



THE ISLAMIC BULLETIN

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Dear Readers,

Assalamu Alaikum! Welcome to the latest edition of The Islamic Bulletin. We would like to thank you for your continued support over the years. As you know, the world has lost a most beloved and influential Muslim leader with the passing of Brother Muhammad Ali. The Editors of the Islamic Bulletin ask that you join us in making a special dua for Brother Ali, who was buried in an Islamic ceremony on Friday, June 10, 2016. Ali, who was 74 years old and had been battling Parkinson’s disease for many years, was truly a pioneer in so many respects. As Heavyweight Champion of the world, Ali was truly the greatest heavyweight champion of all time. Yet, he did not allow this fame and honor to prevent him from speaking the truth and firmly standing for the issues he believed in. Whether it was proudly defending his religion, Islam, or his beliefs not to enlist in the Vietnam War, or his fight against racism and segregation, Ali was a hero of Muslims and non-Muslims throughout the globe. Once recognized as one of the most famous faces of all times, Ali is adored by both young and old. His presence and grandeur was large, but his heart and soul remained humble, possessing a beautiful quality enabling him to connect to his millions of fans worldwide.

We ask that Allah (SWT) grant Muhammad Ali forgiveness for his sins and shortcomings, have mercy on his soul, make his legacy and his progeny pious Muslims, and ask Allah (SWT) that Ali be given Jannat-al-Firdous (the highest place in Paradise). Ameen

In honor of Muhammad Ali, the Islamic Bulletin is publishing a touching story of his life—an inspiration to us all. Included in this issue is another beautiful story about an American Inmate’s Journey to Islam. Also inside this issue, read about Ibtihaj Muhamamd, the first hijab-wearing American Muslim woman to compete in the Olympic Games. Join us as we cheer on this trend-setting pioneer in women’s sports. We are so proud of her accomplishments and her role in inspiring other young hijabis to be whatever they want to be.

Read about The Islamic Roots of Modern Pharmacy. In stories of the Sahaba we retrace the inspiring story of Bilal and his bravery in the early days of Islam. The story of Nurse Cassie, who became acquainted with Islam while caring for a sick, elderly man will touch the heartstrings of all that read it. Cook’s Corner features two delicious recipes sent in by our readers. Try them out this Ramadan and they just might become keepers to your recipe collection.

We ask Allah (SWT) to accept this publication and may He (SWT) make it a source of guidance and blessings to every single reader. Please keep the Islamic Bulletin staff members and their families in your duas.

Happy Ramadan!

AN AMERICAN INMATE'S JOURNEY TO ISLAM

Physically Confined but Spiritually Free

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Most Merciful.



You hear many times about men entering prison and accepting the religion of Islam. Some say that it is a unique phenomenon particular to the black inmate population, male as well as female. The truth of the matter is that many prisoners of diverse backgrounds make the reversion to Islam. My story is only one of many. It is written not to draw attention to myself; rather, it is written as a testimony to what faith in Allah can do to a person physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. I pray that my story inspires others to study the signs of the Creator so that they may recognize the Truth and live in accordance with it.

I was first introduced to Islam in 1984. At that time, I was only a boy of 11 years and did not understand what exactly I was hearing. I was told that Muslims pray to only one God and do not eat pork. I was also told that Islam is a religion truly for the black race and that any other race could never really be Muslim. All of this was strange to me. I was raised in a Baptist family and was taught that the only way that I could be saved was to believe in Jesus while also recognizing that the only way that I could talk to God was by praying to Jesus. I was told that I was a sinful person by nature and that the only way that I could be purified was through the "blood of Christ." These contradictory philosophies only served to confuse my young mind even more. So in response to this mental onslaught, I chose to ignore both.

During my teenage years I attended neither church, mosque, nor any other type of religious institution. Instead, I devoted myself to preparing for my worldly future: I dedicated myself to my country. I entered the ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) program at my high school and excelled. I was told that there was no greater calling than to stand up and fight for one's country. To this ideal, I put forth all of my efforts. It was also during this time that I started to fall prey to street life. I soon gained a reputation as a tough guy, and while it earned me a lot of respect from others on the streets, it also led to my downfall.

On August 26, 1990 I was arrested and charged with "aggravated assault with a deadly weapon" as well as "accessory to murder." Being highly publicized, my case sent shockwaves through the community. Most of my co-defendants were good students who were expected to succeed in whatever they chose to do. Thus, many people were baffled as to how all of this happened. In September of that year, our charges were upgraded to "organized crime conspiracy to commit murder" and "organized crime murder." I was then placed in solitary confinement because I was considered a threat to the security of the institution. In April 1991, I was formally sentenced to 20 years in prison for the part I played in those crimes. I would like to think that I was a man at that time; but in reality, I was still a boy trying to act like a man. And

so in this self-deluded state, I was thrust into an environment that I was totally unprepared to deal with.

On July 21, 1991, I arrived at my first unit of assignment, the Clemens Unit in Brazoria, Texas. This unit was nicknamed the "Burning Hell." My first cell partner called himself Mac-T. He attempted to lay down the rules of the cell immediately: 1- take off your shoes before entering the cell, 2- clean the floor before you leave the cell, and 3- no noise when he is praying. Thinking that I was tough, I really did not try to listen to what he was saying. So needless to say, we did not stay in the cell together longer than a day. Only in later years did I learn that he was a Muslim. Soon after that, I started to assimilate into the prison culture: fighting, stealing, gangbanging, and getting drunk at every chance. Anything to try to forget my wasted life and shattered dreams. I left Clemens in December of 1991 so that I could attend college at the Hughes Unit in Gatesville, Texas. My journey was just beginning.

Upon my arrival at the Hughes Unit, I immediately recognized the complete difference in the environment. Where as in Clemens everyone was about the same age as me, in this new unit most people were 15 to 20 years older than I was. My reputation preceded me to Hughes, so I was forced to live up to it. A few of the older men saw what I was doing and tried to warn me that this was not the way to do my time. Nonetheless, the cycle that I had started in Clemens came back in full swing. I fought a lot, drank a lot, and did everything I could do to break the rules of an establishment that I saw as corrupt.

In 1993 when my father died, my life spiraled completely out of control. In my eyes, I had nothing to live for – my one source of stability was gone. It was during this time that I met three brothers who would have a huge impact on my life. One was named Yaqub, another Kareem, and the other Wadi. These were three of the most disciplined people I had ever met. They were devout Muslims whose sole purpose in life was to please God. Often times, they would invite me to the Islamic services, but with my gangster persona and corrupted mentality, I would decline and go on about my mischief. By this time, I considered myself an atheist. The only thing I worshipped was power; the only thing I believed in was myself. It was in that state that I was to meet a young man who would inspire me to return to the one thing that had been missing from my life for years: God.

It was 1995, and I was working in the kitchen as a diet cook. My job was to ensure that the food was up to dietary standards and that each person on the approved list received their tray during mealtime. My assistant was a young man named Haywood. He was a Muslim and went by the name Mustafa. We were good friends and would talk about everything: politics, education, and even religion. And so one day, while he was studying, I asked him what he was reading. He replied, "This does not have anything to do with drinking or killing – you wouldn't be interested." I bothered him until he finally let me see what it was that he was studying: he was teaching himself Arabic. When he asked if I knew what it was and I said yes, he didn't believe me. I told him that I had seen it when I was introduced to Islam in 1984. I told him that I could even learn it if he taught me the letters. He said, "NO WAY!" so I tried to bet him that I could learn it, but he told me that Muslims do not gamble.

I resolved to learn Arabic just to prove to him that I could. He taught me the letters and around 20 minutes later, I had them memorized. The feeling of accomplishment was incredible! When he saw that I had committed them to memory, he gave me a short list of words to learn, thinking that I could do nothing with it. I really do not blame him for feeling that way – I know that I would have felt the same way about me. After learning the word list, I needed another way to study Arabic. Little did I know that my next decision would change my life forever.

On a whim (or perhaps by inspiration), I decided to ask a Muslim named Faheem for a copy of the Qur'an, Islam's sacred Book, to aid me in my study of the Arabic language. He gave me one saying, "God-willing, you will become a Muslim." I did not think so but I thanked him anyway. My next step was to start trying to read the Arabic in the Qur'an.

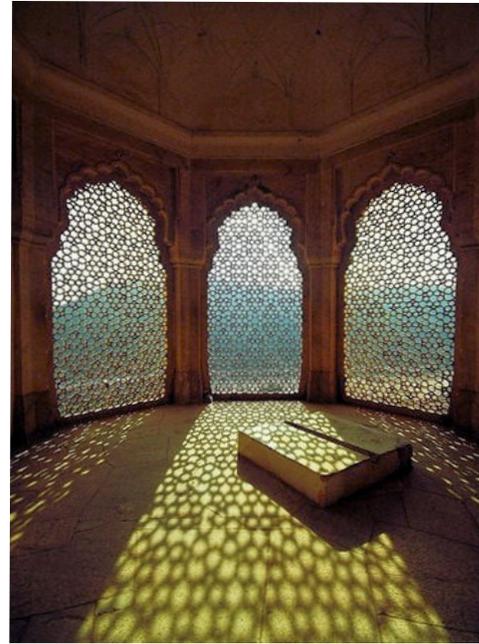
As I was reading, some of the injunctions and stories in the scripture caught my attention. They touched me in a way that is hard to describe, and after a few months of studying, I told Faheem that I was thinking about becoming a Muslim. He encouraged me and gave me a lot of advice. In my studies, I reflected upon the actions of Yaqub, Wadi, and Kareem. These were three brothers who had endured the brutality and hopelessness of prison life for decades and still held their heads up high with the knowledge that all things are in the hands of Allah. No matter what man tried to do to them, they maintained their faith in the doctrine that there is no might or power except the Power of the One True God, Allah. And so it was, with these thoughts in my head, that I continued my journey.

The final piece fell in place on a Friday night. The next morning I was supposed to pick up a package of illegal contraband that I had been waiting for. As I sat in my housing area that night, I decided that I would read from the Qur'an. As I opened the Book, the words of a particular verse jumped out at me: Surah 3, verse 103, which reads, **"And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it, thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way."** These words shook my very soul such that I decided not to go to my meeting the next morning. The next day, I found out that the person who I was supposed to meet had been apprehended. I was so taken aback by this that I did something that I had not done since my youth: I prayed. I prayed for forgiveness of my sins and bad conduct; I prayed for guidance and mercy from the God I had turned my back on. I decided then and there that I wanted to dedicate my life to doing good and pleasing God.

When I took this good news to Faheem, he sat me down and asked me if I was resolved on my decision. When I told him yes, he began to educate me on the basic beliefs and teachings of Islam. When other Muslims saw this, some encouraged me while others, familiar with my ways, told the brothers that they were wasting their time. I would not be denied, however. As I learned the Prayer, a whole new world opened up to me that I had never seen before. In this world was peace, contentment, and most importantly, a sense of completeness. The lessons that I was learning about Tawheed (Unity and Oneness of God) touched my soul. By the Grace

of Allah, and with the help of the Muslims that were in the cellblock with me, I learned very quickly.

I was ready to take my Shahadah (public declaration of faith), but I still had one piece of unfinished business: I needed to disassociate myself from my gang. By that time, I had a lot of rank and influence in my organization so I thought that there would be no problem with me walking away. I thought wrong. They say that with knowledge comes responsibility, and with responsibility comes accountability. As such, people wanted me to be held accountable for my actions, so they came up with



a plan to take me out. I had decided to call a meeting of the other leaders of my organization to let them know what I was doing and why. I owed no one an explanation, but I wanted to be up front with them in order to make a clean break. I was oblivious to their plotting against me, thus I naively went to the recreation yard to meet them. Allah says in the Qur'an in Surah 3, verse 55: **"And they planned and Allah (also) planned, and Allah is the best of planners."**

During the meeting, certain inmates who were trying to get rank within the organization proposed that I should be beaten and/or killed. This was all discussed while I was present! I was outraged but not shocked. Many people in prison look at Islam like it is just another gang. Thus, to the spiritually-blinded eyes of many of my former gang mates, I was changing my loyalty from one gang to another. There was one man, however, who understood the difference. His name was Willie, and he was as wild as they come. Thus, imagine my shock when he said the following words: "How can we even sit here talking about doing something to this brother just because he wants to give his life to God." He went on to remind the members of the meeting about all of the things that I had done to help many of my fellow gang members. In the end, they recognized the truth of his words and decided to leave me unharmed.

Years later, some of the same brothers would embrace Islam in much the same way that I did. Allah touches the hearts of men in ways that we do not perceive. It is only later that we comprehend and recognize the wonderful plan of the Creator. The next night, I declared my Shahadah in front of all of the community that was present at the Islamic teaching service. I can not express the feelings of love and joy that I felt when I publicly declared my belief. While I had been saying my Shahadah in my ritual prayer for weeks, it was not the same. It felt like a massive burden had been lifted off of my back. For the first time in my life, I was truly free. It was like I had been born again – returned to the natural state of my

early childhood. This was a new beginning. I had little idea of where my journey was taking me, but I was nevertheless glad to be going.

The next few months were spent in intense studying. I wanted to learn everything at my disposal about Islam. My studies were aided by four brothers who helped me greatly: Faheem, Shafiyq, Malk`ilm, and Ismaiyl Shareef, a.k.a. "The Minister." These four were instrumental to my intellectual and spiritual growth as a Muslim, and I thank Allah every day that He allowed me to cross paths with them. Malk`ilm and Shareef were concerned with studying Arabic. Shafiyq was into hadeeth (Prophetic traditions), and he never passed up the chance to share something with me. Faheem was my partner, my confidant, and my biggest supporter.

I started using an Arabic/English dictionary to understand the Arabic text of the Qur'an. I had been misled and duped by the translators of the Bible my whole life, so I was highly skeptical of someone else's translation of the Holy Qur'an. My goal became to not only read and write Arabic, but also to be able to understand and translate the Book on my own. I had no instructor, but I did have determination, faith in Allah's Power, and a will to succeed. I would spend up to 10 hours a day learning the words of Surah 2. As I familiarized myself with the words, I would commit the verses to memory. It was a hard and long process that definitely took its toll on me physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. I would often pray to Allah to lighten the load of my intensive studies. I did this until I came across the verse in which Allah tells the **believers that He has imposed no difficulty upon them in their religion (22:78)**. This greatly lifted my spirits and gave me the strength to carry on. So, within six months after taking my Shahadah, I was teaching the beginning Arabic class. Al-Hamdu lillah (Praise be to Allah).

As I became more spiritually aware, I began to see the value of true Islamic knowledge. It is reported in a Tradition: "Seek knowledge even as far as China." Thus, my immediate task became to acquire all of the Islamic knowledge that I could obtain through my limited resources. I started studying the books of Hadeeth. I became familiar with the different authors of the major canonical books of Traditions. Next, I sought out a deeper and better understanding of the fundamentals of faith. I strove to recognize the spiritual meanings of the physical acts of worship that we perform everyday. I also turned my attention to the science of Qur'anic exegesis. I studied the works of Ibn Kathir and Jafar As-Saddiq in order to get a richer understanding of the different schools.

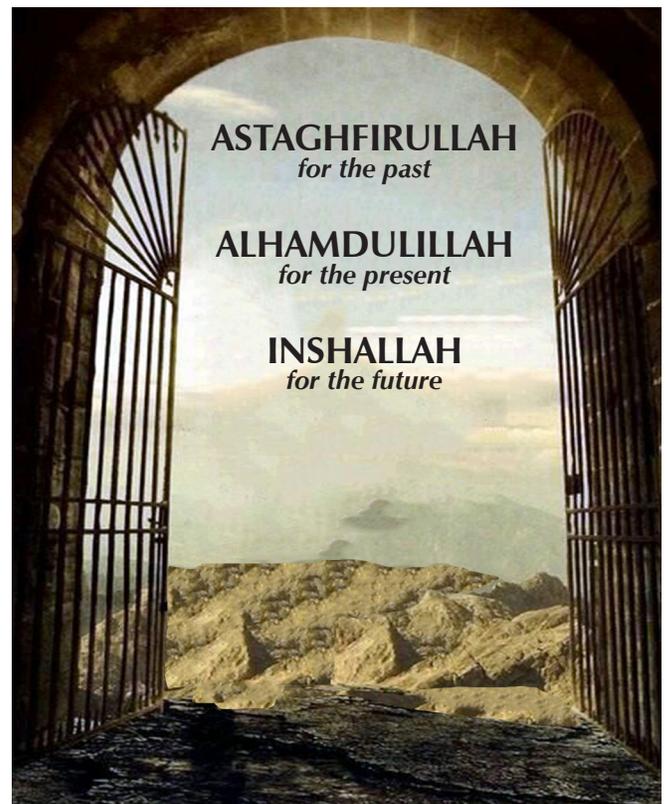
I next turned my attention to Islamic history, while trying not to confine myself to a particular author or school of thought. I read the works of Ibn Atheer, Muhammad Hykal, al-Ameen al-Amilee, and Ameer Ali. The more that I learned about the "Golden Age" of Islamic history, the more my faith in the future of humanity grew. Allah the, the Most High, tells us in His Book that we must reflect on the generations that passed away before us. By studying the actions of the Ummah (Islamic nation) of the past, we see what sincerity of faith and dependence on Allah can accomplish. Similarly, I recognized what disunity can do to the Ummah. Petty hatreds and grudges can destroy the oneness of the Muslims. With this knowledge, I then sought to inspire others to open their

minds to the Truth and to embrace Islam wholeheartedly, without any reservations.

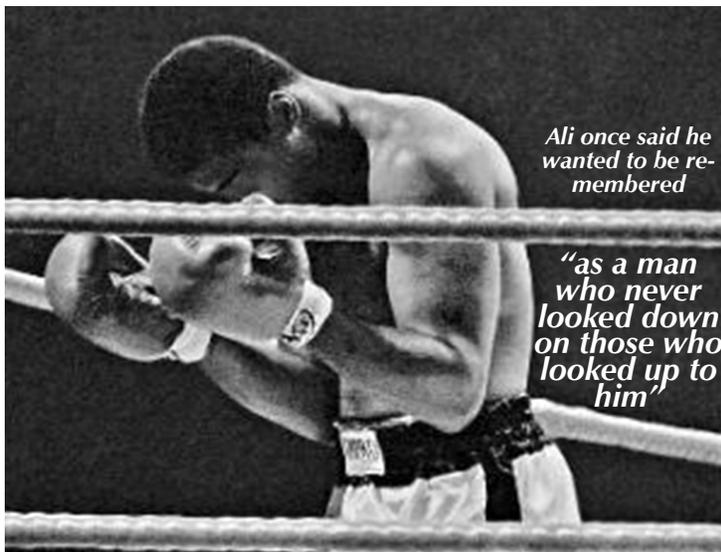
Soon after, I was asked to start giving lectures at our teaching services. I tried to stay away from frivolous topics and discussions so as to give a clear and correct view of Islam. My objective was to establish the basics and stay away from the different ideologies and fractionalization. Once I began to speak, Allah opened up for me many doors of knowledge and understanding. I still continued to focus on perfecting my knowledge of the Arabic language and the Islamic sciences.

In July 1999, I was transferred to the Beto Unit in Palestine, Texas to attend another college. As I settled in, I began to teach Arabic once again but this time at the advanced level. The regional Islamic Chaplain, Imam Abdullah Rasheed, asked me to participate in handling the Islamic affairs, so I was appointed to the Majlis Al-Shura (decision-making council) and acted in that capacity for two years. The experience and knowledge that I gained working under Imam Rasheed and his successor, Imam Omar Rakeeb, helped me to grow not only mentally, but it also made me aware of my moral duty as a Muslim.

On June 17, 2003, I was released from prison after almost 13 years of incarceration. While some say that my time in prison was a waste of life and potential, I look back on it as a blessing from a Most Merciful God. I used to ask myself, "What would have happened if I had never come to prison?" This was something that bothered me all of the time until I read in Surah 64, verse 11: "**No affliction comes about but by Allah's permission; and whoever believes in Allah, He guides aright his heart; and Allah is Cognizant of all things.**" This helped me to understand that my going to prison was only a trial from Allah. It helped me to recognize my error and amend my life. And while I missed out on a portion of the life of this world, in sha' Allah (God willing) I gained a much greater portion of the Hereafter.



MUHAMMAD ALI (1942-2016)



Ali once said he wanted to be remembered

"as a man who never looked down on those who looked up to him"

Born in Louisville, Kentucky to a Baptist mother and a Methodist father, Ali was named Cassius Clay. His father was a sign painter and his mother, Odessa Clay, was a housemaid. The American South was racially segregated at that time and the young Ali grew up with all the humiliations and restrictions that the Jim Crow laws enforced on African Americans.

When Muhammed Ali was 12, his bicycle was stolen and he reported it to a local police officer. He boldly declared to Officer Joe Martin that he 'would whip the thief' who stole his bike when he caught him. Officer Martin, who was quite amused by this bold and resolute young man, advised young Muhammad that he had better learn to fight and invited him to come and train at the gym he owned. Muhammed Ali took him up on his offer and the legen began. He would become the greatest ever heavy weight champion, winning the title 3 times and defending it 16 times. Ali was opposed to war and refused to fight in the Vietnam War. This resulted in him been banned from boxing for nearly four years. Throughout his life his battles in and out of the ring were many as he strove for perfection in every sphere of his life.

From a very young age Ali would question many aspects of the Christian faith and he challenged the idea of having to see himself as inferior because of his race and color. His mother was often bombarded by him with questions such as "Why is Jesus white with blonde hair and blue eyes?", and "Why are all the men at the last supper white?" The fact that white people were always portrayed in a positive way and that African Americans were given subordinate positions did not miss his keen observational qualities.

Muhammad Ali's fierce fighting skills were not only put to use in his boxing matches, but also against white supremacy and social injustices. Ali could not accept that the Christian faith interpreted the bible in a way that allowed for the degradation and subordination of anyone that was not white. Having been bothered from a very young age that beauty, goodness, truth and many other virtues were seen

from the perspective of the white supremacy. He asked his mother, "Why is everything white?", "the Angels' food cake was the white cake and the Devil's food cake was the chocolate cake. The president lives in a White House and Santa Claus was white. Everything bad was black, the little ugly duckling was black duck, the black cat was the bad luck and if I threaten you I'm going to blackmail you, I said 'Mum, why don't they call it white-mail, they lie too?'"

He started questioning his beliefs and while touring around the world he realized that six hundred million people were Muslims. He noted that every third person was named Muhammad. He has said that even though he had found it extremely difficult to read at a younger age, and was probably dyslexic he started reading profusely after his conversion to Islam. He read the Quran, Islamic books and research books in order to find contradictions in the Bible. He kept notes on all that he discovered in his readings and spoke profusely at various events and lectures when invited. The link between Christianity and white supremacy is what caused Ali to drift away from the Christian faith and to oppose white supremacy with all his might. After all, African Americans had been robbed of their true religion, Islam, and that is one of the reasons why he rejected the name given to him at birth and opted to be named Muhammad Ali, after the prophet. The slaves had been named after the people who had bought them and had not kept their own names. In 1964, shortly after he won the coveted title, Ali joined the Nation of Islam. It was then that he said, "Cassius Clay is a slave name. I didn't choose it and I don't want it," "I am Muhammad Ali, a free name – it means beloved of God, and I insist people use it when people speak to me."

Allah is the Greatest; I am just the greatest boxer."

Muhammad Ali is the most well known American to convert to Islam. Later on, he met Malcolm X who became his spiritual mentor at that time. During a mass conversion of the Nation into Sunni Islam in 1974, organized by the son of the founder of the Nation of Islam Elijah Muhammad, Muhammad Ali converted to Sunni Islam. Muhammad Ali ceaselessly exalted the virtues of Islam as a universal and anti-racist religion. The absoluteness of Islam is embodied in the Hajj (pilgrimage) and the spirit of brotherhood and Ali endlessly spoke about it.

Ali was touched when he saw how many different cultures and races converged in one place to honor Islam. He was always warmly accepted wherever he went and was very articulate about the way Islam connected humanity; no matter what race or ethnicity they were. He once said, "You can go to any country and say, Asalaamualaikum. Walaikum salaam and you've got a home, you've got a brother." The reason Ali chose to follow the Islamic path was because he "never saw so much love, never saw so many people hugging each other, kissing each other and praying five times a day." Muhammad Ali was a person that most people felt deeply connected to because he was very approachable and had a wonderful way of transcending any prejudices that he encountered on his travels. We all know that racism exists worldwide and in many variations, but Ali's graceful manner reminded the

Muslim world that the Ummah (community) is meant to embrace the differences in race, class and culture.

Muhammad Ali never considered himself as elite and saw himself as no different to anyone else. His activism was grounded in his Islamic beliefs and he believed that human beings are obliged to do good and charitable things during their short time on earth. As a child growing up in a racially segregated Louisville, it was almost impossible for him to find a place to work out and he would run to the gym or to school in order for him to stay in shape. He returned as an adult and, without ever been asked, helped many charitable causes, and built a Museum for children in order to encourage them to reach for their dreams.

His belief, that by giving he was pleasing Allah and that actions were based on intentions, made him known for his generosity.

Muhammad Ali is known by his trademark statement "I am the greatest!" This was not a sign of arrogance. He is still the greatest heavy weight champion of all times. He was asked by an interviewer how he balanced his humility as a Muslim with this statement and Ali replied "*Allah is the Greatest; I am just the greatest boxer.*" He was a pious person and showed utter humility and always gave credit to Allah for his victories.

Ali is the only celebrity to have turned down the offer to have his name placed on the Walk of Fame in Hollywood. He so revered the Prophet Muhammad (S), that he did not want to have people stepping on his name and thus is the only celebrity to have his star placed on the wall.

Watch this video on the Walk of Fame:
<http://www.islamicbulletin.org/videos/clay/star/ali.mp4>



Ali refused to play the role of the "submissive negro" and he attributed all his success and skill as a boxer to the Greatness of God. A Muslim fan once asked him if he was "As good a Muslim as he was a boxer, and he asserted that "No true Muslim will brag or even take a chance of saying he is good, because it is up to Allah to judge. God blesses me to be so great here, because all of the time I've been talking about God, pushing God, pushing religion. I'm not talking about me, how great and how much money I've

got, I'm always giving the praise to God, so that's why I'm as great as I am in this physical world, because I push Him first."

Muhammad Ali never let an opportunity drop and he would take any question put to him and answer in a way so as to preach about Islam and the Oneness of God. He used his fame and stature to his advantage and would make people contemplate various issues pertaining to their faith, especially about man's existence, life after death and how to prepare to receive Allah's Jannah (eternal place of rest). He would take any opportunity to give Dawah(preach) and always encouraged the Muslims to get closer to Allah. He praised Allah and the religion of Islam and advised young Muslims to "Stay strong, read the Quran, pray and praise Allah," in order to ward off the pressures of secular or anti-Islamic forces. Young people, he believed, should not compromise their beliefs. In many photos of Ali before a fight we see him standing with his hands raised in dua(prayer and supplication) to Allah. Prayer and dua were an essential part of his struggle and he attributed all obstacles, difficulties and all of his successes to Allah.

On his retirement, Muhammad Ali was asked how he was going to spend his time. He replied that he was going to prepare himself to meet his Maker, Allah. In interviews he often expressed that if we subtracted all the hours that we needed to sleep, watch television etc, and then he reckoned that he had about sixteen years to prepare for his death. Click here to watch his video interview:
<http://www.islamicbulletin.org/videos/clay/speech1977.mp4>

He would remind people that the soul and spirit never die and that is why we must prepare them for heaven. His intention was to help people learn how to treat each other and he brought about peace and charitable work. He managed to do all this and more. "Islam is a religion of peace," he would say.

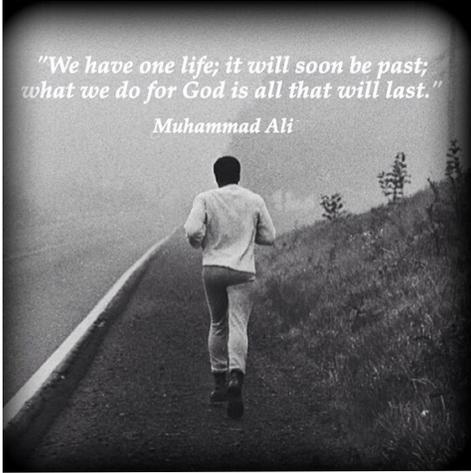
Muhammad Ali's adored his family and his 2 sons and 7 daughters. They speak of what a warm and gentle father he was to them and he always had his large family around him. In an interview two of his daughters revealed that he had over a hundred hours of recordings which he had made of them speaking to him and answering his questions and he played them back to them as they grew older.

"His daughter Hanna recalls how he taught her an important lesson about modesty. She had arrived at his home dressed in a revealing outfit. Instead of admonishing her he took her aside and lovingly said, "*Hana, everything that God made valuable in the world is covered and hard to get to. Where do you find diamonds? Deep down in the ground, covered and protected. Where do you find pearls? Deep down at the bottom of the ocean, covered up and protected in a beautiful shell. Where do you find gold? Way down in the mine, covered over with layers and layers of rock. You've got to work hard to get to them.*" He told his young daughter, "*Your body is sacred. You're far more precious than diamonds and pearls, and you should be covered too.*"

When Muhammad Ali was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1979, he did not stop making himself available to charitable causes worldwide and he managed to negotiate the return of American hostages from Lebanon and Iraq.

He even increased the active role in pursuing justice all over the world. With time the disease severely affected his mobility and his speech. "We as Muslims have to stand up against those who use Islam to advance their own personal gain," – Ali has said. He remembered that though he was great, he was not The Greatest; that he was a servant of Allah (SWT).

On June 3, 2016, Muhammad Ali returned to his Lord. He is one of the most famous, most loved and most written about public figures in the last century. He has been



on the cover of Sports Illustrated magazine 30 times. He lit the Olympic Torch in the 1996 Atlanta Games and was the first Muslim to do so. To his last breath he challenged America to live up to its promises and refused to accept the unjust imposition of class and race.

The former Attorney general of the United States, Eric Holder said, "his biggest win came not in the ring, but in our courts in his fight for his beliefs." He never ceased to be an example to all and constantly reminded the people of Allah and the Islamic faith. He spoke the truth, he was never ashamed to be pious and he felt as much at home in the palaces that he visited as he did in the humble homes of the people of his home town. He knew how to handle the pressures of fame and the obligations that fame bring. He managed to channel his fame to a good purpose and lived his life according to his faith and the principles of Islam. This ambassador to humanity always managed to practice what he preached in every sphere of his life.

Muhammad Ali was buried in his home town of Louisville Kentucky. An estimated 100,000 people holding signs and chanting, "Ali!Ali!" lined up the streets as he was carried to his final resting place. His headstone was simple in keeping with Muslim tradition. Muhammed Ali was a Champion for all people and will be remembered fondly .

"Verily to Allah we belong and unto Him is our return."

(Quran 2:156)

We ask Allah to have Mercy on him, forgive his sins and grant him the highest level in paradise, Jannat Al Firdous. Ameen.

IBTIHAJ MUHAMMAD FENCING CHAMPION

A five-time Senior World team medalist and 2014 Senior World Team Champion, Ibtihaj Muhammad will make history in Rio de Janeiro this summer as the first U.S. woman to compete in the Olympic Game with a hijab. Ranked No. 7 in the world during the 2015-16 season, Muhammad has won both individual and team medals on the World Cup circuit.



As a Muslim youth, Muhammad's parents were in search of a sport for her to play where she could be fully covered. Growing up in New Jersey, Muhammad's after-school schedule was a round robin of youth sports: swimming, volleyball, tennis, softball, and track. But she always seemed to stand out on the court, field or pool deck, because her religion prevented her from wearing a uniform that didn't cover her arms, legs and head. She was teased, even harassed. Then, while driving past the local high school, she and her mother saw girls wearing fully covered uniforms. Muhammad's mother turned to her daughter said, "I don't know what that is, but when you get to high school, you're doing it." Fencing provided a unique opportunity where Muhammad could fulfill her desire to participate in a sport, while still adhere to the tenants of her faith to cover her body. She began fencing at age 13 and now at 30, Muhammad is set to be the first U.S. athlete to compete in the Olympics while wearing a hijab. And while competitors in other sports have had to fight to be able to dress according to their religion, Muhammad deftly worked her way up the international fencing rankings without having to defend the way she dresses.

Muhammad trains in New York City at the Peter Westbrook Foundation, an organization founded by Olympian Peter Westbrook to mentor inner-city kids through the sport of fencing. Westbrook said, "She has something in her that it takes in real champions, that unbelievable will to win."

Muhammad graduated from Duke University with a dual major in international relations and African studies, and a minor in Arabic. In 2014, Muhammad launched her own clothing company, Louella, which aims to bring modest fashionable clothing to the United States market.

She also is a sports ambassador, where she serves on the U.S. Department of State's Empowering Women and Girls Through Sport Initiative. She has traveled to various countries to engage in dialogue on the importance of sports and education.

THE GREATEST CHAMPION OF ALL TIMES

Muhammad Ali 1942-2016



WOMEN IN ISLAM

The Nurse and the Muslim Patient A True Story from the United Kingdom



My name is Cassie and I am 23 years old. I graduated as a qualified nurse this year and was given my first position as a home nurse. My patient was an English gentleman in his early 80s who suffered from Alzheimer's. In the first meeting, the patient was given his record and from it I could see that he was a convert to the religion of Islam, therefore he was a Muslim.

I knew from this that I would need to take into account some modes of treatment that may go against his faith, and therefore try to adapt my care to meet his needs. I brought 'halal' meat to cook for him and ensured that there was no pork or alcohol allowed on the premises.

My patient was in a very advanced stage of his condition so a lot of my colleagues could not understand why I was going through so much effort for him. But I understood that a person who commits to a faith deserves that commitment to be respected, even if they are not in a position to understand.

After a few weeks with my patient, I began to notice some patterns of movement. At first I thought it was some copied motions he's seen someone doing, but I saw him repeat the movement at particular time; morning, afternoon, evening.

The movements were to raise his hands, bow and then put his head to the ground. I could not understand it. He was also repeating sentences in another language. I couldn't figure out what language it was as his speech was slurred but I know the same verses were repeated daily.

Also, he didn't allow me to feed him with my left hand (I am left-handed). Somehow I knew this linked to his religion but didn't know how.

One of my colleagues told me about Paltalk as a place for debates and discussions and as I did not know any Muslims except for my patient I thought it would be good to speak to someone live and ask questions. I went on the Islam section and entered the room 'True Message'.

Here I asked questions regarding the repeated movements

and was told that these were the actions of prayer. I did not really believe it until someone posted a link of the Islamic prayer on youtube. I was shocked.

A man who has lost all memory of his children, of his occupation, and could barely eat and drink was able to remember not only actions of prayer but verses that were in another language.

This was nothing short of incredible and I knew that this man was devout in his faith, which made me want to learn more in order to care for him the best I could.

I came into the Paltalk room as often as I could and was given a link to read the translation of the Quran and listen to it. The chapter of the 'Bee' gave me chills and I repeated it several times a day.

I saved a recording of the Quran on my iPod and gave it to my patient to listen to. He was smiling and crying, and in reading the translation I could see why.

I applied what I gained from paltalk to care for my patient but gradually found myself coming to the room to find answers for myself. I never really took the time to look at my life. I never knew my father, my mother died when I was 3, and my brother and I were raised by our grandparents who died 4 years ago; so it was now just the two of us.

But despite all of this loss, I always thought I was happy and content. It was only after spending time with my patient that felt like I was missing something. I was missing that sense of peace and tranquility my patient, even through suffering felt.

I wanted that sense of belonging and a part of something that he felt, even with no one around him.

I was given a list of mosques in my area by a lady on Paltalk and went down to visit one. I watched the prayer and could not hold back my tears.

I felt drawn to the mosque every day and the Imam and his wife would give me books and tapes and welcome any questions I had.

Every question I asked at the mosque and on Paltalk was answered with such clarity and depth that could do nothing but accept them.

I have never practiced a faith but always believed that there was a God; I just did not know how to worship Him. One evening I came on Paltalk and one of the speakers on the mic addressed me. He asked me if I have any questions, I said "no." He asked if I was happy with the answers I was given, I said "yes."

He asked then what was stopping me accepting Islam and I could not answer. I went to the mosque to watch the dawn prayer. The Imam asked me the same question and I could not answer.

I then went to tend to my patient. I was feeding him and as I looked in his eyes I just realized that he was brought to me for a reason and the only thing stopping me from accepting was fear.... not fear in the sense of something bad, but fear of accepting something good, and thinking that I was not worthy like this man.

That afternoon I went to the mosque and asked the Imam if I could say my declaration of faith, the Shahadah.

He helped me through it and guided me through what I would need to do next.

I cannot explain the feeling I felt when I said it. It was like someone woke me up from sleep and sees everything more clearly.

The feeling was overwhelming joy, clarity and most of all.... peace.

The first person I told was not my brother but my patient.

I went to him, and before I even opened my mouth he cried and smiled at me. I broke down in front of him, I owed him so much. I came home, logged on to Paltalk and repeated the shahadah for the room.

They all helped me so much and even though I had never seen a single one of them, they felt closer to me than my own brother.

I did eventually call my brother to tell him and although he wasn't happy, he supported me and said he would be there; I couldn't ask for any more.

After my first week as a Muslim my patient passed away in his sleep while I was caring for him. Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi Rajioon.

He died a peaceful death and I was the only person with him. He was like the father I never had and he was my doorway to Islam.

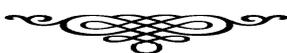
From the day of my Shahadah to this very day and for every day for as long as I live, I will pray that Allah shows mercy on him and grant him every good deed I perform in the tenfold.

I loved him for the sake of Allah and I pray each night to become an atoms weight of the Muslim he was. Islam is a religion with an open door; it is there for those who want to enter it.... Verily Allah is the Most Merciful, Most Kind.

*Sister Cassie passed away after giving da'wa to her brother. Allhamdulillah, he accepted Islam. **Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi Rajioon.**

We ask Allah (SWT) to have Mercy on her, forgive her sins, and grant her the highest level in Paradise, Jannat Al Firdous. Ameen

Listen to her story in audio by clicking here:
http://www.islamicbulletin.org/videos/Nurse_Cassie_and_her_Muslim_Patient.mp4



Ramadan Checklist

- ◆ Dua Before Sleep
- ◆ Dua when Waking Up
- ◆ Morning & Evening Dua
- ◆ Dua after Prayers
- ◆ 12 Sunnah Rawatib:
 - 2 before Fajir;
 - 4 before Dhuhr;
 - 2 after Dhuhr;
 - 2 after Magrib;
 - 2 after Isha;
- ◆ Salatul Duha
- ◆ Night Prayer after Taraweeh in Last Third of Night
- ◆ Make Dua in Last Hour of Friday before Magrib
- ◆ Train Tongue to do Dhikr/Forgive others & Refrain from Profanity
 - ◆ Read Quran
 - ◆ Make Dhikr
 - ◆ Perform Extra Prayers
 - ◆ Sponsor a Widow & Orphan
- ◆ Develop Habit of Making Regular Dua
 - ◆ Set a Goal to Memorize Surahs
 - ◆ Intention to Fast 6 Fasts of Shawwal Straight after Ramadan

Microsoft Word



Want to save your changes to Ramadan

Save

Don't Save

Cancel

The Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) said:

SPEAK A GOOD WORD OR REMAIN SILENT!

Abu Hurayrah relates that the Prophet (SAW), said:

"Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak a good word or remain silent."

The importance of this Hadith...

This hadith discusses some of the ways a Muslim's faith should affect the way he relates to others. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani writes: "This hadith speaks about three matters, and in doing so it brings together everything that good manners entail with respect to both word and deed."

Whoever believes in God and the Last Day...

The first condition is to either speak a good word or remain silent.

Speaking a good word or remaining silent

This is an encouragement to speak what is good and beneficial; at the same time it is a warning, cautioning us to be careful in what we say, lest we say something that is harmful or false.

It is part of a Muslim's faith to speak the truth and to say things that bring about benefit to others. Allah SWT says :

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak a word that is right. He will set right for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. " (Quran 33:70-71)

"No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right, or bring reconciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking Allah's pleasure, then we shall grant him a great reward." (Quran 4:114)

When we have nothing beneficial to say, silence is golden. Once, Mu`adh ibn Jabal asked the Prophet (SAW) to inform him of some good work that would admit him into Paradise and distance him from the Hellfire. The Prophet (SAW) mentioned to him the virtues of many good deeds, then said:

"Shall I inform you of the foundation of all of that?"

Muadh said: "Certainly."

The Prophet took hold of his tongue and said: "Restrain yourself from this."

Muadh then asked: "O Prophet of Allah! Are we held to task for the things that we say?"

The Prophet replied: "May your mother be bereaved of you, O Mu`adh! Does anything topple people headlong into the Hellfire save the harvests of their tongues?"

We should avoid speaking ill of others. We should rather remain silent unless we are seeking justice for some wrong that has been perpetrated against us.

Our tongues are like double-edged swords. They can work for us and against us, both in this world and the Hereafter. We will be held accountable for what we say.

The Messenger of Allah (S) said: *"The strong man is not the one who can overpower the people by his strength, but the one who controls himself while in anger."*

He (S) also said: *"If any of you becomes angry, let him keep silent."*

The Messenger of Allah (S) said, *"If any of you becomes angry and he is standing, let him sit down, so his anger will go away; if it does not go away, let him lie down."*

The Prophet said: "Indeed a servant will speak a word pleasing to God that he thinks to be insignificant, but because of it God raises him by many degrees. And indeed a servant will speak a word displeasing to God that he thinks to be insignificant, but because of it, He will consign him to the Hellfire."

We must be vigilant not to speak falsehood. We must think about what we are saying and the possible consequences of our words before we go ahead and speak. This hadith encourages us to guard our tongues. A person who wants to speak should think upon what he is about to say before he utters it. If it then shows itself to have some benefit to it, he may speak it; otherwise he should refrain from doing so."

A Little Humor

A person goes to the doctor, about their spouse's temper.

The doctor asks, "What is the problem?"

The person says, ' Doctor, I don't know what to do. Every day my spouse seems to get angry for no reason. It scares me.'

The doctor says: I have a cure for that. When it seems that your spouse is getting angry, just take a glass of water and start swishing it in your mouth. Just swish and swish but don't swallow it until your spouse leaves the room or calms down."



Two weeks later the person comes back to the doctor looking fresh and reborn.

The person says: "Doctor that was a brilliant idea. Every time my spouse started losing it, I swished with water. I swished and swished, and my spouse calmed right down! How does a glass of water do that?"

The doctor says: "The water itself does nothing, it's keeping your mouth shut that does the trick."

The Prophet (SAW) said: "The strong man is not the one who can overpower the people by his strength, but the one who controls himself while in anger."

Ayyub (Job)

دُعَاءُ أَيُّوبَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
رَبِّ ائْتِنِي مَسْنِيَّ الضُّرِّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيمِينَ
(Quran 21:83)

**Rabbi annee massani-
ya alddurru waanta
arhamu alrrahimeen**

O My Lord: Great harm has afflicted me, and you are the Most Merciful of the merciful

Adam (Adam)

دُعَاءُ آدَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَسِرِينَ
(Quran 7:23)

**Rabbana thalamna an-
fusana wa-in lam
taghfir lana watarham-
na lanakoonanna
mina alkhasireen**

Our Lord, we have done wrong to ourselves. Unless You forgive us, and have mercy on us, we will be among the losers

Suleiman (Solomon)

دُعَاءُ سُلَيْمَانَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ
عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وُلْدِي وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ
وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ
(Quran 27:19)

**Rabbi awziAanee an
ashkura niAAamataka al-
latee anAAamta AAa-
layya waAAala wali-
dayya waan aAAamala
salihan tardahu waad-
khilnee birahmatika fee
AAibadika alssaliheen**

My Lord, direct me to be thankful for the blessings you have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and to do good works that please You. And admit me, by Your grace, into the company of Your virtuous servants

The Prophets

Peace Be Upon Them

الأنبياء

Duas

(Supplications)

Ibrahim (Abraham)

دُعَاءُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ
الْحِسَابُ
(Quran 14:40-41)

**Rabbi ijAAalnee muqee-
ma alssalati wamin thur-
riyyatee rabbana
wtaqabbal duAAa/i
Rabbana ighfir lee wali-
walidayya walilmu/mi-
neena yawma yaqoomu
alhisab**

My Lord! Make me an establisher (of) the prayer, and from my offsprings. Our Lord! and accept my prayer. Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents and the believers (on) ".the Day will (be) established the account

Muhammad
Sallallahu Alaihi wa Sallam

دُعَاءُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ
(Quran 2:201)

**Rabbana atina fee ald-
dunya hasanatan wafee
al-akhirati hasanatan
waqina AAathaba
alnnar**

Our Lord, give us goodness in this world, and goodness in the Hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the Fire

**Yunus
(Jonah)**

دُعَاءُ يُونُسَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ
الظَّالِمِينَ
(Quran 21:87)

**La ilaha illa anta sub-
hanaka innee kuntu
mina alththalimeen**

There is no god but You! Glory to You!
I was one of the wrongdoers

**Shuayb
(Jethro)**

دُعَاءُ شُعَيْبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا رَبَّنَا
أَفْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ
الْفَاتِحِينَ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ
الصَّالِحِينَ
(Quran 7:87)

**WasiAAa rabbuna
kulla shay-in AAILman
AAala Allahi tawak-
kalna rabbana iftah
baynana wabayna qaw-
mina bialhaqqi waanta
khayru alfatiheen**

Our Lord embraces all things in knowledge. In God we place our trust. Our Lord, decide between us and our people in truth, for You are the Best of Deciders

**The
Prophets
Peace Be Upon Them**

الأنبياء
Duas
(Supplications)

**Nuh
(Noah)**

دُعَاءُ نُوحٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ
عِلْمٌ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُنْ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ
(Quran 11:47)

**Rabbi innee aAAoothu
bika an as-alaka ma
laysa lee bihi AAILmun
wa-illa taghfir lee
watarhamnee akun
mina alkhasireena**

O my Lord! Indeed, I seek refuge in You, that I (should) ask You what not I have of it knowledge. And unless You forgive me and You have mercy on me, I will be among the losers

Al 'tikaf* الإعتكاف

THE SPIRITUAL RETREAT



The meaning of *Itikaf* is to seclude oneself in the Masjid with the express niyyah (intention) of *Itikaf*. Allah SWT has indeed in His perfect wisdom created humanity in a unique way. He has made it such that from time to time His creation

needs a rest. We rest at night to give our bodies time to recover. Birds retire to their nests, horses to their stables, bees to their hives etc. However there comes a time when more intensive rest or a retreat is required. Sometimes due to a person's physical condition he is admitted into the intensive care unit allowing his body time to recover.

Likewise the soul also needs to recover from the hustle and bustle of the world, the spiritual pollution caused by elements of society; the rat race of wanting, desiring and acquiring more of this world and the distractions that has diverted our mind, heart and soul from the remembrance of Allah SWT and His Beloved Messenger Muhammad (SAW).

The Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for the soul is the Masjid and *Itikaf* is the feature within this ICU to allow the soul to not only recover but be spiritually rejuvenated! *Itikaf* is indeed a Spiritual Retreat!

Inside each and every human being, a constant battle rages. It is like a battle between two tigers. One tiger is a manifestation of evil. It is full of hate, lust, and greed. It's fangs drip with bitterness and strife. The other tiger is an embodiment of good. It is full of love, compassion, and honesty. He never betrays his brother. These two tigers are constantly at war. Which tiger is going to win the battle? The answer is quite obvious.... Which ever one you feed. Our soul is being bombarded by forces of good and evil. We need to feed it good so that it overpowers the evil, and *Itikaf* is indeed an excellent opportunity to achieve this by feeding and nourishing the soul with good deeds. Since the life of the transient world keeps us busy for the whole year in studies, work, social functions, business, traveling and other such things that often causes us to be negligent of our souls and the next life, we may sometimes think that these things are the sole purpose in life and thus, we end up forgetting our true goal – Allah SWT (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

Itikaf indeed rejuvenates the soul and gives a fresh breath to life. In addition, we can once again find ourselves and our Allah SWT and spiritually return back to Him before we are forced to return back to Him when our soul separates from our body (death).

The period of *Itikaf* is the best time to force one's self to sit and think and reflect on the self and the world around; the period of the *Itikaf* is the best time to forget the worries of the transient world and to return to nurturing the soul and linking oneself with the Creator of the soul; the period of the *Itikaf* is the best time to return back to Allah SWT in true repentance for our sins committed through the year and to give our souls the spiritual strength desperately needed to live a spiritual and pure life in this challenging world.

The Prophet (Sallallâhu 'alayhi wasallam) observed, *Itikâf* and the Muslims have on the whole adhered to it. It has become a regular feature of the month of Ramadhân and a confirmed practice with the devout and the faithful. Ayesha (RA) relates that "*Rasulullâh. Sallallâhu 'alayhi wasallam regularly observed Itikâf during the last ten days of Ramadhân till the end of his life. After him, his wives maintained the tradition.*" (Bukhari). "*Rasulullâh Sallallâhu 'alayhi wasallam observed Itikâf for ten days every year in the month of Ramadhân. In the year he passed away he observed it for twenty days.*" (Bukhari). The Prophet (SAW) said: "*The persons who secludes himself (in the Masjid in Itikaf) in true faith and hope (for the reward of Allah), all of his previous sins shall be forgiven.*" (Kanzul Ummal, Hadith 24007)

3 TYPES OF ITIKAF

WAAJIB (Compulsory) Itikaf.

This *Itikaf* becomes compulsory when a person makes it obligatory upon himself. An example of this is, when a person makes a vow to Allah that if Allah fulfills a certain wish of his, he will undertake to perform so many days *Itikaf*. In this case the moment his wish is fulfilled, *Itikaf* becomes compulsory. A person may just make unconditional vow whereby he makes *Itikaf* Waajib upon himself for certain number of days. This becomes a Waajib duty on from that moment onward.

SUNNAH Itikaf.

This was the general practice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and it means to seclude oneself inside the Masjid for the last ten days of Ramadhan.

NAFIL Itikaf.

There is no special time or specific number of days for Nafil *Itikaf*. A person may make niyyah for any number of days at any time, even for his whole life

Before engaging into *Itikaf* it is highly recommended to learn the rules relating to this important act of ibadah (worship) from your local Ulama (Islamic Scholars) for more guidance.

Bilal (RA)



“O mankind! We have created you from male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know one another. Surely, the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.”
(Quran 49:13)

Bilal Ibn Rabah (RA) May Allah be pleased with him

The first Muezzin (Prayer Caller) and the first slave convert in Islam.

The religion of Islam embraces the unity of mankind and equality of all people. From the very beginning the Islamic community consisted of men and women from various tribal, racial and social groups.

Hazrat Bilal (580–640 AD) or Bilal Ibn Rabah, who was also known as “Bilal al-Habashi” or “Bilal the Ethiopian,” was the first Muezzin of Islam. One of the best known heroes of Islam, Bilal used to describe himself as “the Abyssinian, who was a slave.” Bilal was most probably the first African to convert to Islam and the greatest example of endurance. He stood firm in the face of oppression and has been an example to generations of Muslims on how to act when their faith is challenged. His life’s motto was “Ahad, Ahad” (Allah is One, Allah is One).

Bilal was the son of an African princess, and an Arab who were both enslaved; thus he was born into slavery. Bilal was hard working and very loyal to his master, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, the leader of the tribe. Umayyah was one of the strongest opponents of the Prophet (peace and blessings upon him). Bilal was tall, thin and very strong. He had a thick crown of grayish hair and was very soft-spoken, speaking only when he was spoken to. Bilal would travel to Ash-Sham (Syria) with his master’s trading caravan under conditions of bitter winters and extreme summers. The only payment he got for this was food, mainly consisting of dates that he was given to maintain his strength. As all slaves he was mistreated and overworked. During the course of his work in Umayyah’s home he would serve guests their meals while he would go hungry. While serving the guests, Bilal would overhear them speaking about Prophet Muhammad (S). The comments were a mixture of envy and hatred, but there were also comments about Muhammad’s (S) integrity and honesty. He started feeling drawn to this religion as he heard Abu Bakr, Prophet Muhammad’s (S) closest friend, speaking of Islam and his heart started filling with “Iman.” Bilal went with Abu Bakr to the Prophet (peace and blessings upon him) and declared his submission to Islam.

This was not an easy step to take because at that time members of the Makkah community were ridiculed and harassed when they converted to Islam. He was the seventh person to accept Islam. While Abu Bakr and others in tribes were protected from harm by the Quraysh, the

slaves that wanted to convert had no one to defend them. In pre-Islamic society, slaves were not treated well by their owners. Umayyah, who was a great antagonist of Islam, subjected Bilal to all kinds of torture to make him change his mind.

Being the heartless person he was, Umayyah ordered his men to throw Bilal onto the baking desert sands during the hottest hours of the day and a burning rock was placed on his chest to make the effect more intense. Bilal refused to revert to polytheism and the response of this great hero of Islam was “Ahad, Ahad” (He is One, He is One). This was all that he needed to say in order to receive the spiritual support to overcome the pain of the torture that was afflicted upon him. Even though many pleaded with him to say something favorable about their idols, he refused until eventually Umayyah and his men grew tired of torturing him. When Bilal was once asked on how he managed to bear the torture, he said: “I mixed the bitterness of the torture with the sweetness of Iman, and the sweetness of Iman conquered.”

Umayyah could not accept Bilal’s denial to revert to their faith and sold him to Abu Bakr, saying that he was ready to sell him for even an ounce of gold. Abu Bakr’s response to this was: “I would have paid even one hundred ounces for him.”

“I mixed the bitterness of the torture with the sweetness of Iman, and the sweetness of Iman conquered.”

When the Prophet (S) migrated to Madinah many Muslims settled there. The Muslims were trying to figure out how to call people to prayer. Islam became firmly established and salat, zakat and fasting were instituted. Muslims would gather for salat at appointed times without being summoned. The Prophet (peace and blessings upon him) had thought of using a trumpet to summon the people like the Jews did, but then decided against it.

One day Abdullah ibn Zayd came to him and said, “O Messenger of Allah, I had a dream last night. A man wearing two green garments came to me holding a bell, so I offered to buy it. When he asked me what I wanted it for, I told him that it was to summon people to salat (prayer), whereupon he offered to show me a better way. It was to say four times, ‘Allahu Akbar,’ then to say twice, ‘ash-shadu alla ilaha illa Allah,’ then to say twice ‘ash-hadu anna Muhammad ur-rasulullah,’ then twice, ‘hayyah ‘alas-salah,’ then twice, ‘hayyah ‘alal-falah,’ then to say ‘Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, laa ilaha illa Allah. “

So the institution of Adhan (call to prayer) was founded and Bilal was the first to be asked by the Holy Prophet (S).

When the Holy Prophet (S), entered Makkah victoriously, not as a proud conqueror but as a humble servant of Allah, he ordered that the idols in and around the Ka’bah be destroyed. Bilal was once again asked to make the call to prayer from the rooftop of the Kab’ah.

That is how Bilal came to be one of the best known heroes of Islamic history and he had a distinguished position among the Prophet's companions.

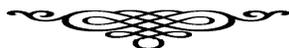
When the Prophet (S) proclaimed prophet hood, Bilal was 30 years old. He spent the remaining years of his life in the assistance of this Deen (religion). He was not only a Muezzin, but was granted the status of being the leader of the Muezzins. This is the beautiful story of how Bilal became Mu'adh-dhin-ur-Rasool, (The prayer caller of the Messenger of Allah).

When the whole of Madinah wept at the death of the Prophet (S), Bilal was asked to make adhan before his burial. When he had to recite the Prophet's (S) name, he sobbed so heavily that he could not continue. Bilal said, "By Allah, I will not say adhan anymore."

Hazrat Bilal was overcome with immense grief. This death had completely shattered his heart and in this state, he decided that he could no longer stay in Madinah. He then asked the Khalifah, Abu Bakr (RA), to allow him to go to Syria; he spent the rest of his life there. Bilal made adhan only twice after that time. The first was when Omar (RA) came to Syria. The second was when he visited the tomb of the Holy Prophet (S) in Madinah. Upon hearing his voice, people started to cry for it reminded them of the days of the Prophet (S).

On his deathbed, Bilal's last words were that he would be meeting his loved ones, Muhammad (S) and his Companions. Bilal was buried in Aleppo, Syria near 'Babus sagheer.' He was 64 years old.

May Allah Ta'ala be pleased with him forever, Ameen.



IMPORTANT REMINDER

The verses of the Holy Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet have been printed for the benefit of our readers. You are asked to ensure their sanctity. Therefore, they should be disposed of in the proper Islamic manner.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

Subhana Wa Tahala (SWT) - May Allah (God) be glorified and exalted
Sallallahu alayhi wasallam (SAW); (or Alayhi Salam) AS; Peace Be Upon Him
PBUH; = in Arabic these salutations are called Salawat - (Urdu: Durood)- this expression follows specifically after saying the name of the last prophet of Islam, Muhammad (Muhammed)

R.A.; R.A.A. - Allah was pleased with him/her

Rahimahullah or Allahu Yarhamu - May Allah pardon and forgive him

Bukhari, Muslim, Sahih, Abu Dawoud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah are the names of the transmitters of the Prophet's (pbuh) Hadith and Sunnah (words and lifestyle.)

NEED TO CONTACT US?

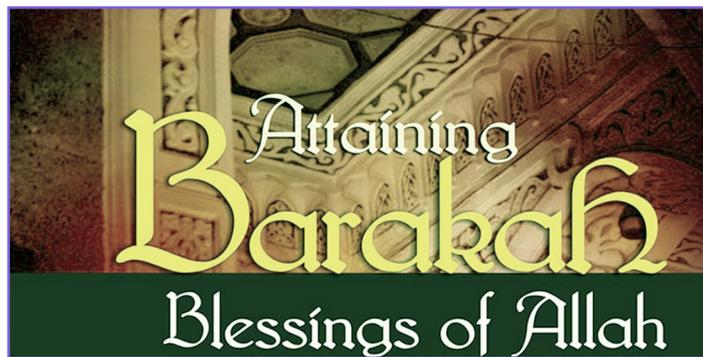
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Barakah is a term that means an "increase" or "growth." It is the establishment of divine goodness in something. It cannot be sensed by people, nor can it be outwardly quantified. It is not limited by anything, but rather it has an unexplainable increase and benefit in it from Allah (SWT).

1. Saying Bismillah

When you say "Bismillah" before anything you do, you're invoking the Name of Allah on that activity; not only will that activity be blessed but the Shaytaan cannot take part in it! So always say "Bismillah" before anything you do!

2. Good Intentions

Before you begin anything, make sure you have good intentions for the sake of Allah (SWT). Your intentions should please and earn Allah's mercy and barakah.

3. Piety and Belief in Allah

Barakah in anything is only from Allah the Almighty and as Muslims we must truly believe in that it is He who can only bestow the blessings. Allah (SWT) in the Quran says: "And for those who fear Allah, He (ever) prepares a way out. And He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine" (Surah Al-Talaq, Verses 2-3).

4. Trust in Allah

During hardships and tragedies, it is natural to become overpowered with our feelings and emotions. However, Islam teaches us to have full faith in Allah (SWT) and to trust in his plans. Allah says in the Quran: "And if any one puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is (Allah) for him. For Allah will surely accomplish his purpose. Verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion" (Surah Al-Talaq, Verses 3)

5. Reading the Holy Quran

The Holy Quran is the last and final message of Almighty Allah (SWT) through His Prophet Muhammad (S), which guarantees success for mankind in this world and the life hereafter. It is important for us Muslims to gain the full barakah of the Holy Quran and to open the doors of spiritual satisfaction in the heart and soul. Allah says in the Quran: "And this is a Book which We have sent down, bringing blessings, and confirming (the revelations) which came before it..." (Surah Al-An'am, Verse 92). So read the Quran, and observe the blessings and barakah of Allah enter your life. The further we are from this book of guidance, the less barakah we will have in our lives.

6. Be Generous

As Muslims we should become more generous and charitable, not only in the month of Ramadan, but we should try to implement it for the rest of our life. It's not always easy as we are in a society that encourages us to live a lavish lifestyle. Instead we should look at our beloved Prophet Muhammad who was an exemplar of generosity. In a Hadith, he said: "Charity never causes one's level of wealth to decrease." So give for the sake of Allah (SWT) who can only bestow blessings and happiness.

7. Ties of Kinship

Uphold and enjoin family relations because our Prophet Muhammad (S) said "Whoever would like his rizq(provision) to be increased and his life extended should uphold the ties of kinship. Allah has also warned us that the person who distances themselves from their family will be far from His Mercy and for them is an unhappy, evil home(Hell).

8. Halal Food and Income Money

Prophet Muhammad (S) said: "O People! Allah is al-Tayyib (Pure), and He only accepts that which is pure! Allah has commanded the believers what He has commanded the Messengers, for He said, 'O Messengers! Eat from the pure foods, and do right,' and He said, 'O you who believe! Eat from the pure and good foods We have given you.'" A wise scholar once said that "He who eats Haram, his limbs will disobey Allah whether he likes it or not, and that the one who eats Halal and seeks Halal income, his limbs will also do good and will be given the permission to seek goodness." This means that your body will be 'blessed' and it will enable you to do good. Also as Muslims, we should try to have lawful income and jobs. It is important that we ask ourselves, "Will Allah be pleased with my work?" or "Am I earning money in the "halal" way?"

9. Charity

By sacrificing part of one's wealth and giving it in charity, it is guaranteeing protection for a Muslim from tragedy and misfortune, in this life and in the next. Sometimes it's hard to give up one's money but we must realize that this life is only temporary and that every penny that we earn will be accounted for it the Day of Judgment. Our Beloved Prophet Muhammad (S) once said: "A charity is due for every joint in each person on every day the sun comes up: to act justly between two people is a charity; to help a man with his mount, lifting him onto it or hoisting up his belongings onto it, is a charity; a good word is a charity; and removing a harmful thing from the road is a charity."

10. Prayer

Keeping up our daily prayers and praying Salat Istikhara in all matters and then leaving the outcome to Allah as well as accepting His Decree is a great source of barakah. The Prophet (S) would instruct us to pray for guidance in all of our concerns. He said: 'If any of you intends to undertake a matter then let him pray two supererogatory units (two rak'ah optional nafil) of prayer and after which he should supplicate for help from Allah the Al-Almighty. For those of you who are still wavering in your Salah, this is your lifeline for the final destination in the hereafter, and the daily food for your soul.

11. Following the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad

There should be nothing in our lives dearer to us than Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (S). The Prophet Muhammad (S) was a perfect example of an honest, just, merciful, compassionate, truthful, and brave human being. Though he was a man, he was far removed from all evil characteristics and strove solely for the sake of Allah (SWT) and His reward in the Hereafter. Therefore, by simply following his lifestyle and the acts of Sunnah we so often hear about, we obtain a great source of Barakah!

12. Dua

Ask Allah for Barakah! Allah is the All-Hearing and He knows everything. He is the granter of blessings and tranquility. Dua expresses a slave's helplessness and dependence on Allah, the All-Powerful and Merciful. It is the channel through which one gets directly in touch with one's Creator.

13. Avoid interest

Undoubtedly interest is haram and a major sin, and if we have engaged in it then we must repent. Allah (SWT) said in the Quran: "Allah will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase of deeds of charity: for He loveth not creatures ungrateful and wicked" (Surah Al-Baqara, Verse 276). We must remember that the life of this world is short and fleeting, and that the purpose of our existence is not to lust after beauty and wealth, but rather to worship Allah correctly and live in obedience to Him.

14. Be Grateful

Let's constantly remind ourselves of Allah's bounties by expressing our gratitude to Him in prayers and at other times. Giving due thanks to Allah earns a person Allah's love and good pleasure, drawing one nearer to Him. Because a person does not attribute his ability to worldly causes, he knows deep inside that he owes everything to Allah alone and thus avoids ascribing any associates to Him. In this way, he attains spiritual benefits which are far better than any material gains and praises Allah for every blessing.

15. Ask Allah for Forgiveness

The Prophet (S) said: "If anyone continually asks forgiveness from Allah, Allah will appoint for him a way out of every distress, and a relief from every anxiety, and will provide for him from where he did not reckon." So seek Allah's forgiveness and mercy daily for He (SWT) is the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate.



MUSLIM CONTRIBUTIONS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

ALGEBRA

Muslim mathematicians, the inventors of algebra introduced the concept of using letters for unknown variables in equations as early as the 9th century A.D. Through this system, they solved a variety of complex equations, including quadratic and cubic equations, and equations with letters such as the now familiar x and y 's. They used symbols to develop and perfect the binomial theorem. The word "algorithm" comes from the mathematician Al-Khwarizmi, known as the father of Algebra. 'Algebra' is from the Arabic word for equation (Al-Jabr).

TRIGONOMETRY

Trigonometry remained largely a theoretical science amongst the Greeks. It was developed to a level of modern perfection by Muslim scholars, although the weight of the credit must be given to Al-Battani. The words describing the basic function of this science: sine, cosine, and tangent-are all derived from Arabic terms. Thus, original contributions by the Greeks in trigonometry were minimal.

CHEQUE

The modern cheque word comes from the Arabic 'saqq', a written vow to pay for goods when they are delivered to avoid money having to be transported across dangerous terrain. In the 9th century, a Muslim businessman could cash a cheque in China drawn on his bank in Baghdad.

ASTROLABE

Astrolabes, originally thought to be invented in the Hellenistic world in 150 BC, were further developed by Muslim astronomers, by introducing angular scales and adding circles indicating azimuths on the horizon. It was widely used throughout the Muslim world, chiefly as an aid to navigation and as a way of finding the Qiblah. The first person credited with building the astrolabe in the Muslim world is reportedly the 8th century mathematician Muhammad Al-Fazari. Astrolabes were used to find the times of sunrise and the rising of fixed stars to help schedule morning prayers. In the 10th century, Abd Al-Rahman Al-Sufi first described over 1,000 different uses for an astrolabe, in areas as diverse as astronomy, astrology, navigation, surveying, timekeeping, the Qiblah, prayers, etc. Astrolabes were introduced to Europe in the early 1100s and had become the most popular astronomical instrument by 1650.

PENDULUM

The pendulum was discovered by the Ibn Yunus Al-Masri during the 10th century, who was the first to study and document its oscillatory motion. Its value for use in clocks were introduced by Muslim physicists during the 15th century.

GLASS MIRRORS

Glass mirrors were in use in Islamic Spain as early as the 11th century. The Venetians learned of the art of fine glass production from Syrian artisans during the 9th and 10th centuries.

GEOGRAPHY

Muslim geographers produced untold volumes of books on the geography of Africa, Asia, India, China, and the Indies during the 8th through to the 15th century. These writings included the world's first geographical encyclopedias, almanacs, and road maps. Ibn Battutah's 14th century masterpieces provide a detailed view of the geography of the ancient world. The Muslim geographers far exceeded the output by the Europeans regarding the geography of these regions well into the 18th century.

NAVIGATION

Muslim geographers and navigators learned of the magnetic needle, possibly from the Chinese and were the first to use magnetic needles in navigation. They invented the compass and passed the knowledge of its use in navigation to the West. European navigators relied on Muslim pilots and their instruments when exploring unknown territories. Gustav Le Bon claims that the magnetic needle and compass were entirely invented by the Muslims and the Chinese had little to do with it. Necham also states that the Chinese probably learned of it from the Muslim traders.

CLOCKS

Mechanical clocks were produced by Spanish Muslim engineers, and this knowledge was transmitted to Europe through Latin translations of Islamic books on mechanics.

ASTRONOMY

Muslim astronomers were the first astronomers to dispute Ptolemy's archaic ideas. They synthesized proof that the sun is the centre of the solar system and that the orbits of the Earth and other planets might be elliptical.

OPTOMETRY

Ibn Firmas of Islamic Spain invented eyeglasses during the 9th century, and were manufactured and sold throughout Spain for over two centuries.

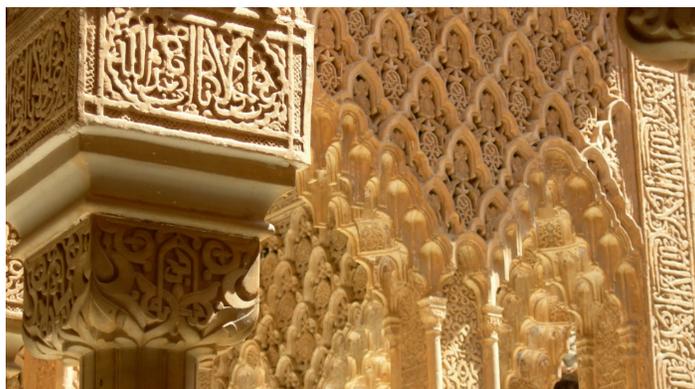
MATTER

The concept of the finite nature of matter was first introduced by Muslim scholar Al-Biruni (d.1050). He discovered that although matter may change its form or shape, its mass always remains the same. Thus, for instance, if water is heated to steam; if salt is dissolved in water etc., the total mass remains unchanged. Antoine Lavoisier later introduced the concept to Europe during the 18th century.

COFFEE

Coffee drinking started in the 15th century in the Sufi monasteries of Yemen. Coffee then spread to Europe by sea from the Yemeni port of Mocha. The term mocha, takes its name from this town and entered European languages as a synonym for the high-quality coffee of the species *Coffea arabica*, still grown in the Yemen Highlands. The word "coffee" entered the English language in 1582 via the Dutch *koffie*, borrowed from the Turkish *kahve*, in turn borrowed from the Arabic *qahwah*.

Islamic Roots of Modern Pharmacy



Pharmacy (the science or practice of the preparation and dispensing of medicinal drugs) is practiced universally today and has its roots deeply embedded over many centuries by scholars, alchemists, and physicians of the Muslim Middle East. Abu al-Rayanal-al-Biruni c.1045 CE described the pharmacist as: "The professional who is specialized in the collection of all drugs, choosing the very best of each simple or compound and in the preparation of good remedies from them following the most accurate methods and techniques as recommended by experts in the healing arts."

By the start of the seventh century, medicine was a fusion of Greek, Indian, Persian and Roman practices that had progressed over nearly a whole millennium. These were mostly lists of plants and minerals and their various effects. Due to various events in the West and Near East many of these documents were on the brink of having been lost. By the mid seventh century, the rise of Islam brought with it a new thirst for knowledge that eventually expanded on what had nearly been lost in the world of medicine.

Medical practitioners took guidance from several hadiths (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) and took it upon themselves to discover cures for the various ailments. Bukhari related: "God never inflicts a disease unless He makes a cure for it." Abu Darda narrated: "God has sent down the disease and the cure, and He has appointed a cure for every disease, so treat yourselves medically."

The ruling court of the Umayyads in Damascus was one of the first to approach the use of drugs in a systematic way. Sudden deaths were not uncommon and they were often attributed, mostly erroneously, to poison. Concerned about issues like snake bites, scorpion and spiders stings among others the exploitation of the poisonous properties of minerals and plants such as aconite, mandrake and black hellebore interested them. The Greek physicians Galen and Dioscorides were considered to be the ancient authorities in this field and were studied profusely; therefore the alchemists of that time worked mostly on toxicology.

The son of the second Umayyad Yazid, Khalid bin Yazid, was particularly interested in alchemy. He had Greek and Egyptian books on chemistry, medicine and astronomy translated into Arabic. During the same time Jabir ibn Hayyan, called Geber in the West, was promoting alchemy as a profession, thereby laying the early foundations for chemical and bio chemical research. These early Islamic alchemists made careful written observations of their experiments and their

results were designed to gather information and most importantly to answer specific questions. They avoided unproven beliefs and relied on trials that could be tested and reproduced. This work was the true advent of the scientific method. By the ninth century the work was completed and the creation of Arabic alchemic manuals represented some of the best work in this field; their careful methodology served all fields, including pharmacy.

During the experimentation process and in the mixing of the various elixirs many mineral and chemical substances were used and the list includes, vitriol, arsenic, common salt and many more. Many botanical products such as olives, saffron, fennel etc. and gums such as frankincense were also used. Their laboratories were very well equipped and included scales and bottles. The processes we use today such as distillation, sublimation, evaporation, pulverization, condensation and many others were standard procedure for them too.

In the ninth century the translations of many works blossomed under the Baghdad-based Abbasids. Hunayan ibn Ishaq was probably the greatest of the translators. He had a superlative knowledge of Syriac, Greek and Arabic and his translations included works of Hippocrates and Galen. The highest levels of the government supported and funded the intellectuals and so paved the way for 400 years of achievements. New methods of extracting and preparing medicines became essential processes of pharmacy and chemistry. The Sanskrit word for a seller of sandalwood, saydalani, is how pharmacists became known. They introduced new drugs that contained – not unexpectedly- sandalwood, camphor, aloe, mercury and others. These were dispensed in the form of ointments, pills, elixirs, confections, tinctures, suppositories and inhalants.

The trend that had started in Baghdad soon spread to other Muslim cities by the beginning of the ninth century. Initially, the pharmacy shops were unregulated, but as pharmacy students were trained theoretically and practically and were required to pass examinations in order to become licensed professionals all this changed. They had to pledge to follow the physician's prescriptions. Doctors could not own or be a partner in a pharmacy so as to avoid conflicts of interest and government appointed inspectors (muhtasib) ensured that the premises were clean, medicines were not diluted and that medicines were mixed properly. Fines or beatings were imposed in the event that something was amiss. Hospitals developed their own dispensaries too that were run by the shaykh saydalani (chief pharmacist).

By medieval times Islamic pharmacology was extensive and a strong empirically based biological science. Like in the West the Islamic viewpoint was based on Galen's Humoral Theory and focused on the need to balance the humors (bodily fluids). Cathartics, purges and laxatives were used to achieve this and senna (a low bush with small yellow flowers, greenish yellow leaves and fat seed pods) was particularly efficient. Taken alone the infusion from the leaves had a distinctive smell and a nauseatingly sweet taste and had to be mixed with aromatic spices. The Arabs introduced manna and tamarind as safer, milder and more reliable laxatives. Scammony, a plant from the morning glory family, was used by some, who regarded it as a functional medicine, but was controversial because of its violently laxative

action. Islamic pharmacists devised a reliable preparation that retained its potency but tempered with the herb's ferocity.

Formulation developed into an art and it involved many steps and ingredients. Ar-Razi, Islamic medicine's greatest clinician and most original thinker created a drug with



bitter almonds and raisin pulp to treat kidney stones. In addition to compounds, early pharmacists also valued simple herbal remedies. The following are a few examples of herbs valued for their healing properties and also for

aiding to make medicines more palatable. Sesame oil relieved coughs and softened raw throats. Juice from the stalks of the licorice plant was good for respiratory problems, swollen glands and clearing the throat, whereas the root helped treat foot ulcers and wounds. Cardamom was believed to cool the body and aid digestion and is still used in Arabic coffee. Cumin was, and is still used for flatulence and for stomach cramps. Fennel helped prevent obesity. Myrrh was highly valued for its medicinal properties and treated many ailments, especially gum disease. Aconite was prescribed for rheumatism, gout, whooping cough, asthma and fever. Cloves were useful for tooth ache and vomiting.

The medieval Muslims were the first to use cassia for its mild laxative action that was mostly suitable for children and the elderly. Caraway oil, still a common herbal remedy, was used to aid digestion. Za'atar which was baked with bread is still a commonly used herb valued for its breath freshening qualities. Infusions of absinthe were used to treat diabetes.

This Islamic legacy is reflected in every prescription filled today, every pharmacy license granted and every medicine, elixir or syrup created, used or tested. The discoveries of those early medical practitioners and pharmacists may seem all too obvious to us now, but today's knowledge is based on the work of those early protagonists.



Athan

Call Of Prayer

الأذان

الله أكبر

X4

ALLAHU AKBAR
God is greatest

أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله

X2

ASH-HADU AN-LA ILAHA ILLA LLAH
I bear witness that there is no deity except God.

أشهد أن محمداً رسول الله

X2

ASH-HADU ANNA MUHAMMADAN- RASULULLAH
I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.

حي على الصلاة

X2

HAYYA 'ALAS-SALĀH
Come to pray.

حي على الفلاح

X2

HAYYA 'ALAL-FALĀH
Come to success.

الله أكبر

X2

ALLAHU AKBAR
God is greatest

لا إله إلا الله

X1

LĀ ILĀHA ILLALLĀH
There is no deity except for God.

SUPER FOODS

The modern world has swept us off our feet in so many ways... our dressing, our lifestyles and most noticeably our eating habits. We have so casually adapted the western culture of unhealthy eating, moving further and further away from the Noble teachings of the Quran and Sunnah of The Noble Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him).

Yet, the newest nutritional research continues to discover the benefits of certain foods, labelled as "Super Foods". They have also unravelled the great benefits of certain eating habits, such as washing the hands before and after meals, eating with the hands, not drinking with meals...just to mention a few. However, all of this has already been outlined in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah more than 1400 years ago.

We are certainly the losers if we do not make an effort to practice upon the Sunnah in our homes and kitchens. What better time to bring about these changes than now? Our beautiful Deen offers us the opportunity during the beautiful month of Ramadhaan, to bring about positive changes in our lives- changes that benefit us mentally, physically and spiritually which *Insha Allah* (Allah Willing) can be sustained for the future.

Physically, fasting gives the digestive system a much needed rest. Energy normally used for digestion is now directed to body detoxification, tissue repair and system healing. Here are just a few of the favourite foods of our Prophet (S). In Ramadhaan we can all ensure we have these foods on our shopping lists. *InshaAllah*, by us adopting the lifestyle of The Noble Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) we will be rewarded enormously... Ameen.

DATES

Dates are the most mentioned fruit in the Quraan. They are high in energy, fibre, iron, vitamins and minerals, free from cholesterol and contain very low fat. They are also a good source of tannins, potassium, calcium, manganese, copper and pyridoxine (vitamin B-6). The Noble Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him)



said: "The home with no dates is like the home with no food". (Muslim)

He (SAW) used to break his fast with fresh dates and a few sips of water. If he did not find fresh dates, he would use dried dates. He (pbuh) said: "When one of you breaks the fast let him do so with dates, for they are a blessing and if he cannot find dates then with water for it is a purification." (Tirmidhi)

He often consumed dates with cucumber, butter, cream or bread. A dessert called "Haisa" made with ghee (butter), dates, cheese and yoghurt was also prepared.

Tips: At *iftaar* (breaking fast) time, dates can also be used to prepare date milkshakes, date chutney, date desserts as well as sprinkled over salads. For *Suhr* (*sehri*) which is the pre-dawn meal, dates can be used as a softened spread over bread or added into muffins, rusks etc.

OLIVE OIL

Dieticians and nutritionist the world over have been advocating the use of olive oil for its excellent cardio-protective, anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. It is also an excellent



treatment for skin and hair, delays old age, and treats inflammation of the stomach, not to mention its low calorie cooking benefits. On-

going research is revealing more and more great benefits on the consumption and application of olive oil.

The Prophets (S) said: "Eat the olive and use it as an ointment as it comes from a blessed tree". (Tirmidhi)

Tips: During Ramadhaan, olive oil is best used raw as a dip for breads or as a salad dressing. The lighter olive oils are well suited for cooking and baking purposes. Whole olives can be added to salads as well as de-pitted and added to breads, muffins, pies and pizzas.

BARLEY

A recent Readers Digest article highlighted barley as one of the five healthiest foods we tend not to eat. Yet it was barley that was one of the staple foods in the diet of our Prophet (SAW) Modern research is discovering that barley has a very high soluble- fibre content. This helps to keep the arteries clear and healthy. It has an extremely low glycaemic index (GI), which

means it takes a longer time to digest, keeping one fuller for longer. It is mentioned that The Noble Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) consumed barley in the following ways:

SAWIQ – a coarse broth prepared from ground wheat and barley - very much like a haleem (soup)

THARID – Barley bread covered in gravy cooked with meat

TALBEENAH – A porridge prepared using barley and milk

A Hadith in Mishkaat narrates that the Prophet (SAW) never used sifted flour in his lifetime. We should take lesson from this, as we are all moving to consuming more refined and processed foods where all the beneficial nutrients have been stripped off. Allah SWT mentions in the Holy Quraan grains with their husks, amongst His many gifts to us. Un-sifted flour as used by the Prophet (SAW) contains all the valuable nutrients found in the bran and germ layers and has a lower GI.

Tips: During Ramadhaan, barley can be added to soups and broths or prepared as a drink by boiling and straining mixture. A hadith in Bukhari mentions that The Prophet (SAW) consumed “Sawiq” at iftaar. Barley flour can be used for preparing breads and rotis. Substitute 1.5 cups barley flour for every 3 cups regular flour. Cereals containing barley flakes like muesli can be purchased, or barley flakes can be added to biscuits, muffins, breads and other cereals.

Barley can be prepared as a filling porridge for sehri -Talbeenah. Soak 1-2 tablespoons whole barley overnight in a flask filled with rapidly boiling water. At suhur time, strain water out and prepare porridge with honey and milk.

HONEY

Modern research has been abuzz with the myriad of health benefits associated with honey- anti-inflammatory, immune boosting, energising tonic....to name a few. Honey is considered the best remedy for diarrhea when mixed in hot water. It is the food of foods, drink of drinks and drug of drugs. It is used for improving appetite, strengthening the stomach, eliminating phlegm; as a meat preservative, hair conditioner, eye soother and mouthwash. Our beautiful Deen has encouraged the use of honey 1400 years ago. The Holy Quran mentions **“there comes forth from the bee’s belly, a drink of varying colours, wherein is a healing for men”**.(16:68-69)

The Prophet (S) further said *“ Make use of two cures- honey and the Quraan”*(Ibn Majah)

He (S) loved drinks that were sweet and cold and often consumed honey water.

Tips: Honey can be used to sweeten items like tea, fresh juices, milk drinks and cereals etc. Raw honey which is thicker and creamier has a lower GI, and can be mixed with cinnamon and used as a spread on toast for suhur.

GRAPES AND RAISINS

Grapes have been found to contain resveratrol- a powerful antioxidant that protects the body on a cellular level from damage. The seeds are rich in flavonoids which lower the risk of fatty plaque accumulation on the lining of blood vessels to the heart. They are also useful in purifying the blood, provide vigour and health, strengthen the kidneys and clear the bowels due to their high fiber content.

The Prophet (S) loved eating grapes. He (S) often consumed a drink “Nabeez”- prepared from soaked raisins. Nabeez can be prepared by soaking raisins after *Isha* (evening) prayer in clean water covered with a plate. The following morning the water can be drunk and the soaked fruit eaten or just use the blender to obtain a beautiful cloudy Nabeez. And, if you soak in the morning, drink in the evening. Nabeez should be consumed within twelve hours of soaking to prevent fermentation.

Tips: Nabeez or fresh grape juice can be prepared as a drink after Taraweeh (evening prayer in Ramadaan). Grapes can be served as part of salad or dessert. Raisins eaten with nuts can be enjoyed as a healthy munch after taraweeh salaah. The Sunnah way of eating is the healthy way of eating. In-shaAllah, let us all strive to revive and bring alive the Sunnahs of The Prophet (S) in our homes this Ramadhaan. I have highlighted just a few. Make an intention to eat on the floor, share eating utensils and to fill a third of your stomach with water, a third with food and a third left for air.

Besides the immense health benefits outlined above our greatest rewards really lie in following the Sunnah, as it comes in Hadith mentioned by The Prophet (S):

“ The person who follows my Sunnah is the one who truly loves me, and will be with me in Jannah” (Hadith-Tirmidhi)

Allah SWT said to His Messenger (S) **“Say (to mankind), if you love Allah, follow me – Allah will love you and forgive your sins.”**(Qur’an:3: 31)





This Ramadan impress your family with these elegant lighted lanterns and Chocodates.

Thumbtack Lanterns

You will need:

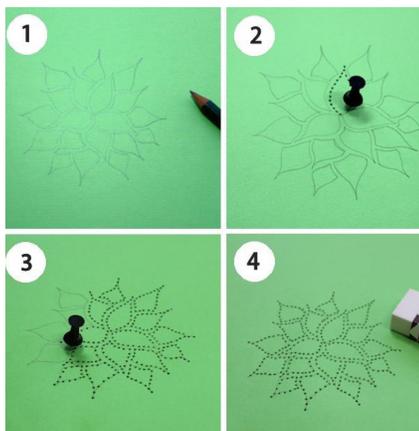
Cardstock, a pencil and eraser, a thumbtack, scissors, and double sided tape

Instructions

1. Lightly sketch a design on the front center of a piece of cardstock. Put your paper onto a piece of Styrofoam and with your thumbtack, punch holes along your design. Make sure to not poke two holes too close together to prevent tearing.
2. After you've dotted all along your design, gently erase pencil marks with an eraser.
3. Wrap your cardstock around a cylinder and secure it with double sided tape.
4. Place a flameless candle or votive candles (placed inside glass votive holders).

Wake up 	Suhr 	Pray 	Qur'an
Rest 	Help 	Learn 	Du'a
Laylatul Qadr 	Dates 	Iftar 	Tarawih
Sleep 	Give 	Zakah 	Eid

[Do not place lanterns directly around a burning candle].



Chocodates

Ingredients

Milk or Dark chocolate, 1 tsp vegetable oil, Dates, Choice of nuts: almonds or walnuts, Garnish: White Chocolate

Instructions:

1. Cut a slit in each date, remove pit, and replace with choice of nut; close date over.
2. Fill a small pot with about an inch or two of water and bring to a simmer. Place a small (heat-safe) bowl over the pot and add chocolate and oil, stirring constantly.
3. Using two forks, drop dates (one at a time) into melted chocolate, roll to cover completely, then take date out, shaking off any excess.
4. Place dates onto parchment-lined baking sheet. Allow them to set for 5 minutes, then pop them into the freezer for 10 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, melt white chocolate with oil, using the same melting method as the chocolate. Take the chocodates out of the freezer and drizzle with the white chocolate.

Place in freezer for 5 more minutes to set. 6. Enjoy!



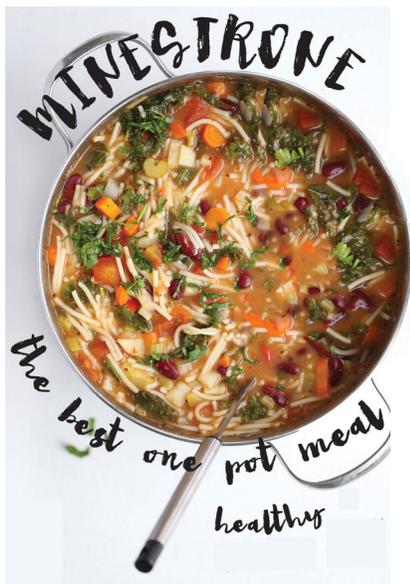
During the beautiful month of Ramadan it's nice to find delicious, made for large crowds' recipes.

What better way to break the fast than with a comforting ,hearty soup. Shock full of vegetables, this Minestrone Soup recipe is sure to please you and your family .Follow it with a piping Bechamel dish. Evenly layered with spiced ground beef, pasta, and bechamel, a creamy sauce consisting of butter, flour, and milk .This Bechamel recipe is perfect for preparing ahead of time, ready for Iftar dish.

Minestrone

◆ Ingredients:

3 tablespoons olive oil
 1 whole onion
 1/2 cup chopped zucchini
 4 potatoes of potatoes, chopped
 1 huge red tomato
 1/2 cup frozen cut green beans
 1/2 celery stalk, chopped
 4 cloves minced garlic
 4 cups vegetable broth
 2 cans red kidney beans, drained
 2 cans of small white beans
 1/2 cup shredded carrots
 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
 1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
 3 cups of hot water
 3 cups of baby spinach leaves
 1/2 cup small shell pasta



◆ Instructions:

1. Heat three tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat in a large soup pot.
2. Sauté celery, garlic, green beans, and zucchini in the oil for 5 minutes or until onions begin to turn translucent.
3. Add vegetable broth to pot, add the whole onion, tomato, beans, carrot, hot water, and spices.
4. Bring soup to a boil, then reduce heat and allow to simmer for 20 minutes.
5. Add spinach leaves and pasta and cook for an additional 20 minutes or until desired consistency.
6. Remove the full onion and tomato and blend it in a blender and stir it back into the soup.
7. Serve warm and Enjoy!!

Bechamel

◆ Ingredients:

Meat Mixture
 1 onion
 1 (6 ounce) can of tomato paste
 salt and pepper to flavor
 1 teaspoon of allspice
 one pound of ground beef
 Béchamel sauce:
 1/2 stick of butter
 4 heaping tablespoons of flour
 5-6 cups of milk
 salt and pepper to flavor
 corn oil
 Pasta:
 1 package of penne pasta
 1 1/2 teaspoon of olive oil
 1 tablespoon of butter

◆ Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 9x11 pan.
2. Boil water in a large pot. Add package of pasta to the boiling water, adding olive oil and salt. Cook pasta until "al dent" and drain. Add butter and set aside.
3. Fry one onion. Add your ground beef until fully cooked. While cooking, add your salt, pepper, and allspice to add a depth of flavor. When the ground beef is cooked, mix the tomato paste into it and set aside.
4. In a large pot, heat at medium heat, butter and corn oil. Slowly, add 4 heaping tablespoons of flour. Whisk continuously until creamy for about 2-3 minutes. Making sure to constantly stir pot, gradually add your milk. Keep stirring at low heat, until it thickens. Once it begins to boil, turn it off. Add salt and pepper.
5. Into the greased pan, add 1/2 of your Penne Pasta on the bottom. Then layer your ground beef on top, pressing firmly on the pasta with your hands. Add your remaining pasta and pour your sauce till it is completely covered. Bake into the oven for 30-40 minutes until the top is golden brown.
6. Serve warm and enjoy!



To Parents And Grand-Parents



Children are quite used to us parents always lecturing them on how to become better people. We often get the feeling that we are really not getting through to them and that all our nagging and preaching is to no avail. Surprisingly though, our young children can often leave us flabbergasted when they point out something so true, that they literally hit the nail on the head. They do after all have more insight than we often give them credit for.

Islam is the second largest religion in the Netherlands and is practiced by 4% of the population. The small city of Bergen op Zoom is in the south of the Netherlands and has a population of about 65 000 of which a small percentage is Muslim. The Muslim community organized an event to raise funds for the erection of a Mosque.

This speech was presented by a ten year old boy on behalf of all the children of the city. He reverses the roles that we are traditionally used to when he implores that everyone give a donation toward the improvement of their community.

How else are the children to learn? Providing food and entertainment is not enough. Children, like sheep, need their shepherd so that their spiritual needs can be fulfilled; thus ensuring that they grow up to be fine examples in their community. In order for them to learn Arabic, the Qur'an and the correct way to practice Islam, things that cannot be provided by the education system or by the internet, they need to be provided with a Mosque to see to these spiritual needs. This is his speech:

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On behalf of Muslim children in Bergen op Zoom, Netherlands I turn to parents, grandparents, and all those jealous about Islam, and to all Islam-Channel TV viewers, and to those present "I say to you: Thank you to our parents and grandparents because you were the reason why we came into this world. You celebrated our birth, you feed and clothed us, and you sheltered us.

You spent sleepless nights for the health of our bodies. In return for all of that, you want us to have a prosperous future to return the good that you have done for us. But I fear that what you ask is too much in return for what you have given us so far. I ask you, on behalf of these friendly faces, are We, children, like animals who only need to eat and play? You will then ask us, what do you lack?

I say on behalf of all your children: We do not want to be those on whom The Quran says:

"But those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as grazing livestock eat, and the Fire will be a residence for them."

(Quran 47:12)

"You are all shepherds and every shepherd is responsible for his flock."

(We seek refuge in Allah).

We want to be protected from the Fire of Hell We want you to obey Allah, The Exalted, Who says in His Book (The Quran):

"O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a fire..."

(Quran 66:6).

And, we are from your family! We need your protection against the Fire (of Hell). Are you not responsible for us?

The Prophet, Peace Be Upon Him, said:

"You are all shepherds and every shepherd is responsible for his flock."

You are responsible for your children, in particular, and responsible for the children of Muslims in this country, in general.

And I say: Oh fathers, mothers, and grandparents, Yes, you have taken much care of our bodies, but many of you have ignored the spiritual aspect in us, and, as a result, we exhausted you with our bad behavior, and perhaps some of you hated the day you had children. What is the cause?

Does the Quran not say:

"Wealth and children are but an adornment of the life of this world" (Quran 18:46).

Some of us have become a disgrace (a loss) to our parents, and society is falling apart as a result. What is the cause? I repeat, oh parents and grandparents! You have taken much care of our bodies, but you must also take care of our spirits, our souls. And how do you do that? Teaching us about Islam; correctly. And, do not forget that you are in a country that is not Muslim. Therefore, it is not logical to expect that a non-Muslim teacher will teach us our religion, or that we can learn it on the internet it is not necessary that every parent be a scholar, Alim (religious scholar), or university professor.

But since this is the case, where we will learn our religion then?

In the street? **NO!**

In bars and night clubs? **NO!**

In public schools? **NO!** A thousand times, **NO!**

Where, then? The place is the masjid (mosque).

The only institution in this country that oversees and cares for us as Muslims. It is the place that unites the Muslim community despite our differences in language, skin color, and customs. It is the unique place from which emerged the great scholars and educators in the past.

So, parents and grandparents do not exhaust yourselves by constructing lots of buildings and houses and places for entertainment and think that this is the way to secure our future. But, I say, on behalf of those kind and innocent faces, what will you leave behind for us, we will struggle for it, after your death Who will get more? And the result will remain.

Quran, says:

“And you have certainly come to Us alone as We created you the first time. And you have left whatever We bestowed upon you behind you....”

(Quran 6:94)

So, what are we asking you? We ask you to build for you and us, a house in Paradise and, can this be possible??

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him), said:
“Whoever builds a mosque for Allah, Allah will build for him a house in Paradise. ”

So, collaborate with us in building this mosque that will remain forever in history. (A place) to worship Allah alone and it will be for you a permanent (ongoing) charity, because anyone who recites the Quran, and every child who learns a Surah, will do it here (in the mosque) and you will have the reward of Allah, Allah willing.

So, I ask you to build for us this mosque where we learn the Arabic language, the Qur’an and the correct Islam and it is Islam that nourishes the soul and body equally and simultaneously So if you help us to build this mosque, we will be able to benefit from it before your death...because you took care of our needs before.

May Allah bless your lives and you must not obey what Satan suggests to you, for Satan runs in the blood of human beings.
As the Quran says:

“Satan, threatens you with poverty and orders you to do immoral things. While Allah, promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.” (2:268)

And not to be of those on whom the Quran says:

“Do you order righteousness to people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason?” (2:44)

Therefore, I will also collaborate together with you, with a modest sum of money and as you know, I’m not as Abu Bakr, who gave in charity all the money he possessed, and I am not like Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, who gave half of what he owned.

I want to ask you...

*Have you ever seen someone who gave for the construction of a mosque and then became poor? **NO!***

I also gave all my money, and I do not fear poverty. But, I am not like Abu Bakr or Omar.

Finally, I want to thank the members of this institution that organized this event and let me say these humble words, and thanks to Islam TV channel and to all audience, as well as the supporters of Islam.

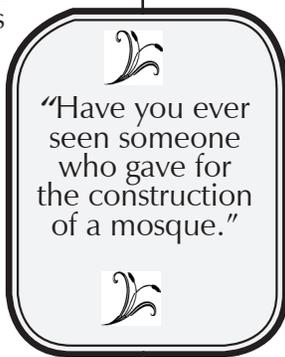
As-salamo ‘aaleikomwarahmato-llahwabarakatoh

(Peace and blessings of Allah be with you)

See the original video speech in Arabic with translation into English and Spanish:

<http://www.islamicbulletin.org/videos/kids/kids.mp4>

The Islamic Bulletin would also like to thank all of the volunteers who assisted in this production and its translation in English and Spanish. We ask Allah (SWT) to accept it and may He (SWT) make it a source of guidance and blessings to everyone who will benefit from it and share it. Please keep the Islamic Bulletin staff members and their families in your duas.



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