

United Muslims of Australia

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The Message

AL MU'ALLIM

THE ENDURING VALUES A PROPHET LEFT FOR HUMANITY





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I will listen to my teacher I will listen to my teacher I will listen to my teacher

Editorial

Do you remember the name of your year three primary school teacher? Chances are you do! A fundamental rule or 'the golden rule' as my parents used to call it, which they continually tried to reinforce during my childhood years, was to always listen to your teacher. So what is it about our teachers that make us keep them in such high esteem?

Al Muallim- when you come across this word, what's the first thing that comes to your mind? I used to always have an image of a short, well-dressed person holding a piece of chalk in one hand and a duster in the other. However, it seems that many of us today have forgotten that the status of a teacher is not restricted to this narrowly minded image.

The Prophet (S) was seen and regarded by both Muslims and non-Muslims alike as being the best teacher and mentor in all aspects of life. However, over the course of the year, it has been increasingly evident that the respect many of us were taught to show to our school teachers is not also adhered to when dealing with our teachers of faith- our scholars and imams.

Today, a four year university degree will entitle you and I to teach at the school of our choice bearing the immense responsibility of caring, educating and nurturing our children- most often than not, this is done with trust, conviction and confidence.

However, over the years I have also witnessed first hand and become increasingly concerned over how various members of our community publicly treat, denounce and often question many of our scholars who have studied and preached Islam, who more often than not, studied longer than the lifespan of the questioner.

In addressing this, it is noteworthy that freedom of expression in Islam is highly upheld as long as **one abides by the Islamic ethics of disagreement and has enough qualifications and knowledge to do so.** However, transgressing beyond the ethics of disagreement to the extent of slandering Muslim scholars is categorically forbidden in Islam - unfortunately, it is now often seen as being common practice. It is just as important to note that showing respect to scholars is an obli-

gation upon every Muslim even when in disagreement with them. This is because scholars are the heirs of Prophets from whom they have inherited fiqh, jurisprudence and sciences and as such, should be respected. In spite of the many texts that incite honouring and respecting scholars, it rarely deters many who do nothing except pick faults in and insult our scholars in mosques, and more recently on television, magazines and newspapers with the sole purpose of attempting to distort their image, claiming to do so to better serve the cause of our Islamic community.

Allah (Swt) says in the Quran, " Say (unto them, O Muhammad): Are those who know equal to those who know not?" We need to remember this verse often when speaking of our scholars. However, we also need to remember that our scholars- like you and I are also humans. They too will make mistakes. Imam Adh-Dhahabi, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "The Imams used to disagree with each other and respond to one another's criticism. However, that does not give us the right to criticise a scholar on the basis of personal reasons or ignorance."

I therefore leave you to delve into our latest issue of The Message Magazine, dealing with the theme of Al Mu'allim. I also pray to Allah (swt) to help open the heart of every brother and sister to reason, open-mindedness and tolerance in listening to our teachers.

Your brother in Islam,

Mohammed Adra

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SHEIKH'S CORNER



Let's Agree to Disagree

All praise is due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad (S)

Disputes and disagreements have existed since the beginning of mankind. Humans will always differ on certain issues; it is only in our nature to question things and engage in discussions. But the issue here is how to respect our differences in opinion, and how to deal with people who hold different views on things. Both parties of a dispute often find themselves holding the only valid opinions, with no regard to what the other person has to say simply because they are convinced of their own infallibility, and the attitude that "I am right, you are wrong." Unfortunately these people are victims of their own self-centeredness, and do not know where to draw the line between the argument itself, or the person's character. This often leads to personal attacks on the people involved, slander, insults, raised voices, and obscene language.

The fact of the matter is, on many occasions there is more than one valid opinion or answer. This is something we need to accept as individuals. There are also others who for some reason believe that by accepting or finally agreeing with someone at the end of a dispute, they have somehow compromised their pride and/or integrity. Alhamdulillah, we have the likes of our Prophet Muhammad (S), our teacher, our mu'allim who demonstrates on many occasions in the prophetic seerah how to disagree with one another.

Allah reveals in the Qur'an in Surat Al-Nahl, verse 125, *"Invite (mankind, O Muhammad) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction and argue with them in a way that is best..."*

Muhammad (S) used hikmah (wisdom) when he wanted to advise people. He never admonished people in public, nor did he ridicule them or make them feel embarrassed. He always spoke kindly and gently to people when he wanted to advise them or correct them on something they did wrong. He clarified things to people so that they understood the matter properly. He instructed them in different ways and capacities, depending on the person involved. One beautiful example is of the nephews of Muhammad (S), Hasan and Hussein, who once observed an older man performing wudu' incorrectly. To avoid embarrassing their elder, they devised a very smart plan to teach him the correct way. They went to their elder and asked him to judge them on who performs their wudu' better. The man agreed and watched them perform their wudu' in the correct manner. In the end, he thanked them and told them that he did not know how to perform his wudu' correctly until they demonstrated it to him.

This beautiful example of hikmah (wisdom) is an example we should all strive to look at and use as an example in our daily lives.

A final example I would like to conclude with is with a dispute that Abu Bakr (R) once had with another companion about a tree. During this

dispute, Abu Bakr said something he wished he did not say which could have hurt the companion's feelings (nothing along the lines of swearing, or attacking him). Abu Bakr instantly realized what he had said and said to him, "Say it back to me!" The companion replied, "I shall not say it back." Abu Bakr said, "Say it back to me, or I shall complain to Rasululllah!" The companion refused to say it and went away.

Abu Bakr went to Rasulullah (S) and explained what had happened. Rasulullah (S) called that companion and asked him, "Did Abu Bakr say so and so to you?" He said, "Yes." He said, "What did you reply?" He said, "I did not reply it back to him." Rasul Allah said, "Good, do not reply it back to him (do not hurt Abu Bakr). Rather say, 'May Allah forgive you, O Abu Bakr!'"

The Companion turned to Abu Bakr and said, "May Allah forgive you, O Abu Bakr! May Allah forgive you, O Abu Bakr!" Abu Bakr turned and cried as he walked away.

Subhanallah, such a beautiful example to live by in such circumstances. May Allah permit us to return in the state of true Islam and brotherhood, the way Rasulullah (S) demonstrated to his companions.

Ameen

Sheikh Shady Alsuleiman.



I am, You Are, We Are Australian



The future is like a book of blank, white pages; anything can happen. When I accepted Islam and surrendered my heart to Allah's will, I didn't do it for economic or social reasons. In fact, I suffered in those two areas because of my conversion. Rather, it was a choice on my part to reform my soul, my mind and my understanding of why I was alive and why I would die one day.

I didn't think about living in some town for a few years and making my fortune so my kids could go to some elite private school. I wasn't thinking about how to get all my relatives back home permanent residence here in Australia nor was I planning to leave and go back to some far land after I finished implementing some get-rich quick scheme I had up my sleeve. I was born and raised here. This is my land. I'll raise my children here, Insha'allah and probably be buried here as well.

Over the years many have raised complaints or alarm bells at the state of some segments of the Muslim community. Now I'm going to offer three suggestions for how we can turn the situation around and become a more dominant social and cultural force in a country that needs Islam more than another pop-star, beer-brand or psychic network.

First, we must be reminded of a simple truth: if you believe in Allah, then you must be more than just a praying Muslim; more than just a fasting Muslim. A Christian can go to the masjid and pray side-by-side with us all he wants; a Jew can fast in Ramadan for forty years, but if such a person doesn't surrender their will to Allah, then all those activities won't mean much. Belief in Allah is what makes those actions have merit on the Day of Judgment.

In the same way, why should we see a praying and fasting Muslim and automatically assume he or she is a true believer? The blessed Prophet (S) once observed that there are many people who fast, but get nothing from it except hunger and thirst. In a similar vein, Allah said that people who pray for show are those who deny the deen. The intention, the belief, that's what makes our Islam real. That's what builds a foundation for the future of our community here.

Secondly, what's more important than what people see us doing in the

masjid, is what they see us doing outside in the society. If people view us as foreigners, it's not because everybody is an evil racist. It's because sometimes we're presenting ourselves that way. We have to look at ourselves with a critical eye! Therefore, if you choose not to actively practice Islam in your daily life, if you choose not to help build an Islamic community here in Australia, then don't display yourself as an ethnic model and say this is what a Muslim should be.

This leads me to the third factor which will help our faith prosper and grow here. The essential, unifying force we must have is a solid community. We must live together. The Prophet (S) was narrated to have said "be with a group". Why do the Orthodox Jews live together? Why do the Amish live together? Why do the Mormons, the Sikhs, and the Koreans all live together? Quite simply, to preserve the unique way of life. Are they 'ghettoized'? No. Are they poor? No. Their communities tend to be healthier, safer and more prosperous than the general melting pot.

Portraying the right image of Islam is the responsibility of every one of us....me and you! We can't always take the easy option and simply blame the media, or successive governments for the difficulties faced by our community. Allah (Swt) states in the Quran, "Surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition."

If my brother has a blister wound I have antiseptic cream in my bathroom cabinet to help treat that wound yet if I choose to only clean it and give him a bandage, I would have only treated the symptom. I've done nothing for his long-term welfare. If we don't act more sensibly towards the long term interests of our brothers and sisters we are part to blame for not playing our part to better serve the Islamic community and wider Australian community. Islam and Muslims have a lot to offer to Australian society. The same way the Prophet (S) was sent down as a mercy to all mankind, Islam in Australia can also be seen as a rahma if we act upon the teachings of our Prophet. I pray that we will finally begin to utilise what Allah has blessed us with... the blessing of Islam.

Reference:
An edited excerpt from: <http://www.jannah.org/articles/america.html>

Integrati

In today's society many individuals are torn when it comes to implementing Islam into their work life. What a great number of people don't understand is that Islam is not only a religion; it is a way of life and that when the day of Reckoning arrives, we are accountable for every second of life. Therefore Islam is not a faith which is practised when you arrive home. Rather, it is one which extends into the workplace as well. But how? Should we interrogate our non-Muslim workmates until they have enough and eventually ask for a transfer elsewhere? Or do we give in and totally abandon the principles we have been taught by our teacher, Muhammad (S)? The real question is: how do you strike a balance?

The life of our beloved Rasul (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) paints a stunningly clear picture of Islam's Message and its values. The leading lesson we are to learn from his untainted example is his approach to life and the people around him. Prophet Muhammad (S) led an active life satiated with dedication, perseverance and insistently hard work. He never forced those around him to accept the religion of Islam. Instead, he used the most pleasant forms to convey the message and educate others about it.

What follows are several interviews conducted by myself. All interviewees have, in one way or another found some sort of stability in their work routines and have managed to inspire others around them as well as fulfil their obligatory duties in Islam.

For comparative purposes, all participants (Dean, Ayah and Mohammed, respectively) were asked the same set of questions so as to provide our readers with different perspectives on the same issues. Read on and find out how fellow Muslims strive to ensure they find a medium between making a living whilst simultaneously contributing to Islam.

1. Please explain to our readers what

your chosen profession is and what your responsibilities are.

Dean - Part of the Intelligence Response Team (IRT). Responsibilities are to support General Duties, police in emergencies, act upon intelligence received by the public and within the police on street level crime. E.g.: drug dealing or children being stalked etc.

Ayah - I am an Executive Assistant. I support a General Manager in an IT company. My main tasks include managing his diary, actioning his emails and organising his travel.

Mohammed - I am a Marketing Manager for a National Newspaper. My duties include providing support to all sales teams on new marketing directions and initiatives.

2. How do you deal with mixed-gender relations in the workplace?

Dean - It's impossible to avoid mixing in my line of work since many of my colleagues are female and of course I am constantly dealing with females in the public. However by maintaining a professional distance in my interactions, I can also abide by Islamic guidelines.

Ayah - I'm very professional in dealing with both genders. I work in a corporate environment where mixing is inevitable. However I go to great lengths to ensure my identity and my Islam are not compromised. I try to ensure that idle talk is avoided and that relationships and interactions are kept strictly professional. In recently putting on the hijab I have found many people already understand that I expect to be treated in a manner that is within Islamic guidelines. I love the way I am treated because of my dress, my manners and my morals.

Mohammed - Realistically speaking, it is difficult in any industry to totally avoid intermixing because if some of your co-workers aren't females then some of your clients/ customers will be... it's a tricky situation. However in saying that, I try limiting mixed-gender interaction to strictly work-related purposes only.

3. How do you incorporate Islam into your daily work routine?

Dean - Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil is essentially what a police officer is required to do. I am lucky enough to instil these values on a daily basis. Islam requires its followers not to lie and I as an officer must also maintain the highest level of integrity - the ramifications of me providing a false statement in court are disastrous. Hence in these situations I find that there is no difference in being an upright Muslim and an upright police

on NOT Assimilation

The Plight of Three Young Muslims in the Workplace

officer.

Ayah - I try to represent Islam in every aspect of myself... through my dress, my voice, manners, and above all my actions. It is of utmost importance that I pray whilst at work. I have installed a program on my computer where the call to prayer sounds at the appointed times. I try to pray during lunch times in a room that my boss has assigned for me. If it gets busy and I need to take my lunch at another time, I just ask to have my break cut short so that I may pray later. Also when I wear the abaya (Islamic dress for women) I ensure that I maintain a professional appearance at all times. I have always been of the opinion that if my Islam is compromised or disrespected, then I can easily find another position that will value the beliefs I try to uphold. I believe I am very fortunate to work for someone who is as understanding as my employer, alhumdullilah.

Mohammed - Alhumdullilah there is a Musalla here in the city, which enables me to pray during my break. Also there are a couple of meeting rooms in the building that I work in which I can book from day- to- day for prayer when I'm a little pressed for time and can't make the walk to the Musallah. In my spare time (eg: while I'm eating my lunch) I look up reputable Islamic sites and read Hadiths.

4. Do you feel that there is room for Da'wah in the workplace? Please elaborate.

Dean - The greatest Da'wah any Muslim can provide is a fine example of conduct. I have been fortunate enough that throughout my years in the force, I have gained the respect of my peers. As a result I am constantly being asked questions about Islam and have been fortunate enough to assist in the education of many police officers at all levels in terms of Islamic principles and practices. Also, the impact of a fasting police officer during Ramadan is greater than most people think. I have also had the greatest honour of having my superior officer testify the Shahadah in front of me, after one of our discussions on Islam.

Ayah - I recently put on the hijab so I think that in itself is Da'wah. People are curious as to why I have chosen to wear the hijab; therefore I'm always explaining Islam. I am mindful of other people's beliefs and thus try to sense when people are uninterested in listening about religion. If ever I want to raise the issue; I pick my moments very carefully so I don't offend anyone.

Mohammed - There is always room for Da'wah. I believe each Muslim should strive to set

a good example through both their actions and words. I make it a point to be very open with my colleagues, to inform them of when I am going to pray and why, as well as educating them regarding reasons as to why I fast the month of Ramadan. Whenever there is a negative headline about Islam I feel it is my responsibility to explain the "real" story. I believe every Muslim is an ambassador for Islam and should defend it in a respectable and intelligent manner.

5. Many Muslims who work for a large organisation such as yourself get asked the question: "Are you coming out with the team for Friday drinks at 4?" How do you respond in regards to participation in such extra- curricular activities?

Dean - As I have stated earlier, over the years my colleagues have to come to respect my beliefs. As such I am never asked to join them for "drinks". Instead we get together with our families and enjoy luncheons or dinners. It's also a cheaper alternative for them.

Ayah - I am honest. I tell them that I don't drink and the reason being my religion forbids it. Most will say; "so just have a soft drink". I always respond back with I don't like to be around alcohol. Most will understand. It doesn't affect my working relationship with my work colleagues. Honesty is always the best policy.

Mohammed - I tend to set the tone at the start of my employment. I inform my manager that due to religious reasons I cannot attend events where alcohol is present and they're fine with it. I found that my absence at events was felt more than my being there. People became more curious about the religion and tended to ask more questions, which opens the door for further Da'wah. I personally like to use humour as well since knowing when to make light of situations and having a sense of humour in an environment which you can not control can only serve to help you.

6. What advice would you give



Integration NOT Assimilation Continued

to employers who wish to accommodate for Muslims in the workplace?

Dean - Be tolerant and understanding. A happy worker is a good worker. If you want your employee to respect you, earn it by respecting their beliefs. Small gestures such as providing an area for prayer or alcohol-free social events will be greatly appreciated and can only lift morale and productivity.

Ayah - My advice would be to provide Muslims with a place to pray in the office. My boss has and he has seen the returns of this investment. I am no longer stressing about rushing through work so I can make my salah.

Mohammed - Don't feel you have to tip-toe around us when you want to approach us with questions when you are curious. I know many Muslims who would consider their ideal job as one which accommodates for prayers. Also, some Alcohol-free events wouldn't go astray. Even if they arrange a "dry" event for the first hour to allow Muslims the chance to attend before the drinks begin.

7. What challenges are you faced with as a Muslim- Australian in regards to workplace matters?

Dean - The attitudes of colleagues when the image of Muslims is tarnished due to the actions of a few in the community is disappointing. The negative stereotypes provided by the media can make work uncomfortable and I'm sure all the Muslim officers still get negative interactions that stem from September 11. Our loyalties are always questioned - Are we police officers first? Or Muslims? Will I back up my partner against a Muslim? This can be quite cumbersome in the beginning of a career. Yet the answer is simple - I am Muslim first, but as a Muslim I must seek perfection in all that I do. Therefore I must strive to be the best officer I can be. If a Muslim is committing a crime I will help he or she by stopping them commit that crime. Islam directs us to stop the oppressors and wrong doers - police officers have the same duty.

Ayah - Having to always explain why I don't attend social events. I prefer not to attend because I am forced into an environment that I can neither control nor enjoy. When workmates hear you won't be joining them, they give you that head tilt as though they feel sorry for you. I just wish that they'd understand I'm happier this way.

Mohammed - Sometimes I may over-hear a couple of tasteless remarks here and there but I just use that as my cue to address the matter and inform that particular individual on the reality of the situation that they've com-

mented on. I always advise my Muslim and non-Muslim workmates to research an issue if it comes up in the media which enables them to form their own educated opinions rather drawing conclusions based on media propaganda.

8. What further advice can you give to Australian Muslims in the workplace?

Dean - You don't have to assimilate to survive in the workplace, but you can integrate. You will win over your workmates with generosity, patience and kindness - all Muslim traits. Once your colleagues like you they will respect you and your beliefs. This will make following your Islamic obligations much easier.

Ayah - Most employers do not have a problem with Islam or you practising by praying at work or wearing hijab. I would advise that you work to the best of your ability keeping in line with your Muslim values. I urge all brothers and sisters to strive to be the best at everything they do whether it is school, university, or work. But never forget to compete for the love of Allah ta'ala by being the best in your deen first.

Mohammed - Be constantly aware of your actions at work because not only are you representing your employer, but you are representing Islam. Remember, it is your duty to do your best to uphold the values that our beloved Prophet (S) taught us at all times.

As illustrated above, Da'wah and other forms of worship can come about in many ways. However concerning matters of preaching the Message of Islam, Allah states:

"It is a mercy from Allah that you were gentle with them. If you had been rough or hard of heart, they would have scattered from around you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them ..." (Quran 3:159)

Bukhari's record of such advice is just as direct since a narration by Anas (bin Malik) (R) reveals that the Prophet (S) said, *"Facilitate things to people (concerning religious matters), and do not make it hard for them and give them good tidings and do not make them run away (from Islam.)"* [1:69-O.B.]

Brothers and sisters, the workplace doesn't have to be an environment of "us Vs them." Nor does it have to be a domain where there is a total abandonment of all your beliefs and morals. People worldwide are making it work somehow and that is due to the example and values our Teacher (S) has taught us. We are all in essence students with much to learn and each new horizon brings with it new challenges. What separates us is how we deal with them.

I would like to thank all participants who were involved in making this document. May Allah reward you for your efforts. May He reward us all.

Your sister in Islam,

Manal Mikati.



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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

ISLAM SAYS NO!

There has been a great deal of media attention directed at the Muslim community in recent times. As a result of this attention, many misconceptions and negative stereotypes have been attributed to Islamic teachings - especially in regards to the status of women. After browsing through various news commentary sites, I found that quite a few non-Muslims are under the impression that all Muslim women are subjugated, oppressed, violently abused and shackled to their kitchen sinks.

While a lot of women have made progress in areas that were previously male dominated, the issue of violence still affects many women of all cultures, races and religious backgrounds. The violence can be both physical and psychological in equal measures. After speaking to non-Muslims at length, it became evident that there are quite a few people who struggle to distinguish between cultural and religious influences. As a consequence, culturally derived misogynistic attitudes have been erroneously attributed to Islamic teachings.

Violence Against Women

Under Islamic teachings, a woman is to be respected and protected under all circumstances, irrespective of her background, religion, culture and so on. All unlawful relationships are forbidden for Muslims, whether or not the woman is a willing partner. The unlawful violation of a woman's chastity is strictly forbidden in Islam:

The Holy Qur'an states: *"Do not approach (the bounds of) adultery" (Qur'an 17:32).*

Islam forbids all forms of violence against women including violence during war time, female genital mutilation, family violence, prostitution and so forth.

Like all of the major monotheistic religions, Islam views rape as a crime against the victim. Moreover, it is also viewed as a crime against humanity, society and God. The victim should carry no blame or stigma for the crime committed against them and it is the perpetrator who is morally and legally responsible for the crime. To explicitly or implicitly point the finger at the victim is against the laws of Islam.

Under Shariah Law, the punishment for rape is not light. If the accused is found guilty, the punishment is death:

During the time of the Prophet (S) punishment was inflicted on the rapist on the solitary evidence of the woman who was raped by him. Wa'il ibn Hujr reports of an incident when a woman was raped. Later, when some people came by, she identified and accused the man of raping her. They seized him and brought him to Allah's
mes -

senger, who said to the woman, "Go away, for Allâh has forgiven you," but of the man who had raped her, he said, "Stone him to death." (Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud)

The Status of Women in Islam

During pre-Islamic Arabia, female infanticide was a common practice as raising a female was met with hardship.

The Qur'an directly addresses the issue of this pre-Islamic pagan practice by questioning its validity:

"And when the female (infant) buried alive shall be questioned. For what sin was she killed? (Qur'an 81:8-9)

Islam prohibited the burying of females and recognised that males and females are equal in status. The Qur'an provides evidence that women have equal status with men in the sight of God with respect to rights and responsibilities. The Qur'an states:

Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has faith, verily to him will We give a new life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the their actions. (Qur'an 16:97).

Islam gave women many unprecedented rights including the right to property, inheritance, divorce, education, marriage, political and social rights amongst many others.

Marriage

Marriage is regarded as half of one's faith; the objective of a healthy marriage – besides procreation - is to achieve a sense of emotional and spiritual tranquility with your loved one.

In addition to honouring his responsibilities, a husband is required by the law of Allah (Swt) to treat his wife with equity, mercy and respect. The wife is also obliged to treat her husband with fairness and dignity and to fulfill her marital obligations.

Among the verses in the Qur'an about marriage is the following;

"And among His signs is this: That He created mates



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for you from yourselves that you may find rest, peace of mind in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo, herein indeed are signs for people who reflect." (Qur'an 30:21).

The Prophet's Relationships

The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, was the most exemplary father figure as well as husband. All Muslims are required to follow his example. He was extremely generous and tolerant towards his wives, his children and all the women he encountered. The Messenger (S) advised all men to follow his example and to be genial to women.

The Messenger, (S) discussed matters with his wives as friends and confidantes. Contrary to the customs of the time, women in Islam were to be consulted and valued. Muhammad's daughters also played an important and influential role, both in his life and in the establishment of Islam and he always showed them the utmost respect.

The Prophet (S) encouraged us through his words and actions to treat women with dignity. He declared: *The most perfect of believers is the best of them in character and the best of you is the kindest to his family.* (Abu Dawud)

The status of women in Islam is one of equality and honour. Women are to be treated with respect and mercy as was decreed by Allah (Swt). Violence against women of all backgrounds is prohibited and it is important to turn back to the Qur'an and the Sunnah for guidance on matters such as family values and marital obligations. Muslim men and women alike are strongly encouraged to seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave so it is of the utmost importance for Muslims to understand their Islamic rights and responsibilities.

In closing, it is vital that we remember to take heed of the wise words the Prophet (S) said during his last sermon in regards to women:

"O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under God's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your rights, then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with anyone of whom you do

not approve, as well as never to be unchaste."

Your Sister in Islam

Asma Fahmi

Below is some information and details on emergency and counselling services that are available nationally, including a Confidential Helpline, emergency contact details, information for young people and translation and interpretation services.

Confidential Helpline

Anyone experiencing violence can call the 24-hour Confidential Helpline on 1800 200 526. When you call the helpline you can have a confidential discussion with an experienced counsellor.

Emergency Situation

For emergency situations that require immediate and urgent assistance call 000.

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Helpline

The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline on 1800 880 052, is an Australia-wide telephone hotline for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disabilities. 1800 301 130 (TTY), 1800 555 677 (NRS) and 131 450 (TIS).

Young People

For young people, the 24 hour Kids Help Line may be a preferred choice on 1800 551 800.

Translating and Interpreting Service

If you do not speak English well and you wish to talk with a counsellor, call the Translating and Interpreting Service 13 14 50 and ask them to contact the Helpline for you.

Hearing Impaired

Callers who are deaf or have a hearing impairment may call through the National Relay Service on **1800 555 677** and quote 1800 200 526.

Distress or Success?

"Ya Allah, what have I done to deserve this? I pray, I fast, I am good to people, I give charity... What did I do wrong for you to punish me? Why me out of all people in this entire world? Why did you take this away from me? Why me?" (Astaghfirul Allah)

Sound familiar?

Every one of us has been afflicted with some sort of hardship or calamity at some stage of our lives. At many times we question why we have been put through a calamity. At other times we take it as an attack on ourselves and feel we are being singled out from the rest of the world. We feel we have been treated unfairly. It is human nature to feel this way sometimes. However, in the case of a Muslim, the following hadith needs to be implemented:

"...If anything befalls you do not say, 'Had I done (this), it would have been such-and-such, but rather say, 'Allah determined/decreed and He did what He Willed,'" (Muslim, from Abu Hurayra).

I am a firm believer that everything happens for a reason. In every event of our lives, there is something to learn from it, no matter how small or large it is. In fact, every circumstance we find ourselves in is a learning experience. We need to learn and grow throughout our lives and the only way this is done is by learning through our calamities. More importantly, let's not forget that Allah (Swt) is testing us and testing our emaan (faith). He (Swt) tests those with strong emaan. So whenever we are faced with a calamity, we need to turn to Him for advice and help. Then we analyse the issue at hand and look for the most appropriate way to deal with it and overcome the obstacle. Also, remember that Allah tests people in different ways and according to their capacity to cope in a situation. Allah says in verse 2:286 of the Holy Quran, *"La yukalifu Allahu nafsan illa wus'aha..."* [Translation: 'God does not impose on any soul a burden greater than it can bear.']

One of the greatest examples of calamity and remaining with Allah is the story of Prophet Ayoub (Alayhi assalam). He was a man who was blessed with a beautiful family, wealth (which he regularly used to donate to charity and help the poor and needy), livestock and farms. He was always devoted to pleasing Allah (Swt) at all times and thanked Allah for all the blessings he possessed. However, this great Prophet of Islam was tested with all of his worldly possessions, including his own health and well-being.

All of his farms and cattle were destroyed. He had nothing to work with, and no wealth to sustain himself or his household. Misfortune struck his household where his house collapsed and killed all of his children, leaving only himself and his wife to survive. His response to all of this was that indeed Allah gives and Allah takes away. He knew that all of his possessions were from Allah and that he was a mere trustee of everything that was given to him.

Consecutively, Prophet Ayoub was struck with a horrific disease; one that consumed him until he was reduced to skin and bones. His skin erupted with malicious infections that lasted a few years, consequently leaving him house bound under the care of his loving and nurturing wife. People refrained from visiting him due to the malicious extent the disease had afflicted him. He had no sympathy from anyone around him except his wife. Even after all this, he remained patient and thanked Allah for all the decades of his life when he enjoyed his health and wealth.

In this helpless state, Prophet Ayoub turned to Allah, not to complain, but to seek His mercy: *"Verily! distress has seized me and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy."* So We answered his call, and we removed the distress that was on him, and We restored his family to him (that he had lost), and the like thereof along with them as a mercy from Ourselves and a Reminder for all who worship Us." (21:83-84)

Almighty Allah also instructed: *"Remember Our slave Job (Ayoub), when he invoked His Lord saying: 'Verily! Satan has touched me with distress (by losing my health) and torment (by losing my wealth)!'" Allah said to him: "Strike the ground with your foot: This is a spring of water to wash in and cool and a refreshing drink." And We gave him back his family, and along with them the like thereof as a Mercy from Us, and a reminder for those who understand. (Ch 38:41-43)*

Such is the distress that Prophet Ayoub was afflicted with, and such is the patience and success he gained after being tested by Allah. He gained Allah's pleasure both in this life and the hereafter by being patient and seeking His mercy. So the next time you are afflicted with a hardship, ask yourself: am I going to try and overcome this by returning to Allah, or am I going to let it consume me?

Your brother in Islam

Hesham Mourad

Reference: <http://www.islamawareness.net/Prophets/ayoub.html>

GO SLOW ON THE H₂O

Did you know that the adult human body is 50 to 65 percent water? Did you know the human body can live for weeks without food, but it can only survive a few days without water? Did you know the earth's water supply is running out...FAST!

We, the Muslims community use water to perform wudu' five times every day. If the tap is left running whilst performing wudu' over a five minute period, you would have used up approximately 40 litres of water. But did you know that a hadith tells of our beloved Prophet (S) who "used to perform ablution with one *mudd* of water' [equal to 2/3 litre]?

What's more is that the Prophet (S) used to take a bath with one *sa'* ["equal to 2-3 ½ litres"] of water (Bukhari, 1: 200). In 2006, a fifteen minute shower using a standard shower head (which releases an average of 22.5 litres of water per minute), would have exhausted close to 340 litres of water! So, in theory, the Prophet (S) used **97 times** less water than you or I to cleanse himself and he was considered to be the most purified man to have ever lived. What does that tell you? Isn't it time you reassessed your water needs?

The Rasul (S) emphasised the need to be economical in the use of water for wudu' and not being extravagant, because Allah (Swt) says: *O children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes) while praying [and going round (the Tawaf of) the Ka'bah], and eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allah) likes not Al – Musrifun (those who waste by extravagance),* (Quran 7:31)

Even in conditions in which there would be abundant resources, the Prophet forbade waste. He is reported to have said "**Do not waste water even if performing ablution on the bank of a fast-flowing (large) river,**"[al-Tirmidhi].

Islam assigns the most sacred qualities to water as a life-giving, nourishing, and purifying resource. It is the origin of all life on earth as

stated in the Qur'an: "**Allah has made every moving (living) creature from water...**" (Surat An-Nur: 45).

Prophet Muhammad (S) urged moderation in all aspects of life and there was wisdom behind his advice since clearly our abuse of the land and its resources is starting to surface- nature simply can not keep up. The message is clear: our environment can no longer sustain our excessive lifestyles. We need to act now. There are many steps you can take around your own home to help the water crisis. For instance,

- Install a water efficient shower head.: By replacing an old shower-head (that uses between 15 and 30 litres per minute) with an AAA rated model (uses 7-9 litres per minute) available from hardware stores and water retailers. By doing so, household water consumption can be cut by half.
- Turn the tap off when brushing teeth
- Plant drought-tolerant plants
- Install dual- flushing toilet system (a single flush system uses 9 litres per flush, whereas a dual flush system uses even half of a full flush)
- Install rainwater tanks (The NSW government offers rebates on installation of rainwater tanks and water efficient washing machines)

My brothers and sisters don't ever think that you are only one person and you alone can never make a difference, because our Prophet - a single man changed the world.

Your sister in Islam

Umm Nuh

* For further information on this issue visit http://mohammed.islamonline.net/English/His_Message/Environment/02.shtml

For more water saving ideas or rebates log onto <http://www.cooltheglobe.com>

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Purifying

The Heart

Allah subhanahu wa t'ala says, "On that day nothing will benefit the human being, neither wealth nor children, only the one who brings Allah a sound heart." A sound heart is one that is free of defects and spiritual blemishes. Though the spiritual heart is centered in the physical heart, the heart being referred to here is the spiritual heart, not the physical heart. In ancient Chinese medicine, the heart houses what is known as "chen" which is "a spirit."

The Chinese character for "thinking," "thought," "love," "virtue," and "intending to listen" all contain the ideogram for the heart. In fact, in every culture in the world, people use metaphors that deal with the heart; in English, we call people who are cruel, "hard-hearted people." There is also the idea of having "a cold heart" and "a warm heart." People who do not hide their emotions well "wear their hearts on their sleeves." When deeply affected, we say, "He affected me in my heart" or "in my core." In fact, the English word "core" means "inner most," and in Arabic, the equivalent "lub" comes from the Latin word, meaning "heart." Thus, the core of the human being is indeed the heart.

Three Types of People

The ancients were aware of the spiritual diseases of the heart, and this is certainly at the essence of the Islamic teaching. One of the first things the Quran does is define three types of people: the mu'minin, the kafirin, and the munafiqun. The mu'minin are people whose hearts are alive while the kafirin are people whose hearts are dead. The munafiqun are people who have a disease or a sickness in their hearts; thus, Allah (Swt) says, "In their hearts is a disease, and they were increased in their disease." This is also in accordance with another verse: "When their hearts deviated, Allah made them deviate further." When somebody turns away from Allah (Swt), Allah (Swt) causes them to deviate even further from the truth.

The Heart and the Brain

The actual physical heart in our breast beats at about 100,000 times a day, pumping two gallons of blood per minute, 100 gallons per hour, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year for an entire life time! The vascular system that sends this life-giving blood is over 60,000 miles long: it is more than two times the circumference of the earth.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the heart starts beating before the brain is formed; the heart begins to beat without any central nervous system. The dominant theory was that the central nervous system is what is controlling the entire human being from the brain, yet we know now that in fact the nervous system does not initiate the heartbeat. It is actually self-initiated; we would say, it is initiated by Allah (Swt).

According to the hadith, the heart is a source of knowledge. The Prophet, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said that wrong action is what irritates the heart. Thus, the heart actually knows wrong actions and this is one of the reasons why people can do terrible things, but, ultimately, they are affected negatively. In *Crime and Punishment*, the brilliant Russian author Dostoevsky's indicates that crime itself is the perpetrator's punishment because human beings have to live with the result of

their actions: their souls are affected. When people do something against the heart, they act against the soul, and that actually affects human beings to the degree that they will go into a state of spiritual agitation, and people will use many ways to cover this up.

This is what kufur is: "kufur" means "covering up." To hide their agitation, people use alcohol, drugs, and sexual experimentation; they also seek power, wealth, and fame, taking themselves into a state of heedlessness, submerging themselves into the ephemeral world which causes them to forget their essential nature and to forget their hearts. Thus, people become cut off from their hearts.

Wrong Actions Sicken the Heart

One of the things about being cut off from the heart is that the more cut off from the heart one becomes, the sicker the heart grows because the heart needs nourishment, and heedlessness starves the spiritual heart. When one goes into a state of unawareness of Allah and the akhira, one becomes unaware of the infinite world in relation to the finite world, unaware that we are in this world for a temporary period. When we look at the infinite world in relation to the finite world, suddenly our concerns become focused on the infinite world and not on the finite world. On the other hand, when people are completely immersed within the finite world, believing that they will be here forever, believing that they will not be taken to account for their actions, this action in and of itself ultimately leads to the spiritual death of the hearts. However, before it dies and becomes putrid and completely foul, the heart will show many symptoms. These are the spiritual diseases of the hearts.

Shubahat and Shahawat: Two Types of Diseases

There are two types of diseases of the heart. The first are called shubahat, and these are diseases that relate to understanding. For instance, if somebody is fearful of his provision from Allah, afraid he will not get his food for the day, then there is a disease in his heart because a sound heart has complete trust in Allah (Swt), and a sick heart has doubt. For this reason, a sound heart does not worry.

It is the nafs (ego), shaytan, hawa (caprice), and dunya (the love of this ephemeral world) that lead to this state of fear or of anxiety. The heart itself is an organ designed to be in a state of stillness, but the stillness will only come about by the remembrance of Allah (Swt). The Quran states, "Isn't it by the dhikr of Allah that the heart is stilled?" This is what the heart wants: it wants to remember Allah (Swt). When Allah is not remembered, the heart goes into a state of agitation: it goes in a state of turmoil, and it becomes diseased because it is not being fed. Just as we need to breathe because cells need life-giving oxygen and if we stop breathing, cells die, similarly, the heart also needs to breathe, and the breath of the heart is the remembrance of Allah (Swt).

Dhikr is what feeds and nourishes the heart. The company of good people is the food and exercise of the heart. All of these things are necessary for the heart to be sound and healthy, and this is basically the purpose of Revelation. The Quran has come to remind people that our hearts need nourishment. Thus, Allah (Swt) tells us that the human being who will be in a good state in the next world is the



One's Heart

one who brings a sound heart.

When we are born, we enter the world in a state of fitra: the original inherent nature of the human being; then we learn to be anxious. We learn anxiety from our mothers, fathers, and society. Thus, the Quran says that the human being is created in a state of anxiety (hala'), and the one group of people who are removed from this state of anxiety is the musallin: the people of prayer.

This "prayer" is not the five daily obligatory prayers; rather, it is the prayer of people who are always in a state of prayer (dhikr); they are always in a state of connection with Allah (Swt), and this is the highest station. This is the station of people who are not diverted from the remembrance of Allah (Swt) by buying, commerce, or anything else. They are the ones who remember Allah (Swt), as the Quran states, "standing, sitting, and reclining on their sides." These are the people who are not the people of heedlessness (ghafla).

The second type of the diseases of the heart is called shahawat, and these are the base desires of the self. For instance, food and sex are shahawat; they are appetites. These become diseases when they grow out of proportion from their natural states. In Islam, we have a method or a means by which our hearts can be remedied and return to their sound state again. The dhikr that the Prophet (S) did more than any other dhikr was "Oh Turner-Overer of the hearts, make my heart firm on your deen," and it is important that Muslims be reminded of this.

Rectification Begins with the Self

If we look at the world today, the tribulations, the trials, and every war that we have, we will see that every bit of human suffering is rooted in human hearts. The reason people are aggressive against other people is due to diseases of the heart: covetousness, the desire to conquer, the desire to exploit other people, and the desire to steal their natural resources are all from diseases of the heart. A sound heart cannot commit such acts. Every murderer, every rapist, every idolater, every foul person, every person showing an act of cruelty has a diseased heart because these actions emanate from diseased hearts. If the hearts were sound, none of these actions would be a reality. Therefore, if we wish to change our world, we cannot go about it by attempting to rectify the outward; rather, we change the world by rectifying the inward because it is the inward that precedes the outward.

In reality, everything that we see outside of us comes from the unseen world. The phenomenal world emerges from the unseen world, and all actions emerge from the unseen realm of our hearts. Thus, if we want to rectify our actions, we must first rectify our hearts. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the famous American preacher and civil rights activist, said that in order for people to condemn injustice, they have to follow four stages: the first stage is that they must ascertain that injustices are indeed being perpetrated. People must point out the injustices, and in his case, it was injustices against the African-American people in the United States. The second stage is to negotiate: people must go to the oppressors and demand justice. If the oppressors refuse, then Dr. King said that the third stage is self-purification. He said that we must ask ourselves, are we ourselves wrongdoers?

Are we ourselves oppressors? The final stage is to take action once we have looked into ourselves.

One of the things the Muslims of the modern world fail to recognize is that when we look at all of the terrible things that are happening to us, we often refuse to look at ourselves and ask ourselves, why are these things happening to us? If we ask that in all sincerity, the answer will come back in no uncertain terms that this is all from our own selves. We have brought all of the suffering upon ourselves. This is the only empowering position that we can take, and this is the Quranic position. Allah (Swt) says quite clearly that He places some of the oppressors over other oppressors because of what their hands were earning. According to Fakharudin ar-Razi's explanation, (R), this verse means that whenever there is oppression in the earth, it is a result of other people's oppression. Thus, those people who are being aggressed upon are being oppressed because of their own oppression. However, this is obviously with the exception of tribulation. There are definitely times when the mu'minun are tried, but if they respond accordingly with patience and perseverance, Allah (Swt) always gives them victory.

The Impure Oppress and the Pure Elevate

There is no doubt that the Prophet (S) and the sahaba were being oppressed when they were in Makkah, but Allah (Swt) later gave them victory. Within 23 years, the Prophet (S) was not only no longer oppressed, he had conquered the entire Arabian peninsula, and all of the people who had previously oppressed him were begging him for mercy. Even though they deserved to be recompensed with punishment, the Prophet (S) forgave them, and this is the difference between somebody whose heart is pure and somebody whose heart is impure. The impure people oppress, and the pure people not only forgive their oppressors, they actually conquer them by the power of Allah (Swt), and then they elevate them.

This is what Muslims must recognize: the only solution to all of our problems is that we have to purify ourselves, and this is what "Mat-hartul Qulub" is about; it is a book of self-purification. If we take this book seriously, work on our hearts, and actually implement what we learn from it, we will begin to see changes in our lives, around us, and within our own family dynamics. It is a blessing that we have this book and that this teaching still exists in our community. All that is left is for us to take this teaching upon ourselves and to take it seriously.

Medicine for the Diseased Heart

If you use the techniques that are given by the imams, you will see results. However, it is just as the prescription that the doctor gives you: the doctor can only write the prescription; he can give you the medicine, but he cannot force you to take the medicine. It is left for us to take the medicine. The imams have given us the medicine: our teaching is there; it is clear; it does work; and we can change ourselves with it. If we do, Allah (Swt) has promised that we will be rewarded in this world and in the next. Thus, all that is left for us to do now is to go through these diseases and then set out to implement their cures in sha' Allah.

By Shaykh Muhammad Maulud

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My Journey to Islam

Assalamu Alaikum Brothers & Sisters.

I write this story to share with you my blessing of being guided to Islam. The beginning of my journey starts over the last 27 years where I did not know Allah! I grew up having everything in my life a person could ever want or need. As I grew up, it crossed my mind occasionally that I wasn't just lucky to have these things, that I had actually been blessed with these gifts. I always felt that there was something guiding me! Something like a God, but I didn't know what. I was unsure. I always looked for signs for guidance, but I didn't know who I was following. I just hoped I was doing the right thing in life.

About 2 years ago, I bumped into an old friend from High School and we caught up over lunch and reunited our friendship. We talked like we had in High School about all the major topics. As we were older, our topics matured to real issues like politics and religion. It turned out my friend was Muslim, something I don't remember from when we were growing up. The topic of Islam always triggered my curiosity. It interested me because everything I thought I understood about Islam and the believers of Islam, seemed to be all of a sudden incorrect.

I had to begin to question myself. If I was wrong about Islam what else was I wrong about? This was something I discussed further with my friend. I became amazed at the strong morals, values and guidelines that this person lived by. How was it that they seemed to know more about right and wrong than me? The difference became apparent after not too long. The answer was the faith in Islam!

I researched further into Islam and the more I read the more everything started to make sense. There was nothing but truth that surrounded the religion of Islam, and that it should be the path that I follow the rest of my life. There was one second; I can still feel it, where my life changed. You might all relate, because it's the feeling of being a Muslim. The realisation that there is only one god – Allah - and that Mohammed is the messenger of Allah.

Since then I feel that I have been truly blessed. It is now my goal to spend the rest of my life a Muslim inshallah. A task which I try my absolute best to spend every second doing. Any obstacle or situation that may arise from now, I am not afraid or uncertain of because I have Allah who has provided me with answers on what to do in every situation and the guidance and example of Al-Mualim, the Prophet Muhammad (s).

It is a feeling of being blessed with the secret of life. Every person I walk past in the street, I have this wish to stop them and share with them my secret. My secret is Islam. My journey has just started and I have a lot more to learn. I look forward to the rest of my journey because it can only get better.

I think if people took the time to actually search for the truth they would find Islam. Being a Muslim gives me strength, courage and responsibility. It gives me the opportunity to know the truth. I can live with dignity and pride. I am aware of all the blessings around me small and large. I live in peace.

Peace be upon all brothers and sisters of Islam.

Your sister in Islam
Jenifer Timewell

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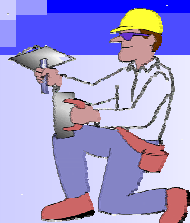
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IN SEARCH FOR

ONE



Many of us look up to someone as a role model. The reasons vary, however the ultimate outcome is the same. We attempt to emulate our role model's actions and behaviours in the hope that we can recreate their success and accomplishments in some shape or form. Surely there is no harm in doing that is there? Well that is largely dependent on who our role models are.

We must examine why we look up to certain people. Generally it's because a person has excelled in his/her profession or behaviour to the extent that we can learn and benefit from their example.

We can all agree on the fact that an enormous percentage of today's role models stem from the "entertainment" Industry, whether they be:

- Singers
- Actors
- Sporting personalities
- Reality TV personalities
- Socialites

These "stars" might be talented at their craft, but if we delve deeper into their lifestyles and morals we uncover a world fraught with infidelity, dishonesty, greed and emptiness. So why do we insist on admiring these celebrities when the majority are guilty of committing at least one of the following?

- Wearing Inappropriate clothing
 - Engaging in unlawful sexual activity
 - Drinking Alcohol, or using drugs
 - Using Inappropriate language
 - Committing a crime (speeding, DUI, assault etc)
 - Lying
 - Back biting, slander
 - Being Materialistic
- Giving in to their desires

Do you believe that people who possess these qualities are worthy of emulation or admiration?

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lation or admiration?

The difficulty in finding a role model is that all humans are flawed; no-one is perfect... None, but One.

Muhammad (S)

Why don't we follow the role model that Allah himself selected and appointed for all mankind? The evidence speaks for itself:

Indeed, In the Messenger of Allah you have the most excellent example of conduct to follow for him who hopes for the meeting with Allah and the Last day, and remembers Allah much . (33:21)

O Prophet! Verily, We have sent you as a witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner and as one who invites to Allah (alone) by His permission and as a lamp that gives light. (Suratul Ahzaab 33:45-46)

The perfect man, the perfect Muslim, the perfect Mu'alim.

The Perfect Role Model

It is important for each of us to comprehend why Muhammad (S) is the only perfect example for humanity.

The Messenger of Allah did not only excel in one facet of his life but in all aspects. He (S) has left us with over two decades of infallible behaviour and success to follow.

Without a shadow of a doubt, He is the most comprehensive role model for humanity- from ruling an empire to knowing how to eat a meal. This remarkable Islamic figure was truthful and honest at all times. His entire life was dedicated to call people to Islam, to the extent that when Aisha (radiyallahu anha) was asked about the life of the Prophet she replied, "Have you not read the Quran?"

Is there a better career than calling people to Allah? And did anyone do it as well as the Messenger (S)?

I'm sure we all know of the outrageous requests celebrities make... red carpet treatment, finest champagne, diamonds on their feet (and for their dogs), nothing but white furniture in their rooms, personal assistants, the list

R...

OUR ROLE MODELS

goes on and on. Yes they have had a hit song or movie, or maybe they get by purely on looks but does it not fascinate you that a Prophet, the Messenger of Allah turned down Kingdoms, wealth, and other forms of tangible power and status so as not to distract himself from the worship of Allah? He remained humble in all his requests. A man, who could have had it all, turned it down because these were possessions which he had no use for.

The Rasul (S) even forbade people to stand for him:

"Let him who likes people to stand up before him prepare his place in hell" (Sunnah Abu Dawood, Hadith #5211)

Does anyone exceed Muhammad in deserving special treatment? Yet he refused it, truly no-one will ever replicate the excellence of this extraordinary man, leader and Prophet. The last Prophet of Islam (S) was so resourceful and grateful for what he had been given even for the smallest of things,

He (Muhammad) forbade "Idle talk and asking too many questions (in religion), wasting money, preventing what should be given, and asking others for something (except in great need) -(Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol.8, Hadith #480)

The Prophet - being the head of an Islamic state was also required to act as a judge from time to time; his capacity to be impartial and honest was exemplary, so much so that even non-believers used to request him as an arbitrator in their personal disputes. The messenger of Allah was righteous and just, and whenever acts of injustice would occur in his presence, Muhammad (S) would address the matter and correct it just as other Muslims have been recommended to do:

"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against your parents or your kin" (Quran 4:153)

Our Mu'alim was the embodiment of good manners; more accurately through the guidance of Allah, he perfected manners. Narrated by Aisha (radiyallahu anha) *"Allah's Messenger (S) was not unseemly or lewd in his language, nor was he loud-mouthed in the streets, nor did he return evil for evil, but he would forget and pardon"* (Sahih Al- Tirmidhi Hadith #5820)

There are many more incidents in the Quran and Hadith that talk about the

beloved prophet Muhammad (S); incidents which convey the many pious characteristics of the Messenger that prove he is the only perfect role model for mankind. Among them is the following:

Kharijah bin Zaid said: "The Prophet (S) was the most honoured among the people with whom he sat. His limbs could hardly be seen. He was often silent and rarely talked when speech was not a necessity. He turned away from those whose speech was rude or impolite. His laughter was no more than a smile. His speech, which was decisive, it was neither excessive nor incomplete."

Insha' Allah through this magazine and other mediums like it, you will be inspired to learn more about the Prophet and the superlative way he lived his life.

The current image of Islam is in shambles because we have strayed from Allah and the teacher he sent to guide us... Muhammad (S). The Messenger of Allah (S), maintained the best characteristics in all of his various roles throughout his distinguished life as a Teacher, father, husband, statesmen, ruler, guardian, friend, protector and Prophet. Therefore he possesses a complete example we can all identify with.

Unfortunately sections of our Ummah have gone astray, our youth are infatuated with Hollywood and music, some have lost the conviction in their faith and others have been engulfed by their worldly desires.

My brothers and sisters in Islam, the next time you reach for a gossip magazine to check out the latest fashions and hair styles, remember that this is a lifestyle which can contribute to you being deprived of the scent of Paradise.

I implore you to put that magazine down, pick up Allah's book and read about your Prophet Muhammad (S) who will lead you along the right path.

May Allah allow us to be among those that stand with this Prophet on the day of judgement Insha' Allah.

Your brother in Islam,

Ronnie Mikati

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

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger (S).

The issue of free mixing is a controversial one. Islam, which is the deen of Allah, a complete way of life, has made it very clear and has set the rules and regulations for that matter. So who is a better judge than Allah (SwT)?

We must by no means call for transgressing the limits and forgetting about the nature of both sexes. In all their dealings, both men and women are to abide by the teachings of Islam that call for co-operation on the basis of goodness and piety while observing the rules of morality and politeness. Note however, that the mere presence of men and women in the same place does not constitute free mixing. Such a thing is not prohibited in Islamic law, since there were men and women at the same place in the markets and public roads during the Prophet's time.

Prohibiting men and women from attending the same public places to prevent temptation would be taking matters to an extreme, because in such cases, there is no intimacy, no crowding, and no reason for suspicion. This is unnatural and would impose great hardships on people's lives. The mixing of men and women can be divided into three categories.

A woman mixing with her mahrams (men that she is not allowed to be married to) such as brothers, uncles from both sides, grandfathers and so on is permitted. What I mean by permitted is within the rules and adab of Islam.

A woman mixing with strange men and men mixing with strange women with the intention of corruption is strictly haram and not allowed.

The mixing of strange men and women in places such as educational institutions, shops, offices, hospitals and other public places takes the ruling (Hukum) as follows.

For example, if a woman meets a man while working together in a factory and this type of meeting ends in unlawful acts, then this type of mixing is haram. We all should understand that the reason why men and women should not mix is that the nature of men is to love and be tempted by woman as Allah said in the holy Quran:

Therefore, every action that brings men and women to commit unlawful acts is haram (prohibited) and if we are to ask our selves logically, what is the main cause for an unlawful act to be committed between men and women? The answer would be: **mixing**.



for the women is the last row and the worst for her is the first." [Sahih Muslim]. The reason for the first line of ladies to be the worst is because of the men who are close to them who might look at their movements and so on, and the opposite is correct.

Aisha (R) said, "The Prophet used to pray fajr and some ladies use to attend the salaah fully wrapped up with their jilbabs and no one would know them because of the darkness." She continued saying that if the Prophet would see what we see from women today attending the prayer he would prohibit them from coming to the mosque. This is the time of sahaba, therefore I leave to you to compare and judge. Think about and compare what happens in our Eid prayers where some females dress explicitly believing that they are getting rewards from Allah because they are attending the masjid for worship (Eid prayer) where in fact they are contributing to corruption (fitna) for many youth and men.

The following are the conditions that must be met when there is contact between both sexes:

1- Both parties should adhere to lowering the gaze, where there is no room for lustful looks. Almighty Allah says: **"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be modest. That is purer for them. Lo! Allah is aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigour, or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn unto Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed."** (An-Nur: 30-31)

2- A Muslim woman should observe the Muslim code of dressing: hijab. It is neither tight nor light in a way that describes the features

The body of evidence showing that women and men should not mix freely with one another is extensive. I will briefly mention some of it:

1. Allah says: ***“And when you ask the ladies for anything, ask them from before a screen. That makes for greater purity for your hearts and for theirs.”*** [Sûrah al-Ahzâb: 53]

2. It is prohibited for men to join women in one place in the absence of at least one of the women's close male relatives (mahram). The Prophet (S) forbade men and women from being alone together; this includes females with male in-laws and vice versa. He said: “Never is a man alone with a woman except that Satan is the third party with them.”

3. There are numerous evidences showing that the woman may not shake hands with men who are not among her closest rela-

tives.

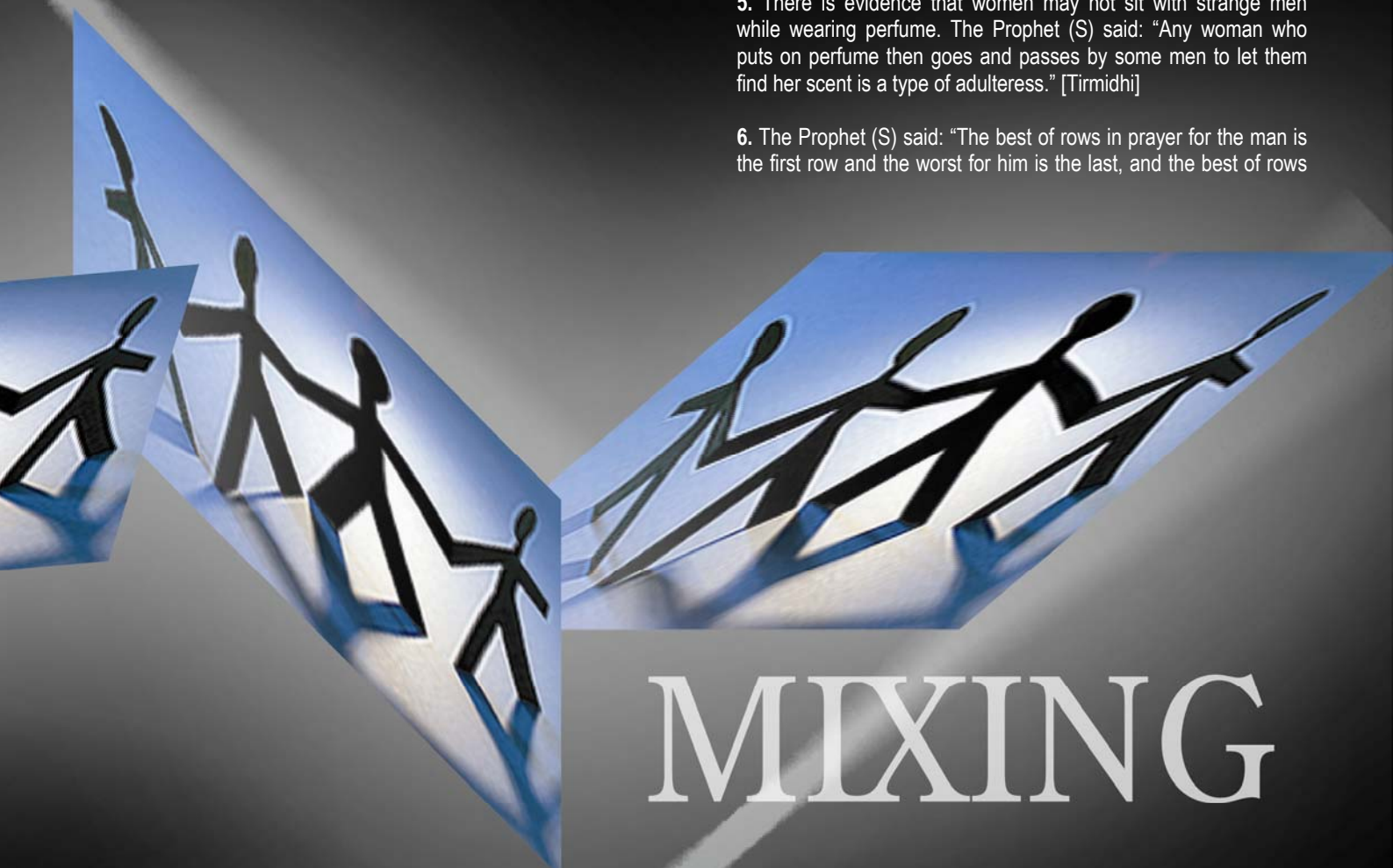
The Prophet (S) never shook hands with an unrelated woman. Umaymah b. Raqīqah said: “I came to the Prophet (S) with a group of the women of Medina to swear fealty for Islam. The women informed Allah's Messenger (S) that they wished to swear fealty to him. The Prophet (S) said: ‘I do not shake hands with women. The way I accept the pledge from one woman is the same as with one hundred women.’ [al-Muwatta’, Sunan al-Tirmidhī].

The Prophet (S) also said: “It is better for one of you to be pierced by a steel pin in his head than to touch the hand of a strange woman.”

4. The Qur’ân clearly forbids women from being soft of speech while talking to men. Allah says: “Be not too complaisant of speech, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire: but speak with a speech (that is) proper.” [Sûrah al-Ahzâb: 32].

5. There is evidence that women may not sit with strange men while wearing perfume. The Prophet (S) said: “Any woman who puts on perfume then goes and passes by some men to let them find her scent is a type of adulteress.” [Tirmidhi]

6. The Prophet (S) said: “The best of rows in prayer for the man is the first row and the worst for him is the last, and the best of rows



MIXING

of the body. The man needs to observe a modest dress code where he too should implement modest attire.

3- Men and women should only engage in speech when it is necessary. Idle talk leads from one thing to another, leading to unlawful acts.

Upon this, I can say that being in the same place with the complete Islamic adaab (morals) without jokes and laughter, the barriers remain safe. If the barrier of morals between men and women break, this is when people are in the danger zone.

The final words that I like to conclude with, without being strict or fanatic, are the words of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet (S), when she was asked: “What is the most important and expensive wealth of a woman?” She replied:

“ أن لا ترى الرجال ولا يراها الرجال ”

Not to see men and nor men to see her.”

This is the piety of Fatima, radia Allahu anha (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon her).

Sheikh Tarek El-Bikai

THIS IS WHEN PEOPLE ARE IN THE DANGER ZONE’.

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The Message

Ramadan Special

RAMADAN KAREEM

"It is a month: its beginning is Mercy (Rahmah), and its middle part is Forgiveness (Maghfirah) and its last part is freedom from hellfire..."

WHAT AFTER RAMADAN?

"How evil are the people who break Allah's oath for Ramadan!"

By Dr. Muhammad Ali Hashim

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Al Mu'allim

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Al-Mu'allim - Lyrics

We once had a Teacher
The Teacher of teachers,
He changed the world for the better
And made us better creatures,
Oh Allah we've shamed ourselves
We've strayed from Al-Mu'allim,
Surely we've wronged ourselves
What will we say in front him?
Oh Mu'allim...

Reference: <http://www.samiyusuf.com/lyrics/almuallim01.htm>

Chorus

He was Muhammad salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam,
Muhammad, mercy upon Mankind,
He was Muhammad salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam,
Muhammad, mercy upon Mankind,
Teacher of all Mankind.

Abal Qasim [one of the names of the Prophet]

Ya Habibi ya Muhammad
(My beloved O Muhammad)

Ya Shafi'i ya Muhammad
(My intercessor O Muhammad)

Khayru khalqillahi Muhammad
(The best of Allah's creation is Muhammad)

Ya Mustafa ya Imamal Mursalina
(O Chosen One, O Imam of the Messengers)

Ya Mustafa ya Shafi'al 'Alamina
(O Chosen One, O intercessor of the worlds)

He prayed while others slept
While others ate he'd fast,
While they would laugh he wept
Until he breathed his last,
His only wish was for us to be
Among the ones who prosper,
Ya Mu'allim peace be upon you,
Truly you are our Teacher,
Oh Mu'allim..

Chorus

Ya Habibi ya Muhammad
(My beloved O Muhammad)

Ya Shafi'i ya Muhammad
(My intercessor O Muhammad)

Ya Rasuli ya Muhammad
(O My Messenger O Muhammad)

Ya Bashiri ya Muhammad
(O bearer of good news O Muhammad)

Ya Nadhiri ya Muhammad
(O warner O Muhammad)

'Ishqu Qalbi ya Muhammad
(The love of my heart O Muhammad)

Nuru 'Ayni ya Muhammad
(Light of my eye O Muhammad)

He taught us to be just and kind
And to feed the poor and hungry,
Help the wayfarer and the orphan child
And to not be cruel and miserly,
His speech was soft and gentle,
Like a mother stroking her child,
His mercy and compassion,
Were most radiant when he smiled

Chorus

Abal Qasim [one of the names of the Prophet]

Ya Habibi ya Muhammad
(My beloved O Muhammad)

Ya Shafi'i ya Muhammad
(My intercessor O Muhammad)

Khayru khalqillahi Muhammad
(The best of Allah's creation is Muhammad)

Ya Mustafa Ya Imamal Mursalina
(O Chosen One O Imam of the Messengers)

Ya Mustafa ya Shafi'al 'Alamina
(O Chosen One O intercessor of the worlds)

Lyrics and Composition:

Sami Yusuf

Producer: Sami Yusuf

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Amusements Page

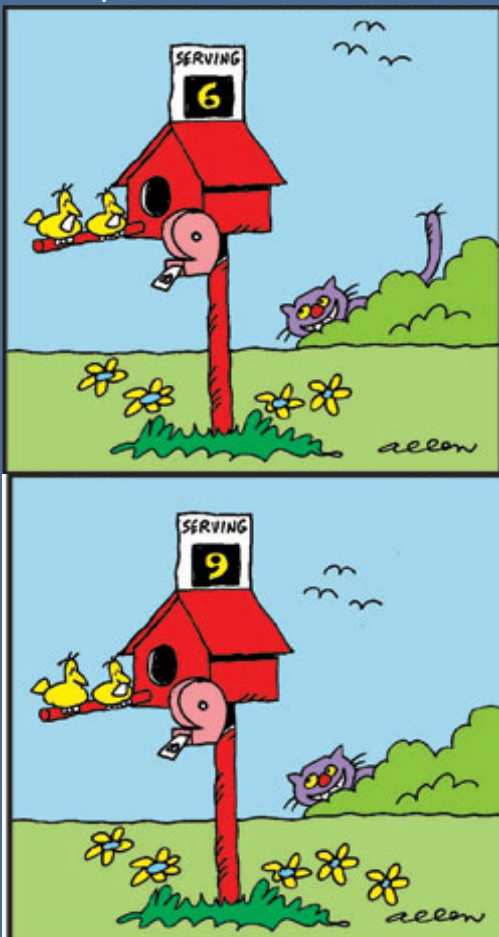
Find the names of our teachers, imams and scholars

C G A L M Y H A B D O I I I N
L U P Y P I B M O Y B W B R A
Z I V T I U L X F N P O N A M
H W S H B W H S T K D K H H H
I U M A R U A A U O I W A K T
U P K U I B Y U O M R O F U U
C R O U N M Q W M B M K A B R
H A F E E N A H U B A A R L P
I M C E M D K M D Q O E M A D
A O Y Y U W C U A H J N K I H
W A K B E E I F A H S C L T P
H Z A T H W U Z T L M J U U I
U F T H V S M T A T I A S R Q
X I B N K A T H I R M V D C Y
N R V C H H Z L B A Z V W Y G

ABUBAKR
ABUDAWOOD
ABUHANEEFAH
ALBUKHARI
ALI
HAMZAH
IBNHAFAR
IBNKATHIR
IBNTAYMEEYAH
IMAMAHMAD
IMAMMUSLIM
MUAWIYA
SHAFIEE
UMAR
UTHMAN

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

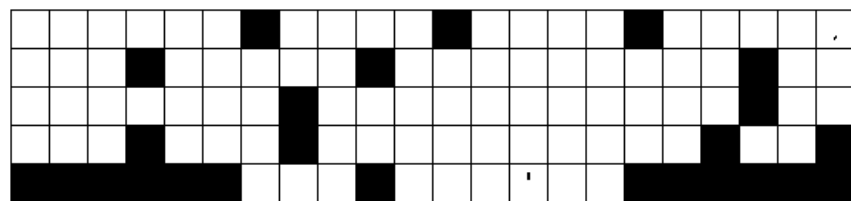
Spot the five differences



1: Number changed. 2: Bird on left has no ticket
3: Cat's tail missing. 4: Extra flower
5: Birds have moved

Fallen Phrase

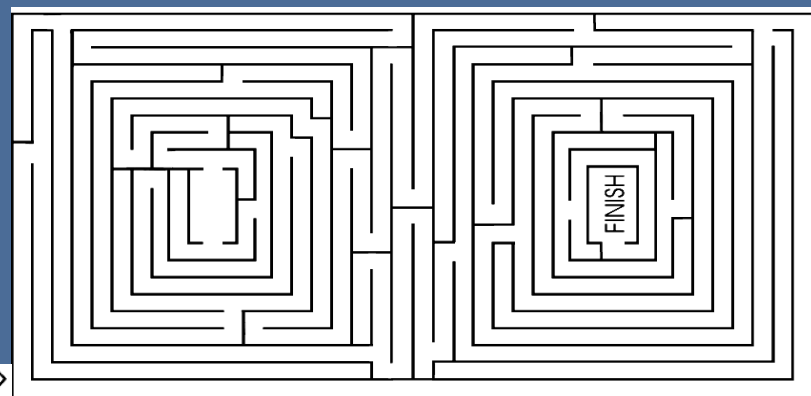
Hint: Hadith of the Prophet on Purifying the Heart



R M R T H
G N A U N D U C U T A S E I I
T E D A S T I E S Q I L I A N I N G F
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