The Best of Creation

By: Shireen Khan

Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Two Names that we are so familiar with, we often forget the other 97 of the 99 Attributes of Allah, The Almighty.

We as Muslims believe that, undoubtedly, Allah (The Exalted) stands in need of none of His creatures. There is none like Allah (The Exalted), in His essence or attributes. He was when there was nothing.

We should also, however, know that He is Sublime, Supreme, and Exalted. We must know that He is above His seven heavens, above His 'Arsh (the throne of Allah, The Exalted), and separated from His creation and that His creation is separated from Him. If we confuse His essence and attributes, then we may be treading the wrong path. But Allah (The Exalted) always knows best.

There is a huge difference between saying “Allah (The Exalted) knows, sees, and hears everything” and saying, “Allah (The Exalted) is everywhere.” Just as we perfect our talk and actions to become the best lawyers, doctors, journalists, etc.; we must perfect our speech as Muslims. We must know how to describe others.

(Continued on page 3 as Where is Allah)

Where is Allah (Ta’ala)

By: Omar Rashed

Three claims that the Christians would assert about Adam and Eve are: man’s original sin, the guilt of Eve in causing original sin, and Prophet Jesus’ (may peace be upon him) self-sacrifice for forgiveness of those who worship him, and acknowledge his supposed status as the son of God. According to Islamic thinking, there are two problems with these claims, the more well-known fact that such thinking leads to associating partners with God, or shirk, and the lesser-known fact that this conceptualization leads to an undermining of man’s worth.

Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported:

As Abu Hurairah, may Allah (The Exalted) be pleased with him, reported: Allah (The Exalted)’s Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) addressed us and said: O people, Allah (The Exalted) made Hajj obligatory for you; so perform Hajj. Thereupon a person asked: Messenger of Allah, is it to be performed) every year? He (the Holy Prophet) kept silent, and he repeated (these words) thrice, whereupon Allah (The Exalted)’s Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) said: If I were to say “yes”, it would become obligatory (for you to perform it every year) and you would not be able to do it (Muslim).

The Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam that traces back to the times of Ibrahîm (may peace be upon him). It is obligatory once in a lifetime for able bodied and financially able men and women. Hajj consists of various rituals, such as tawaf (which is the circling of the Ka’bah seven times) and Jamâ’at (the symbolic stoning of the devil). The Hajj is a purifying experience that will rock a person’s soul, and a huge humbling factor. This whole thing was new to me. To

(Continued on page 10 as Hajj)

Experience of A Life Time

By: Ali I. Ali

Thump, thump, thump. That is all I can hear, as I stand transfixed at the Ka’bah, which is within ten feet of me. This is almost surreal, finally seeing something up close that I have seen a million times on TV and in pictures. Then, after that brief moment of peace, I am sent back to reality, and flow back into the crowd circling the Ka’bah. I am now in the midst of completing my Hajj.

As Abu Hurairah, may Allah (The Exalted) be pleased with him, reported: Allah (The Exalted)’s Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) adressed us and said: O people, Allah (The Exalted) made Hajj obligatory for you; so perform Hajj. Thereupon a person asked: Messenger of Allah, is it to be performed) every year? He (the Holy Prophet) kept silent, and he repeated (these words) thrice, whereupon Allah (The Exalted)’s Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) said: If I were to say “yes”, it would become obligatory (for you to perform it every year) and you would not be able to do it (Muslim).

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AssalamuAlaykum.

It's finally here! The first issue of Nasihatul-Haqq has finally arrived. First, I would like to thank the staff of both newsletters (the former “Haqq” and “Nasihah”); they have both worked tirelessly in creating this new newsletter. I have received more articles and poems during this issue than any other usual issue of the past. I hope this trend will continue and that the newsletter will continue to expand.

Nasihatul-Haqq has more than a new fancy logo. It has now become much more diverse with sections ranging from faith to diversions and from opinion to news. It has also become monthly in order to assure that our audience benefits on a larger scale. However, to do this we, Nasihatul-Haqq, need your continuous support. Inshallah now that the two have merged, collecting articles would become easier and we can focus on producing more quality work rather than focusing on quantity. I hope you find this new newsletter rather informative and entertaining as well as beneficial.

AssalamuAlaykum wa rahmatul-Lahi wa Barakatuh, Salah Issa, Editor-in-Chief

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This publication contains the name of God, please respect it.

Nasihatul-Haqq welcomes submissions and articles from everybody. Articles may be edited for content and length at the editors’ discretion. Submit all articles to Nasihatulhaqq@yahoo.com.

The opinions expressed in Nasihatul-Haqq are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily represent that of Nasihatul-Haqq.

Visit Nasihatul-Haqq online at http://muslims.rutgers.edu/newsletter.htm

Nasihatulhaqq@yahoo.com

Thank You for Your Support

As to those who believe and work righteousness, verily We shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a (single) righteous deed. Al-Kahf 30
Miracles of the Qur’ān

By: Shakir Ahmed

The passage of faith, belief, and revelation, which began with the father of all humanity, Prophet Adam (may peace be upon him), to the holy scriptures contained in the Torah and the Injā'ī (Gospel); all became abrogated and historical on a quiet and warm night inside a cave known as Hira’ (Saudi Arabia) during the holy month of Ramadan. Indeed it was a revelation unlike any other, therefore was revealed to a man unlike any other, the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (may peace and blessings be upon him). Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings be upon him) heard a trembling voice which commanded, “Read: In the name of thy Lord Who createth” (al-īqā’ 96:1). Though not foreseen, the past as well as the future would be dynamically impacted with this revelation. The forthcoming message of righteousness was bestowed upon civilizations for generations, the words of Allāh (The Exalted) were revealed to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). One does not have to reference volumes of historical data to absorb this impact, but rather just refer to the Holy Qur’ān. In the Qur’ān, all previous books and scriptures have been abrogated; this is the might of All-Mighty. Furthermore, the words of Allāh (The Exalted), All-Mighty and the miracle of the Qur’ān, are not merely raised surfaces of the Earth. It is not only 1855, when scientists claimed that these mountains are not merely raised surfaces rather they are rooted deep beneath the ground. In most cases, mountains are deeper than the surface they are above. In fact, some have been known to be as much as 15 times deeper. Scientists within the last century concluded that the Earth’s layers are being held steady together by these underground portions of mountains. The analogy of a staple, holding pieces of paper together comes to mind. Subhan Allāh (Praise be to Allāh, The Exalted), Allāh (The Exalted) revealed this exact fact through Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) 1400 years ago. Further clarified. (Continued on page 4a in Qur’ān)

(Continued from previous page)

feels it is clear that this creates feelings of value, worth, dignity, and contentment. All of this from the ability to name; so what is it?

Luqman Abdullah-Wajid, a local Muslim social worker who focuses on human nature, asserts the ability to name is related to his ability to access knowledge. The angels proclaimed their knowledge was strictly given to them by Allāh (The Exalted), whereas Adam (may peace be upon him)’s methodology was different. This requires further examination.

Reality is pre-existing, concerning our awareness of it, and tends to be experienced as a vague whole. The vagueness of this total reality resists awareness, scrutiny, and therefore understanding. Naming distinguishes out the components of reality allowing us to focus on the parts of our choosing. This gives access to studying, understanding and possibly changing our perception of specific pieces of reality (Abdullah-Wajid 7). This scholar goes on to explain the creativity involved in naming: “We make one piece of a whole, distinct from the rest, then name it. We have created two from one. The more accurately we name a thing and the more parts that we indentify, the closer we get to understanding it” (Abdullah-Wajid 7). As presented, there is much strength to be gained through naming. However, the opposite is also true; it is both possible to avoid naming, and it is done. He writes, “To avoid understanding, to avoid thinking about resolving, or in an attempt to avoid being aware of and responsible for, we can avoid naming” (Abdullah-Wajid 7).

However, it is necessary to reaffirm two points: the status and worthiness of mankind is a gift, regardless of whether it is accepted or not; every human being has the choice in accepting this gift and believing Allāh (The Exalted), or rejecting it and believing Satan. It is simply an injustice to the self to deny Allāh’s (The Exalted) gift, and the gift is not revoked by doing so. The gift of worthiness is Allāh (The Exalted) eternal gift to mankind.

Thus, the single conclusion to be drawn is the importance and fundamental nature of naming, and its integral part in human existence. The next logical step in this discussion is the necessity of naming in our lives, and the fact that this process gives us worth. Finally, it becomes clear that without naming, an individual has lost identity and the gift bestowed upon him, and has denied the favor of his Lord. In the Qur’ān, Allāh (The Exalted) asks mankind, “Then which of the favors of your Lord will ye deny?” (at-Rahman 55:13). This point is clarified as described by Luqman when he writes, “Adam (may peace be upon him) and Eve (may Allāh be pleased with her) ate from the forbidden tree, by believing that the creation Allāh (The Exalted) created them to be was defective. This is an insult to Allāh (The Exalted)” (Abdullah-Wajid 7). This clearly illustrates that mankind has made a fundamental error in disbelieving Allāh (The Exalted) when He declares that man is worthy. Further, repentance and forgiveness can solve humanities problem of self-doubting, and is made evident when “Adam (may peace be upon him) transformed his toxic unhealthy shame into healthy shame by naming it, and externalizing it, and healed himself by repentance; and re-forming his actions” (Abdullah-Wajid 7). The experience of Adam (may peace be upon him) reflects on the life of all his children, thus all of humanity can learn from the lessons taught through his story. Mankind’s duty, after having received this knowledge, is simple; “Humanity would benefit immensely from following their example, and purging themselves of all beliefs, that the person Adam (the Exalted) created them to be, is anything less than sacred, [and that] Allāh (The Exalted) does not make mistakes” (Abdullah-Wajid 7). The next logical question would be how do we purge ourselves of beliefs that contradict Allāh (The Exalted)? The answer lies in an understanding of the self-talk, or the messages that a person tells themselves about themselves. These messages can induce toxic shame when corrupted by the whispers of Satan. It is important to note that at this juncture understanding the process of purifying beliefs and shaping them to fit the mold of Allāh (The Exalted) and the Prophet Muhammad’s (may peace and blessings be upon him) teachings is a difficult path. The process is complicated further because an individual’s attempts to purify their own self can be sabotaged by his dealings with family, friends, and any other group of people who may not fully understand these dynamics.

Ultimately, two points are clear: first, Allāh (The Exalted) has established through His Qur’ān that man is worthy, and what makes him unique is the ability to name; second, a person who does not believe in his self-worth, those who disbelieve in Allāh (The Exalted)’s message in the story of creation and who have fallen victim to Satan’s whispers, have the ability to shift their thinking in such a way that they can purify their self-talk, acknowledge their own worth, and believe in Allāh (The Exalted). The process can be times overwhelming, but this is the core of mankind’s purpose on Earth. It is the average person, not which people are best able to understand Allāh (The Exalted), Islam, and their own self.
Standing up to the Hatred for the Companions

By: Zakir Mohammed Hossain

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was an extraordinary human being. Not only was he (peace and blessings be upon him) the Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) of Allāh (The Exalted), he (peace and blessings be upon him) was also a very beautiful human being. Here I don’t intend to refer to his physical beauty; I want to refer to the beauty of his character. He behaved humanely with Muslims, non-Muslims, and animals. Everyone saw his compassion and truthfulness. His integrity and kind-heartedness helped to spread Islam in his community like wild fire.

The Prophet (SAW) lived about 1400 years ago. We do not have any documentary films dating back to 620 AD showing us how the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was. The only sources we have to describe his (peace and blessings be upon him) life and the Message he brought are the Qur’ān and the authentic hadiths. Anything other than that is based on mere conjecture.

Here comes the relevance of the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). The Qur’ān and the hadith that we read today have been transmitted through the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). If we were to question the integrity of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), the people who collected the hadith and the Qur’ān, we would have to end up questioning the authenticity of the Qur’ān and the earlier teachings of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). Our perception of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and the Qur’ān have been based on conjecture. This is why ‘Ilmām Abīn’ābānbanal said once that those people who doubt the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) put their faith in Jāhannām into doubt. Jāhannām as it exists in today’s world, and has done so for the past 1400 years, would be in murky waters if we were to call the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) a corrupt people.

Defaming all the hundreds of the close companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) without any sound evidence is blasphemy no matter how you look at it. These people lived over a thousand years ago. All the original historical documents show how well-rounded, trustworthy human beings these people were. How can we judge them fairly or justly even though none of us have seen them? We don’t punish people living today for committing zinā unless we have four witnesses for the crime. How can we pass our blind judgment on people who have lived so long ago whom we did not see? Is that human? Is that just?

“This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Jāhannām as your religion” (Al-Mā’ṣūrah 5:3). These are the words of the Holy Qur’ān. To a Muslim these are beautiful because these are the words of Allāh (The Exalted). This is Allāh’s (The Exalted) speech to mankind for guidance. Allāh (The Exalted) has promised us that He has perfected the religion of Islam. Shouldn’t we think that the religion that was perfected about 1400 years ago would remain as the perfect guidance for humanity till the end of time? If we love Allāh (The Exalted), and believe Him to be the Most Merciful, we must accept that He will uphold this religion of Islam and all its true teachings, or else there will be no proper guidance at all for us. We have to accept that the Prophet’s (peace and blessings be upon him) message was transmitted via his (peace and blessings be upon him) uncorrupted Companions. If his Companions were to be deceiving then every act of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) that we read about in the Qur’ān and the authentic hadith would have been in doubt. Should we think Allāh (The Exalted) would want to keep us in that sort of doubt? Should we think that Allāh (The Exalted) would make the road for practicing Islam that ambiguous, where we have to question every act of worship? Allāh (The Exalted) is the Most Merciful, the Most Benevolent (One Who Gives without asking anything from us) and so He’d never do such a thing. Furthermore, He has promised this to us. Allāh (The Exalted) says, “Verily We: It is We who have sent down the Dhikr (Qur’ān) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)” (Al-Hijr 15:9).

“Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it, (it is) sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise

(Continued on page 6 as 6 Hatred)
and all that is on the Earth? There is no secret counsel of three, but He is their fourth, nor of five, but He is their sixth, nor of fewer than that, nor of more, but He is with them wherever they may be. Then on the Day of Resurrection He will inform them of what they did. Surely, Allāh knows all things full well” (al-Mujādilah 58:7).

Those who deny Allāh’s Exaltedness, and instead say that He is everywhere, would use this verse to prove what they say. On the other hand, Ibn Kathir says that this verse only shows that Allāh (The Exalted) is well acquainted with everything a human does, whether it be private or not. The opening of the verse speaks of Allāh (The Exalted)’s knowledge and not His location. The point of the verse is that Allāh (The Exalted) has knowledge of what may go on in a private and secret counsel, not of being a part of the secret counsel. The verse ends with Allāh (The Exalted) informing them of their own secrets, which confirms Allāh (The Exalted)’s knowledge. And “Allāh manages all affairs from the heaven unto the earth” (as-Sajdah 32:5).

Another verse that is used to justify by those who deny Allāh (The Exalted)’s superiority is: “It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein” (Qaf 50:16). Does that mean Allāh (The Exalted) is within our veins? And in the trees? And in the water we drink? No. Allāh (The Exalted) is nearer to us than our own veins but not in time, place or location. Once again, the word “know” is used. It is His omnipotence that is the key to the ‘location’ question. It is quite obvious that Allāh (The Exalted) is above the seven heavens, above His ‘Arsh. The Aḥlus-Sunnah wāl-Jama’ah believe that the Mi’raj was not an illusion but real, and that Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings be upon him) was taken from the lowest heaven up to the seventh to reach Allāh (The Exalted), and have the obligatory prayers prescribed to him.

Mu’āwiyah as-Sahmi reported: “I had some sheep which I kept… with a slave-girl to look after them. One day… [I] discovered that a wolf had devoured one of them… [I] struck the girl. Later on, I came to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and reported to him the incident. He terrified me with the gravity of my action. I said, ‘Messenger of Allāh! Shall I free her [as an expiation of my sin]?’” He said ‘Call her over.’ When I did, he asked her, ‘Where is Allāh?’ She said ‘Above the heavens’. Then he asked her, ‘Who am I?’ She said, ‘The Messenger of Allāh.’ He replied: ‘Certainly, He is above His ‘Arsh and nothing escapes His knowledge’ (Iṣṭitāma’ il-Juyūsh il-Islāmiyyah 93).

Imam Ahmad was asked, “Is Allāh above His ‘Arsh, above the seventh heaven, separate from His creatures, and is His knowledge and power encompassing everything everywhere?” He replied: “Certainly, He is above His ‘Arsh and nothing escapes His knowledge” (Iṣṭitāma’ il-Juyūsh il-Islāmiyyah 123).

As Muslims, we must be careful about how we describe our Lord. We must be careful about what we accept as right and refuse as wrong. The list of ayāhs proving Allāh (The Exalted) to be above His ‘Arsh is extensive and the entire Muslim ummah (with reference to the standpoint made by the four Imams above) is to be in unison when it comes to answering the question: “Where is Allāh (The Exalted)?” Because the slightest error may lead us off the path of righteousness; and Allāh (The Exalted) always knows best.
Goals: Seeking them out

By: Salah Fuad Issa

Have you ever tried to achieve something but failed, for example trying to lose weight, memorizing a chapter from the holy Qur’ān, or just trying to be a better person? Like most everyone else, I have also experienced a lot of failed dreams and goals.

One day I was discussing Muslim leadership with a person, when he showed me a whole collection of tapes, CDs, and books about leadership. He then gave me a set of 6 tapes with the title “Goals” by Zig Zigler.

Three weeks later, I decided that it was finally time to listen to one of them. So, I opened one up, put it in the radio, and suddenly I heard the voice of Zig Zigler speaking. He spoke with a heavy southern accent, one you would hear in the movies. I was about to give up.

However, since I was cleaning the basement I decided to listen to it while working.

Looking back I was happy that I stayed and listened to the tapes. The tape taught me a lot about goals and achieving them. Here is a summary of the first two tapes of “Goals” by Zig Zigler. I hope you find it useful.

To achieve goals, one first must decide what goals he/she wants to achieve. The biggest problem with goals is that most people don’t have any. 1. The first step is to write all the goals you want to accomplish, whether small or big, write every goal you want to. Continue to add to the list for three days, even though the largest portion of the list will be written in the first day. 2. After three days of writing the goals, write next to each one, “Why?” 3. Think of why you want to accomplish this goal. If you can’t articulate the reason in one sentence, then cross it off, don’t scribble it off or the reason in one sentence, then cross it off. 4. Balance your goals list by giving each goal a category: physical, mental, social, financial, career, and family. Check to see if your goals are oriented in one category. If they are, try to make it them more balanced.

Ask the following questions for each goal: Will reaching this goal make me happier? Make sure you differentiate between pleasure and happiness. Pleasure satisfies a person’s desires for a small period of time, while happiness will give a person long-term satisfaction (for example the difference between eating a chocolate bar and getting married). Will reaching it make me healthier? Will reaching it make me more prosperous? Will reaching it make me more secure? Will reaching it make me more friends? Will reaching it give me peace of mind? Will reaching it improve my family? If you can’t answer yes to one of these questions, then cross off the goal.

6. On your goals list, some of the goals might be big, so one has to stretch to reach it. Some goals are small and daily. Other goals are continuous/ongoing goals (as in daily exercise or revising what you have memorized in the Qur’ān). Also, some of the goals might be long range, so if one has a disaster, it doesn’t destroy the person, since he will feel it as a slight setback, not the end of his life. In your list, make sure you have some of each kind of goal (long-term and short-term).

7. Check for Negativity. If you have a goal that for the moment is too big, out of reach, or unrealistic, cross it out. Also, cross it out if it is in a field completely unrelated to you. For example, if you had a goal to make a website that will get the best website award, but you don’t know a thing on how to make a website. Also, take off any goal that at the moment depends on luck.

Ask the following questions for each goal: Is it really my goal (is it something you want, or what someone thinks you should do)? Is it Islamically right? Will it take me closer to my objectives? Can I emotionally commit myself to start and finish the project? Can I see myself reaching the goal? One needs to reduce the goals list down to four. Continue doing 1-8 to decrease them to four. Then answer the following to find out how to accomplish the goal and the amount needed to reach the goal: Find out where you are. The first four tapes of each goal. What will the goal accomplish? What you need to accomplish, or attain, the goal? Skills needed to reach the goal. Organization needed to reach the goal. And the plan of action to reach the goal.

This is the basic summary of the first two tapes of the six tape series. If Allah (The Exalted) wills, I will write about the other four tapes in the future issues.

Note that this is just a summary of Zig Zigler tapes, based on what I understood. I used my own examples.

From the Outside, Looking In: The Bubble Popper

By: Rushna Arshad

Picture this: you are walking to class one morning wondering what this new ISRU committee is about. All you have been told is that it exists. As you make your way through the cold and wintry morning, a familiar face runs towards you, stops, smiles, raises a sewing needle into thin air, looks you in the face and screams, “Pop!” That’s it. The mysterious brother or sister runs off in merriment, most likely to do the same to another be-wildered and utterly confused and sleepy ISRU-er dragging him or herself to class. Congratulations! You just met the bubble popping committee. The goal of this committee is to pop the bubble of routine college life and encourage critical thought and reflection of intentions and actions on a daily basis.

As the new semester begins we will soon find ourselves back in the hustle and bustle of college life. Within the first few weeks we will become accus-tomed to our new, yet familiar scheduled-term. Depending on our level of faith, this will result either in mindless routinization or the desire to dwell therein forever (At-Tawbah 9:100). Only in a few minutes of 10 minutes per day of the above, followed by action to make necessary changes in the days and weeks that follow can and will, if Allah (The Exalted) wills, make us better people. Under what circumstances did we all went through a constant renewal of intentions followed by action. We would find ourselves in a very different bubble: the un-popable, universal faith bubble of the nation of Muhammad (may peace and blessings be upon him).

“Note to readers: The bubble-popping committee consists of all ISRU members working tirelessly to benefit the brothers and sisters in their community. The poppers are ISRU meetings and events. Drop by to have your bubble popped and changed every Thursday at 7:00 pm.”

As-Saff (2-3)

O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not?

Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that ye say that which ye do not.

The Vanguard (of Islam), the first who

to forsok their homes (Al-Muhājirīn) and of those who gave them aid (Al-Anṣār) and also who follow them in all good deeds. Allah is pleased with them as they are with Him. For them He prepared gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever” (At-Tawbah 9:100).

“Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah and those who are with each other. You see them bow and prostrate themselves in prayer) seeking grace from Allah and (His) good pleasure. On their faces are the marks being the traces of their prostration...” (Al-Fath 48:29).

In a reliable hadith, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, “The best of my followers are those living in my century” (Bukhārī).

My dear Muslim brothers and sisters, next time you hear anyone cursing the Saudi, or the 100,000 people that lived around the Prophet’s (peace and blessings be upon him) time, please ask them, “Are your actions just?”
They See Me
By: Saba Rathore

I never know
How to look
At people,
Because all
I see
Is what
They see
In me,
And it
Scares
Me to see
How deep
They go,
Down, down
Trying to see
Reflections
Of glimpses
Of me.
But what they
See is not me.
They capture
Reflections
Of glass mirrors
Turned upside
Down,
So, you see
They don’t see me.
But what they see
Strikes at my heart.
And I cannot
But start
At the frozen
Stares because
Of what they see:
They see me.

They See Me
By: Saba Rathore

The book starts to sweat,
Leaking pieces of tar whet
The appetite for reality.
The book smells of sweat,
Will we ever let
The book feel wet?
And there is the beauty of
Contradiction, Satisfaction
Of never-ending hallucination.
The dusky musk of
Papery leaves clashing
With the sound of
Aromatic winds,
That fills the cavity
Of destruction.

Then & Now
(for all Americans)
By: Farah Khadim

Put the victims of hurricane Katrina & slavery in juxtaposition
Look at their positions
In this world of opposition
Do you see the converging junction?
The Dome & the slave ship similar destinations
For the inferior vs. superior in different time period locations
Whites vs. Blacks & Rich vs. Poor- some differentiation
In this free land of equal justification
How do you feel true liberalization?
When the little that you get undergoes magnification
And your own efforts receive underestimation
“All men are equal”-get the right interpretation
Don’t get any misapprehension
Know your innate rights & don’t allow for miscalculation
For you have the minds to disprove the allegations
To put those insane ideologies to complete elimination
Centuries old thoughts of superiority must undergo vilification
To free ourselves from obstructions
To exemplify the true meaning of America for propagation

Coming Clean
By: Nida Hasan

No words uttered except for the first greeting
Like an awkward forced first meeting
A smile disappears into a stoic facade
Continuing pretenses turned odd
How quickly relationships get torn
Enmity between close companions is born
Memories of shared fortunate times swallowed
So rapidly leaving friendships hollowed
Merely based on trivial utterances
Minor disputes evolve to major differences
Downward descend guided by pride
The bigger picture is cast aside
Priorities lost amidst scattered lies
My intentions I must revise
Realizing Ramadān had started
 Patching up with those who parted
To avert a Tremendous Wrath
From encompassing my path
Blessed that I recognized this now
Instead of when it would’ve been too late to bow
My head before You in repentance
Punishment surely then would have been intense
O Allah (The Exalted) Make my heart clean and pure
So perhaps I may be able to secure
A place for myself in Your Paradise
This alone for me will suffice

Apostrophe
By: Mohammed Irfan Shariff

Do not really know much about,
The air of talk that is spoken.
Do not really care much about,
The points of view gossip people.
Do not really mind number or color.
Does the hater walk? I do not bother.
But I will stand, I will speak.
And I will walk, and I will reach.
The clear path that we know,
For the person who wants to grow.
Not by distance but by the light
Heart wrenched worried about the afterlife.

O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allah), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqun (the pious).
[2:21]
The Flow of Faith

By: Mohammad ElAmin Kouar

Everyday, every hour, every minute, and every second of my life
There is temptation, seduction, and a never-ending strife
Submitting to the Lord because heaven is more than worth it
While the devil be the resistor in my taqwa circuit
The satanic whispers, I try to suppress
Because it’s all a test
More or less
When I struggle no need to confess
Just return back to Allah (The Exalted) and his religion
Because paradise isn’t an impossible mission
Sin is the bait while Satan has gone fishing
Sometimes I get caught up
But then I remember the way I was brought up
Raised in accordance to the way of the prophet
But then I remember the way I was brought up
Because my religion is that of my companions
Because it’s all a test
When I struggle no need to confess
I’m following every sin with a good deed
As if my parents had planted a good seed
So I return to the way of the prophet
So I realize my true friends and foes
But my faith gets weak
And worn out like my clothes
Because my religion is that of my companions
And the devils traps are like grand canyons
But I hear the Adhan so I answer the call
And sincere prayer purifies my soul
But the devils tricks never get old
So I hold firmly to rope
Of Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful
And if you look at my words sideways, you see the flow of faith
Increasing and decreasing till you reach the GRAVE

Find Your Way Across the Desert

ACROSS
1. All Muslims are required to do it at least once in a lifetime
2. The first person to disobey Allah (SWT)
3. Circling the Kaaba
4. Ritual that is performed five times a day
5. A person who ran between two hills before he/she found water
6. Center of the Islamic Ummah
7. Most important and sought out house in the world (Note, not the White House)
8. A Mountain where a prophet preached on during Hajj
9. A city in Arabia that survived a three months siege against a huge alliance
10. A person who had a great prophetic state and ________
11. A spring that sprang out out of earth and helped save a little child
12. Son of a prophet and lived in a desert
13. Used to live in the most important house
14. A ritual that is performed five times a day
15. A book that should be read more often
16. The Creature that helps us go astray
17. Used to be the main source of transportation for the pilgrims

DOWN
1. Submission
2. Patience
3. Ibrahim
4. Isma’il
5. Masa
6. Mina
7. Safa
8. Marwa
9. Sunshine
10. Hram
11. Taqseer
12. Taawheed
13. Hajar
14. Taqseer
15. Idols
16. Taghut
17. Eid al-Adha
18. Tawheed
19. Hajar
20. Isma’il
The Trojan Horse

By Adam Salem

Thousands of miles away, in the land of Arabia, lies a land chaotically generated and ruined by militant forces – that land is Iraq. Though external forces have bombarded and devastated the land, the most destructive of all militant forces is that which lies within the land – a militant extremism, dedicated with the sole intention of creating sedition and partitions among the varied Muslims of Iraq. Day after day, news reports are channeled throughout the world – disseminating messages of horrendous attacks carried out against the public sphere. In street markets, banks, security buildings, and even mosques, a violent manifestation has whirled throughout the country for several years now. Though so much can be said of this topic, one notion must be temporarily retained – that the greatest destruction which has overthrown the Muslim community is driven not by external forces of the world’s super powers, but rather by internal forces within the community itself. Henceforth, the most degenerating attacks that diminish the community are characterized by the divisions created by those within the Muslim community itself.

Homer’s Iliad exemplifies the destruction of an entire civilization by military forces which marched from within the civilization itself. When Odysseus (the enemy of the Trojans) develops the plan to create a giant Trojan Horse as a gift for the Trojans, the Trojans become convinced that the gift suggests a completion of the war. Thereafter, the Trojans carry the giant Trojan Horse into the center of their city – oblivious to the enemy hiding within the Horse. When the enemy creeps out of the Trojan Horse into the night, the covert warriors destroy the city by surging into it. (Continued on page 13)

The Big What?

By Ahmed Eid

It is due to human curiosity about the reality of the universe that we have many theories regarding its origin. Throughout history, there has always seemed to be an indescribable need to understand the mystery we call "outer space." Some scientists claim that the earth was here forever and it will continue to be, while others have said that the universe was a small containment of energy that exploded once upon a time to form the universe we know today. The truth is, the big bang theory makes absolutely no sense and cannot be accepted by the human mind because of its illogical premises and therefore, illogical conclusion.

Let us begin by tackling the issue with only our common intellect and no scientific jargon. If I were to tell you that on my way to school I saw a tree that began sawing itself into pieces of usable wood, and then began moving and miał itself together to form a boat, then moved into the water and people began to ride it, you would call me crazy. How is it then that one believes that the entire universe with almost magical orchestration and beauty came about by chance? Just living, we all can conclude that nothing happens without input. It wasn’t because I wanted this article to be written that it was, but because I sat down and exerted the effort needed to get the article written. In the same way, if the universe didn’t have to be created, it wouldn’t be. If I tell you that man-made miracles, each labeled a number from one to ten, into a jar and pull them out by one in order, the chances of that happening would be less than one in a thousand of a percent. Explain to me, O knowledgeable scientist, how the earth has the perfect temperature to accommodate life, with the perfect number for the force of gravity, all of which is the most perfect distance it is from the sun, which is the only planet that has water on it? The truth is that this all could not have happened by chance, rather, there must be an All-Powerful Creator who designed everything to perfection. Think about the human heart, with the ability to store and discharge blood for over 60 years, never needing to take a break. Or the human brain, the most complex chemical plant known to man. Not hundreds of thousands of chemical reactions happen every second of our lives, everything correctly proportioned and planned. I can go on and on with arguments until I die. This earth could not have happened by chance, because if it did, then something was bound to go wrong at least once! Yet the earth is the most perfect place to sustain human life. It is by following this logical train of thought that we can prove the big bang did not happen. (Continued on page 5)

An Example of the Freedom of Speech

By Ahmad Yousaf

I feel like saying something I am supposed to be allowed to say:

I should be able to say that I AM MUSLIM before I am American and would die to protect those who share the same faith as I and die for those who are being oppressed as we speak! In Kashmir, in Palestine, in Chechnya, in China, in west Africa, in France, in Harlem, on the Bible Belt, outside Giant Stadium (if you don’t know what I am doing read the freaking news) and IN GITMO. If you have a problem with what I say then deal with it because the constitution, that is supposedly the foundation for this once great nation, says I can say whatever I want and you can’t do crap. But if you really are not sure, just call me at work and I am easy to find. Just remember that I belong to the greatest Fraternity/Sorority in the world (1.4 billion strong!). Do not get me wrong… I don’t like to start fights but that does not mean I… WE…will not do what we have to do to protect ourselves when we are first attacked. AND WE HAVE BEEN ATTACKED. If you do not believe that this front in Iraq and the “war on terror” is not a war on Islam then you have allowed yourself to be fooled. Just because of the actions of a few, all my people (not an ethnicity… a FAITH) have been looked at with suspicion and fear. Even theapot book Timothy McVeigh’s attacks in Oklahoma cause the same disdain for the Catholic Church!!! What about that guy named HITLER? I do not believe that all Germans, or all Christians for that matter, agree with the annihilation of the Jews or in the supremacy of a race.

Because of the actions of Ariel Sharon, I do not believe that all Jews with genes shared with the Palestinian people. So then why do I get looked at funny? Why do my sisters who protect their homeland with (Our creative) power, who created us, and accept it. Keep in mind that it was a couple of hundred years ago when no one believed the existence of anything but the sun, the moon, and the earth, and some people even said that the earth was flat. We know now that that is incorrect, and that other galaxies like the one we are in exist. Back then, if one were to say that the universe actually exists, and that there is more to it than the sun and the earth, one would be labeled crazy and put into an insane asylum. However, what amazes the Muslims is that the Qur’an proved the existence of a universe, as well as explaining in detail its origin over 1400 years ago. It is also a scientific fact today that the universe is constantly expanding, and has no finite size. The Qur’an says regarding the universe with (Our creative power) and, verily, it is We Who are steadily expanding it.” (51:47) I wish not to bore you with proofs from the Qur’an, because if I were to try, I could take up many pages. The Qur’an cannot be disproved about anything regarding its scientific realities and proofs, and
be honest, I was ignorant on the rituals of Hajj until I was on the plane. One of the things that really got me was the wearing of the two towels (or ihram) for a number of days. I mean, for someone so used to wearing pants and underwear, two towels was a stretch.

Mina, our first stop was not as bad as many people make it out to be. It was like a camp ground, with tents and sleeping mattresses. This is where one sees the true poverty. Outside our campground was where the less fortunate camped out, in the streets and the alleys. There have been a lot of reasons for the cause of the stampede in Mina. But, from someone who was there’s perspective, all it needed was organization, which included the suitcases.

Muzdalifah and Arafat went by in a flash, and along the way I met an array of different Muslims. I made friends from Kazakhstan, Iran, Egypt, Turkey, etc. At one point in the Harem, I was sitting with a group from Turkey, and although we did not speak the same language, we shared dates and Zam Zam. Hajj teaches us a lot of things. I’ve learned patience, confidence, taqwa, and many other things. This is how Hajj in a nutshell. This might not be the most detailed account or the most helpful, but one of the hardest things to do is put something like Hajj on paper. All I can say is that, you have to see it to fully comprehend it.

By Ahmad Yousaf

I AM A FUNDAMENTALIST!
I am fundamentally sound
Fundamentally bound
Fundamentally submit to the One who holds Crown
I fundamentally believe
That I am supposed to be fundamentally free
Because I fundamentally agree
With the constitution, the fundamentals of this society
I AM AN EXTREMIST!
I am extremely kind, I am extremely against those who oppress
I am extremely modest you will find, around my sisters who extremely dress
But I digress to tell you that I am extremely impressed
And extremely respect
The brother who has extreme hair on his chin
And the sister who covers here extreme beauty to show her beauty within
I AM A RADICAL!
I am radically opposed to you
Radically opposed the Palestinian-killing Jews
I radically oppose the way you see women as meat
Because I radically believe Jannah is at these women’s feet
I am radically opposed to your radical oppression
Radically going into Iraq to find what ‘nukelar’ weapons
YOU ARE A FUNDAMENTALIST!
Your fundamentally nuts, you are fundamentally crazy
You don’t know what fundamental means, you fundamentally amaze me
You fundamentally spit on the constitution
You are fundamentally the walking human pollution
You fundamentally want to burn the stripes and block out the stars
You want to fundamentally kill freedom and put liberty behind bars
YOU ARE AN EXTREMIST!
You are extreme in your acts, extreme in your behavior
Extremely deluded to believe that no matter how many people you kill: Christ is your savior!
You are extreme in your foreign policy
Extremely influenced by what you want in your heart
YOU ARE A TERRORIST!
You are extremely dangerous when you are in power
Extremely oblivious of the upcoming Hour
YOU ARE A RADICAL!
You are radically ignorant, you radically lie
You are radically unaware Who’s law you defy
Your thoughts are radical, radical is your way
You radically deceive and you will do anything radical to get your way
Radical is your mindset, radical is your major friend
And when they rape, pillage and destroy, you still radically defend
I AM A TERRORIST!!!
But not the way you want me to be, Because the truth terrorizes you Integrity puts fear in your minds and righteousness is what I do
So I am a terrorist because justice puts terror in your hearts
You are terrorized by decency and my honesty is way off the charts
So I will continue to terrorize you with all that is true
So call me a terrorist but know that I am only a terrorist to you

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NAAN KABAB INDOOR BBQ
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~ FRESH HALAL MEAT
~CATERING ALSO AVAILABLE FROM OUR INDOOR KABAB BBQ
KASHMIR GROCERY HALAL MEAT
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(732) 339 1031
(732) 330 9022
Misplaced

By: Mohammed Irfan Shariff

Beautiful it was that midday in the month of Shawwal. Bopping their heads as the bass thumped in the new Toyota Corolla his friend drove, but he remembered the blue sky. It was a beautiful day, the fog and rain, and being pulled over by the Brunswick Police, money spent in a government system backed by taxes and a conflict of interest. A whirlwind of thought after the sun went down created his rigid mindset of just getting home and going to sleep. He knew the company he was in, but never were they as in touch as he was never they as sensitive as he was and even in the hottest summer day never were they as cool as he was. It was raining and the fog was so dense, all he could do was smile because he knew of the bright blue sky.

His sneakers were torn and letting in water as he walked from the dorm to the bass thumping Corolla, not any Corolla, this one had spinning hubcaps. They made him laugh, especially since two of them were jammed and only served as a synthetic piece of chrome that reflected the sunlight. But he never told his acquaintances this, for he too was spinning in a whirlwind only to be jammed by the vivid colors of momentary thought. But things stopped, things really did stop and come to a standstill when the world was over-turned and prayer came…. still he stood as firm as possible to pray the way the last prophet prayed. Blessings and peace be upon him…. Life was routine for those who are cowardly enough to succed and supersede.

The Qur’an clearly prohibits the ridicule other women who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule others who may be better than themselves. ‘O you who have attained to faith! Be conscious of God. Verily, God is an acceptor of repentance, a dispenser of grace!” (Al-Hujurat 49:12).

Thus, the Qur’an constantly emphasizes the gravity of such a crime: “You who believe! People should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves. And do not find fault with one another or insult each other with derogatory nicknames. How evil it is to have a name for evil conduct after coming to faith! Those people who do not turn from it are wrong-doers” (Al-Mujadilah 5:11).

Thinking to himself, what brand new Corolla shuts off…. Aren’t they the tactile representation of dependability? Who blows out their battery with a 3000 thousand watt subwoofer? I should not have asked him to drop me home. I should have just taken the train. I should have stayed at school; mom is not even going to be happy to see me I shoulda… “chill kid, the car turned on… I’ll check you later” “salaamz”...”

By: Mohammed Irfan Shariff

February 2006

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Hamas Wins Historic Election

By: Farrukh Salim

Palestinians took to the polls on January 26 for the first time in the absence of Yasir Arafat. It was a first for many other things as well. In a shocking result Hamas, considered by many to be hardliners and even declared as a terrorist organization by the United States, Israel, and the European Union scored a landslide victory over the long time ruling Fatah Party. The victory was not only a shock to the rest of the world but also to Hamas itself. "When we took part in the elections we honestly expected to win but we did not expect to win by so much," said Osama Hamdan, the party’s representative in Lebanon. The party’s supporters and workers took to the streets and celebrated the unprecedented victory by hoisting the party flag over the Palestinian Parliament. Hamas won an overwhelming majority in the 132-seat legislature, taking 76 seats to Fatah’s 43 in the election, the official vote count showed. It gives Hamas the power to shape and possibly even lead elections we honestly expected to win but we did not expect to win by so much," said Osama Hamdan, the party’s representative in Lebanon. The party’s supporters and workers took to the streets and celebrated the unprecedented victory by hoisting the party flag over the Palestinian Parliament. Hamas won an overwhelming majority in the 132-seat legislature, taking 76 seats to Fatah’s 43 in the election, the official vote count showed. It gives Hamas the power to shape and possibly even lead the next cabinet. The Fatah party has dominated Palestinian Politics since the 60’s but has been drenched in corruption, which is why observers feel the people of Palestine were fed up and decided to change because it was expected. Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, in a statement declared that Israeli has no right to hold talks with a government that consisted of "an armed terror organization that calls for Israel’s destruction". The European Union, which provides the majority of financial assistance to the Palestinians, called for Hamas to renounce violence and recognize Israel. The reaction from the Islamic world called for the world population to recognize Hamas’ victory. President of Pakistan Gen. Pervez Musharraf declared that Hamas should be given a chance as they may turn out to be peace champions. Musharraf stressed that Hamas needed to be given a chance because it was democratically elected. "Otherwise democracy will become a farce," said Musharraf. "If you deny them this, you will end up in more turmoil!", King Abdullah II of Jordan, whose country was the second to make peace with the Jewish state, declared the need for continued peace talks. "I hope the election results will boost unity and order the internal affairs in the territories," the king said, stressing that "the peace process should not stop." The United States and its call for having democratically elected governments around the world spoke a stiff tone with President Bush saying the Palestinians’ aid can be halted with their choice of leaders. He also stressed that Hamas needed to bring about a change in their ideology towards Israel. Whatever the reaction throughout the world is, the election in Palestine is a huge win for the Muslim world observers say in terms of the election process. Many also feel that this is a telling sign of the frustration amongst Muslims all over the world that are now electing anti-American parties. Hamas’ win should be accepted as a refreshing change because it is the will of the Palestinian people but Hamas also needs to clean up its image and do away with the gun toting. Hamas has to stress good governance and not let the Palestinian people down who have given them a chance of a lifetime hoping that peace will be brought with Israel. Israel also has to give Hamas a chance, and do away with the extreme statements which can do no good for the peace process. One can only hope that this change will be the beginning of a new era in which violence is shunned.