rode on." Later, Asmaa related to Zubayr exactly what had happened and he said, "By God, that you should have to carry grain is far more distressing to me than your riding with (the Prophet)."

Asmaa obviously then was a person of great sensitivity and devotion. She and her husband worked extremely hard together until their situation of poverty gradually changed. At times, however, Zubayr treated her harshly. Once she went to her father and complained to him about this. His reply to her was: "My daughter, have sabr (patience) for if a woman has a righteous husband and he dies and she does not marry after him, they will be brought together again in Paradise."

Zubayr eventually became one of the richest men among the Sahabah but Asmaa did not allow this to corrupt her principles. Her son, al-Mundhir once sent her an elegant dress from Iraq made of fine and costly material. Asmaa by this time was blind. She felt the material and said, "It's awful. Take it back to him." Al-Mundhir was upset and said, "Mother, it was not transparent." "It may not be transparent", she retorted, "but it is too tight-fitting and shows the contours of the body." Al-Mundhir bought another dress that met with her approval and she accepted it.

If the above incidents and aspects of Asmaa's life may easily be forgotten, then her final meeting with her son, Abdullah, must remain one of the most unforgettable moments in early Muslim history. At that meeting she demonstrated the keenness of her intelligence, her resoluteness, and the strength of her faith.

Abdullah was in the running for the Caliphate after the death of Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah. The Hijaz, Egypt, Iraq, Khurasan and much of Syria were favorable to him and acknowledged him as the Caliph. The Umayyads, however, continued to contest the Caliphate and to field a massive army under the command of Al-Hajjaj. Relentless battles were fought between the two sides during which Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr displayed great acts of courage and heroism. Many of his supporters however could not withstand the continuous strain of battle and gradually began to desert him. Finally he sought refuge in the Sacred Mosque at Mecca. It was then that he went to his mother, now an old blind woman, and said: "Peace be on you, Mother, and the mercy and blessings of God." "Unto you be peace, Abdullah," she replied. "What is it that brings you here at this hour while boulders from Hajjaj's catapults are raining down on your soldiers in the Haram and shaking the houses of Mecca?" "I came to seek your advice," he said. "To seek my advice?" she asked in astonishment. "About what?" "The people have deserted me out of fear of Hajjaj or being tempted by what he has to offer. Even my children and my family have left me. There is only a small group of men with me now and however strong and steadfast they are they can only resist for an hour or two more. Messengers of the Banu Umayyah (the Umayyads) are now negotiating with me, offering to give me whatever worldly possessions I want, should I lay down my arms and swear allegiance to Abdul Malik ibn Marwan. What do you think?" Raising her voice, she replied: "It's your affair, Abdullah, and you know yourself better. If however you think you are right and that you are standing up for the Truth, then persevere and fight on as your companions who were killed under your flag had shown perseverance. If however you desire the world, what a miserable wretch you are. You would have destroyed yourself and you would have destroyed your men." "But I will be killed today; there is no doubt about it." "That is better for you than that you should surrender yourself to Hajjaj voluntarily and that some minions of Banu Umayyah should play with your head." "I do not fear death. I am only afraid that they will mutilate me." "There is nothing after death that man should be afraid of. Skinning does not cause any pain to the slaughtered sheep."

Abdullah's face beamed as he said: "What a blessed mother! Blessed be your noble qualities! I have come to you at this hour to hear what I have heard. God knows that I have not weakened or despaired. He is witness over me that I have not stood up for what I have out of love for this world and its attractions but only out of anger for the sake of God. His limits have been transgressed. Here am I, going to what is pleasing to you. So if I am killed, do not grieve for me and commend me to God." "I shall grieve for you," said the ageing but resolute Asmaa, "only if you are killed in a vain and unjust cause." "Be assured that your son has not supported an unjust cause, nor committed any detestable deed, nor done any injustice to a Muslim or a Dhimmī and that there is nothing better in his sight than the pleasure of God, the Mighty, the Great. I do not say this to exonerate myself. God knows that I have only said it to make your heart firm and steadfast."

"Praise be to God who has made you act according to what He likes and according to what I like. Come close to me, my son, that I may smell and feel your body for this might be the last meeting with you." Abdullah knelt before her. She hugged him and smothered his head, his face and his neck with kisses. Her hands began to squeeze his body when suddenly she withdrew them and asked: "What is this you are wearing, Abdullah?" "This is my armor plate." "This, my son, is not the dress of one who desires martyrdom. Take it off. That will make your movements lighter and quicker. Wear instead the sirwal (a long under garment) so that if you are killed your 'awrah will not be exposed." Abdullah took off his armor plate and put on the sirwal. As he left for the Haram to join the fighting he said: "My mother, don't deprive me of your du'a (prayer)."

Raising her hands to heaven, she prayed: "O Lord, have mercy on his staying up for long hours and his loud crying in the darkness of the night while people slept..." "O Lord, have mercy on his hunger and his thirst on his journeys from Madinah and Mecca while he fasted..." "O Lord, bless his righteousness to his mother and his father..." "O Lord, I commend him to Your cause and I am pleased with whatever You decree for him. And grant me for his sake the reward of those who are patient and who persevere."

By sunset, Abdullah was dead. Just over ten days later, his mother joined him. She was a hundred years old. Age had not made her infirm nor blunted the keenness of her mind.

May Allah's blessings be upon Asmaa bint Abu Bakr!

## EID STAMP



Did you know that in the United States there are many stamps commemorating a variety of religious holidays and events? Except, none of those stamps have ever recognized Islamic holidays or events for the United States' growing Muslim community. However, our sisters at the International Union of

Muslim Women, with Sister Aminah Assilmi, are requesting that the U.S. Postmaster General issue a postage stamp marking Eid. This is why we need your help to show the Postmaster General that the entire Muslim community is interested in this proposition.

All you have to do is write a simple letter to the U.S. Postmaster General expressing what it would mean to you if an Eid stamp was issued. Indicate your name, age, city, and state on the letter. If you like, include a drawing showing what the stamp should look like.

Send letters for the U.S. Postmaster General to:

Aminah Assilmi

International Union of Muslim Women

P.O. Box 181194, Fairfield, OH 45018

Tel/Fax: 513-887-0882

E-Mail: aminah@fuse.net (e-mail letters accepted)

We are urging everyone to participate, especially children, Islamic schools, Centers, and Mosques. The U.S. Postmaster General has shown interest in this idea so we need your help. Please share this information with everyone.

## ALHAMMDULILAH EID STAMPS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT POST OFFICES NATIONWIDE

WASHINGTON D.C. - In October of 2001, before the month of Ramadan of that year, the Postal Service of the United States brought to light the Eid stamp. This marks the end of a successful campaign led by the American Muslim Council to have a stamp for Ramadan. AMC (American Muslim Council) also took part in the campaign to have a stamp of Malcolm X in 1999.