The ‘Hood of Brothers
The Misconception of Brotherhood at RU
by Tanveer Sajjad

Brotherhood and solidarity are among the most important attributes of the believers. The Qur’an tells us that all believers are brothers. They are people sharing the same feelings who strive for the same end. They adhere to the same Book and struggle for the same goal. Consequently, solidarity becomes the natural feature of the community made up of believers.

In our Muslim community here at RU, this feature of solidarity and brotherhood, if not missing, is definitely not up to the standards and notions laid down by the Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). I will try my best to explain what the problem might be, its cause, and a possible cure for it.

Let us start with a typical scenario, a freshman or anybody else who goes to the ISRU meeting for the first time faces. He walks in around 7:00 o’clock, expecting the meeting to start on time, and realizes that the meeting does not start until 7:30. So while our new member waits patiently, the regular ISRU brothers walk in with their friends, take their seats, and start chatting, completely ignoring the new member, as if he is not present at all. As more people come in, cliques begin to form and instead of using this time to meet new Muslims around campus, everyone comes and joins his cliques and starts chatting and laughing loudly to make the newcomer feel worse. Finally the meeting starts, some sort of peace is reached, however the damage is already done. The new member feels left out, and hurt and shocked at this kind of an attitude. As soon as the Ameer says the dua’ to end the meeting, the cliques get up and start talking and laughing again. The new comer tries to help out with the chairs, (for ‘isha), just

“BROTHERS” contd. on page 4

Unveiling the Emerging Identity of a Muslim Woman
by Razia Akhtar

It has become rather evident that the typical Western depiction of a Muslim woman, as well as all of Islam, is the burqa. As the second generation of Muslims in America, we face a heavy challenge of showing others how women in Islam are more than just veiled. Everyday we encounter racism, sexism, and stereotyping in areas like employment, education, and parenthood. It is our duty to remove the label of “oppressed” stamped on our foreheads by American society and live the life of a true Muslim woman. But what kind of identity does Islam offer us, and how can we maintain this identity in our lives as Americans?

Our identity should always focus on faith. A common mistake made by our generation concerns our desire to be accepted in Western society. There is nothing wrong with seeking the social and economic opportunities that this country has to offer, as long as we do not forget the opportunities that Islam has already given to us. But what we need to ask ourselves is whether such acceptance is worth it if it costs us our faith? Unfortunately, many Muslim women become misguided and are constantly trying to fit into society with their appearances; this method of gaining acceptance is doomed to failure both religiously and socially. We must recognize that Islam offers women a unique power that Western society fails to provide – the power to earn respect. Being unable to prance around as a Knicks’ cheerleader or Victoria Secret model cannot be considered as constraining our identity since respect is agreeably far more valuable. It is necessary for Muslim women to first recognize such respect before expecting Western society to do so.

Read “WOMAN” on page 5

The Official Newsletter of The Islamic Society of Rutgers University.

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In Iraq...
Nov 30th:
Baghdad- Disarmament experts undertook a third day of inspections in Iraq, rolling into suspected sites for missiles, warheads and chemical weapons. A first team spent three hours at a complex baptized Um al-Maarak (Mother of All Battles) south of Baghdad. Baghdad’s state-run media meanwhile hailed the persistence of anti-war protests around the world as Washington continued to press for Iraq to be punished for any breach of the November 8 UN Security Council resolution.

Dec 1st:
Baghdad- At least eight people were killed and 20 injured when U.S. and British warplanes bombed the premises of the Southern Oil Company in Basra. Baghdad regularly says that U.S. and British warplanes enforcing “no-fly” zones in northern and southern Iraq bomb civilian targets.

In Australia...

Dec 1st:
Sydney- A final decision whether Australia will join a U.S.-led attack on Iraq will be made by the government and debated by the parliament afterwards, Prime Minister John Howard. Thousands of anti-war protesters came into the streets of Australia’s major cities over the weekend. More than 10,000 marched in Sydney.

See “News” on page 12
This publication contains the name of God, please respect it.

Nasihah welcomes submissions and articles from everybody. Articles may be edited for content and length at the editors’ discretion. Submit all articles to alnasihah@yahoo.com The opinions expressed in Nasihah are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily represent that of ISRU or the staff of Nasihah.
To the Editor:

Throughout history many changes have occurred. Minorities have risen and fought for their rights. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a very well-spoken, famous individual spoke and shared words and outlooks of his dreams and views of how the world should be. He fought for his people’s rights to be taken into account. Indira Ghandi did the same. The similarities between these two men is that neither promoted violence yet both were apart of segregation and suppression. Anger did not overcome these individuals as it has many countless times to others.

Today, in the twenty-first century where people are to be open-minded and respect the rights of one another, we face the same dilemma. The people of Islam have been persecuted against not once, but countless amounts of times.

Who is to blame? The media? Non-Muslims? Ourselves? A combination of all three has caused the Islamic name to fall far below it’s rightful standards.

Unfortunately, a handful of individuals decided to take it upon themselves to show that their people do matter. Unfortunately, over 200 Muslim men and women died on September 11th, 2001. Unfortunately people’s ignorance has led them to believe that it is not the act of a sole individual but an act of religion. Islamic Jihad, a term used very lightly nowadays, pierces through the mind of thousands of people whom incorrectly perceive it to be a war against America. America is not your enemy. America is home to hundreds and thousands of Muslims. America possess resources that some but not all of the individuals living here take advantage of. Muslim men and women need to unite and not fight against one another. Islam needs to be spread not only amongst individual families, but in the lines of politics, media, medicine, science, technology, etc. It is the duty of Muslims to carry out Islam in a peaceful, selfless manner. If the Islamic name is to regain its honor, a newspaper with the truth, not biased events, must be circulated. Resources must be used to their fullest extent. Muslims must unite and not anger one another over petty items as who will win the next election. One should support another despite the circumstances. Speakers should become even more vocal. It must be known that it is not Islam that promotes violence, but it is Islam that promotes peace, and acts of kindness.

Groups such as the Islamic Society at Rutgers University, the Islamic Society of Central Jersey, must go out to not only Muslim shelters, but to non-Muslim shelters as well. Allah (SWT) has created us all equally. Though one may not believe in the Islamic faith, he/she still does not deserve to live a life inadequate to others. Islam must be seen as a helping hand, not a hindrance. Islam is not a forceful religion and therefore should not be imposed onto anyone. If asked about, one should be educated about Islam but not put in a position to take up the religion based on fear.

In order to achieve success and victory in all aspects of life, education must be spread. Steps must be taken backwards in order to regain a state free of chaos. Arab countries must trust one another and become loyal. The Qur’an must be read by the people and not interpreted by others to fit their satisfactions. Islamic terms such as “jihad” cannot be used incorrectly. The people must learn to read, write, speak, learn the sciences and mathematics starting from simple to complex. The goal is education. If the people can take the step back and regain their knowledge, it is then and only then that they will be able to survive and be able to fight fairly against those that provide them and their families harm.

From Anonymous
so that somebody might come and say salaam, but it doesn’t happen. Maybe one brother smiles at him, but nothing exciting. And finally after isha, the brother leaves with a lasting impression of how bad Muslims are.

Brothers and sisters, I am not exaggerating. This is a sad fact. I have been going to ISRU for the past 2 years and besides listening to many disturbing stories, I have seen people coming to ISRU once and never show up again. People come to ISRU with high expectations to meet good people, learn something beneficial, and make good Muslim friends. This sort of behavior shocks and disheartens them. Even after attending ISRU for two years, I would dread going there without a friend.

And of course these cliques continue outside the ISRU meetings also, as very rarely would anyone smile or say salaam to a fellow Muslim brother.

So this is the problem: too much division among Muslims. What might be the cause of these divisions? In my humble view, I think the cause is that we do not understand the true meaning of being a Muslim brother, the roles and duties we have to fulfill, and lastly the rights we have over each other. Prophet (PBUH) said that we are on the deen of our companion. WHY? Well who would be our companion or friend, someone who has something common with us, right? Usually every clique has a common feature such as nationality, race, or maybe even same academic major. International students prefer to be around each other, while students who attended the same high school always hang out together. Some other groups might comprise of people who have expensive cars or of sisters who wear hijabs.

Not only do we have these cliques due to some common feature, at times this common element makes one group feel proud and look down on others. If a sister does not observe hijab, people automatically tend to think she’s not religious, or if your dad has bought you an expensive car, then one begins to feel proud of it and mock at others who don’t. We tend to be proud of the fact that we are Americans. Often times, immigrants are labeled as “fools”. The way they talk sounds tooobby to us. Many of us feel shy to speak or be in the company of someone who speaks any of the foreign languages, especially languages from the sub continent like Urdu, Hindi, and Gujarati. If one cannot speak well, then its understandable, but if you do know it then there is no need to be embarrassed about it, neither is it appropriate to make fun of someone who does. Allah says in the Holy Qur’an,”And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variation in your languages and your colors: verily in that are signs for those who know” [30:22].

At one hand we want to help out people in Pakistan, India and other countries and at the same time we feel embarrassed to be around them or mock them when they are here.

There was a particular clique some years ago, I heard about, which actually provided motivation to write this. Their requirement was that you have to wear expensive clothes, drive luxurious cars and eat out 5 times a week. They had their own definition of what “cool” means and if you do not meet their standards, then they would pick on you and insult you degrade you.

My friend told me about these so called “ISRU BROTHERS” who use to make fun of him, ridicule him, and totally destroyed his self-esteem. As a result, he began to despise “every” Muslim and started being in the company of kuffars… and what happened next, is not even worth mentioning.

All this happened due to the attitude of these “brothers” at ISRU. What a shame!! Allah describes people who mock at others or feel superior for any reason, as Zalimun. Allah says, “O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former; nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former, nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad is it, to insult one’s brother after having Faith and whosoever does not repent, then such are indeed Zalimun (wrong-doers, etc.). [49:11].

The cliques I mentioned above are made up of brothers who are obviously not informed about their deen. But we find division among people who are serious about learning and practicing their religion.

Often times we hear “Oh brother, don’t read that book, don’t listen to him- come to me, don’t follow that scholar”. Some say Sufism is shirk, while other label salafis/wahabees as extremists. Some are of the opinion that any Madhhab can have a mistake so don’t follow any of the imams, Tableeghis leave their wives for 4 months, so stay away from them. So, before we only had a few madhaibs, now there are as many madhaibs as there are Muslims. This isa sad state of affairs. Every person thinks that he knows the truth and he is on the right path and thus is free to criticize anyone he wants. As a result, people who agree with a certain methodology tend to be closer to each other. They have more affection for a person who agrees with their methodology rather than a person who has different views, even if the latter as better morals and is serious about practicing his deen.

So what is the solution? Most scholars would say that the solution to the problems the Muslim ummah is facing, is Emaan and Ittihaad (Brotherhood). If everyone works on his emaan, improves his relationship with Allah(SWT), and remains united with other believers- then no force can overtake us. If that is the solution to the problems of the ummah, then it could cure the community. Lets analyze this a little more.

As I mentioned above, most groups form due to a common feature. If we take a look at ourselves, we will come to the understanding that we share the common characteristic of being Muslim. So really, there should be one huge group: that is why the word ummah is there. Because Islam does not characterize us. We are not known for our Islam, but people know us through the job we have, the car we drive, how good we play basketball! It is obvious, the more we talk about something, we will be known for that. We need to reprioritize our time and use our resources to learn more about our religion.

We need to go to halaqas (lectures), read more books, and gain more knowledge. Then we will be able to comprehend what futile things are dividing us. We will mature enough to realize how big an asset a Muslim brother is. Brotherhood will not increase by hanging out at Ameens till I am talking about phone plans, new car models or the game last night, but it will by talking about how to improve salah, or planning how to give da’wah, or by better understand-
Society will start to detach the terms of “oppression” and “Islamic dress code” if we remain confident enough to cover ourselves knowing that we have the power to conceal our sexuality and allow our femininity to show.

However, the identity of a Muslim woman involves more than just a dress code. While it is true that Western society allows women to participate in almost anything, women are still dissected into nothing more than appearances even in this day and age. So contrary to belief, the liberation of women began 14 centuries ago with the beginning of Islam, not last century with the “feminist movement for equal rights.” According to Islamic thought, limiting a woman’s identity to just her physicality does not do her justice; her mind weighs much more. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Seeking knowledge is a mandate of every Muslim (male and female).” This includes knowledge of the Qur’an and Hadith, as well as other scholarly knowledge. While maintaining the home, supporting her husband, and teaching her children are among the first and very highly regarded roles for a woman, if she has the skills to work outside the home for the good of the community, then she should do so. Islam obligates us to seek as much knowledge as possible in order to benefit our community, our family, and ourselves. As Muslim women in college, we need to start defining our educational and, ultimately, professional identity. By living in this country, we are fortunate enough to achieve a wonderful education in whatever field of study we desire, so we should try to learn as much as we can for the sake of our deen. Muslim women in the past had fought in wars for Allah because such a duty was demanded from them. Likewise it is demanded of us to educate ourselves, help our husbands with their financial burden, and teach our children that there is more to life than looking like Ken and Barbie. We need to identify ourselves as Muslim women with such responsibilities.

Preserving the female identity in Islam is something that is needed especially today. The concept of “in America, everything goes” often clouds our minds and turns us away from Islam and our true goals in life. A common misconception shared by many Muslims and non-Muslims alike is that a woman practicing Islam remains extremely limited in everything she does if she wants to uphold her Islamic duties, but that is far from the truth. Gaining respect through modesty, getting a degree in what you enjoy, marrying your equal in Islam, pursuing a life-long career goal, and keeping your children happy all at the same time cannot be considered limitations. In one word, the Islamic identity for a woman is empowerment, and for the sake of Allah and for the sake of our own personal desires, we need to embrace this identity and express it so that this Western world can recognize the true worth of being a woman.

Let us leave today, with a resolve to revive the air of mercy, love and brotherhood.

BROTHERS contd. from previous page

Let us take a lesson from the scholars of the past: “Imam Malik one day entered the Masjid after Asr. Towards the front of Masjid An-Nabawee he drew closer and sat down. Rasul Allah had commanded that anyone who enters the Masjid should not sit until he first prays 2 rakas as a salutation of the Masjid. Imam Malik was of the opinion however that Rasul Allah’s forbiddance of praying after Asr took precedence and so he would teach his students to pray for the sake of Allah and for the sake of the community, then she should do so. Islam obligates us to seek as much knowledge as possible in order to benefit our community, our family, and ourselves. As Muslim women in college, we need to start defining our educational and, ultimately, professional identity. By living in this country, we are fortunate enough to achieve a wonderful education in whatever field of study we desire, so we should try to learn as much as we can for the sake of our deen. Muslim women in the past had fought in wars for Allah because such a duty was demanded from them. Likewise it is demanded of us to educate ourselves, help our husbands with their financial burden, and teach our children that there is more to life than looking like Ken and Barbie. We need to identify ourselves as Muslim women with such responsibilities.

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Lowering the Gaze

by Ali Farooki

I seek refuge in Allah from Shaitan. In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. All praise is due to Allah and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon his Messenger Muhammad (SAWS). Before I begin, I want to make it clear that I am not an extraordinary Muslim. I am an average “Abdullah” who commits the same wrongdoings as other Muslims. Alhamdulillah I am, a self-reproaching person who recognizes that I sin and that I need to repent to Allah for my shortcomings. Allah tells us in Surah An-Nur: 24:30 - “Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: and Allah is well acquainted with all that they do.” “24:31- And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze to guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: and Allah is well acquainted with all that they do.”

The Ummah has lost consciousness of itself and individual Muslims have lost their self-consciousness. Qualities that we find are honorable and noble in Islam are perceived negatively in today’s society. This has put some Muslims in a state of confusion. For example, someone who is very assertive and loud is praised nowadays, while the shy, and quiet person is looked down upon. I rarely hear credit for being soft-spoken. Instead we give praise to “good speakers”. Sometimes the most eloquent speech is silence. We must remember that it is good to control our tongue for the tongue is a gateway to the nafs. A loose tongue and roaming eyes are open doors for Shaitan to reach our heart. Carefully ponder thoughts before opening one’s mouths. In this way, we will develop minds by encouraging thought and limiting our tongues in their propensity to wrong others and ourselves. Some of the people I love talk very little. The beauty of their character shines through their actions and character and it is easily discernible from the Noor on their face. I have never talked to these people; nevertheless, I still feel a deep affection for these brothers and sisters, and I envy them for their strength. Imran bin Hussain (RA) relates that the Holy Prophet (SAWS) said: “Modesty results in good alone and nothing else.” (Bukhari and Muslim) Abu Bakrah reported that the Prophet of Allah, upon him be peace, said, “Shyness comes from faith, and faith will be in Paradise. But ribaldry comes from harshness, and harshness will be in the Fire.” (Bukhari and Ibn Majah)

Moreover, we strive to gain “knowledge” but what is our goal? We attend conferences to get a periodic boost of Islam, only to find later that we are falling back into sin. We should gain knowledge with intention to improve our Imaan. We should seek the fruit of knowledge. Scholars say that the fruit of knowledge is taqwa. In this sense, the scholars are the ones who have taqwa and adab. Even in so-called “Islamic” settings, we find proof that Muslims have little to no adab. Muslim brothers and sisters interact in inappropriate ways. As if a scarf or a kufee makes it different; we find that Muslim brothers and sisters look at each other for long periods while engaging in vain conversation without modesty. That it is exactly the complacency in so-called Islamic settings that makes “Muslim” settings dangerous. While there will be those who argue that there is nothing wrong with things I mentioned, I urge my Muslims to fear Allah and do everything to please Him. Why risk our goal for small gains? Let us not sell our Akhira for insignificant priced.

The Salaf-as-Salihen were renowned for their Haya, especially the third Righteous Caliph, ‘Uthmaan ibn ‘Affan (RA), who was known as the Companion and from whom even the Angels felt shy. Rasulallah (SAWS) would treat ‘Uthman in a special way because of his extraordinary Haya. Moreover, some of the Sahaba (RA) were not very physically attractive; however, the beauty of their Islam penetrated the world through their etiquette. We should strive to emulate the Prophet (SAWS) and the Salaf (RA), who set examples for us. With this in mind, we should guard our eyes from the opposite sex. When talking to members of the opposite sex, brothers AND sisters should try to avoid unnecessary eye contact. I know this may seem “extreme” to some people, but the truth is that we have become so desensitized to these sins that we no longer see anything wrong with them. Even if you feel that you can look at someone of the opposite sex without feeling lust, you should lower your gaze to help the person you are looking at. Unlike you, that person may not have the same strength to contain his/her feelings. Enough emphasis is not put on men protecting their modesty and women lowering their gaze. The Ayahs clearly apply to both genders. It is clear from Surah An-Nur that both believing men and women should lower their gaze to guard their modesty so that they may “attain Bliss”. I believe that it is this lack of Imaan leads to the problems that we see today in Muslim youth communities. Girlfriend/ Boyfriend relationships, illegitimate children, Muslims marrying non-Muslims are some, but certainly not all of the problems that we see in every Muslim community. Imam al-Ghazali tells us that “fornication of the eye is one of the major venial faults” and that “the man who is unable to turn away his eyes will not be able to safeguard himself against unchastity.”

Many of us, Alhamdulillah, are not plagued with these problems. However, we should have compassion for others and try to make it easier for them to safeguard their Imaan. As a young male with a natural attraction for our beautiful sisters, I know these feelings are hard to con-
Tale of stale
by Emran El-Badawi

I had known him all his life and I always prayed that Allah would soften him, just a little. But alas, Allah wished otherwise, His choice is final and we are but dust. I was always more studious and marginal than him, especially during my pre-Med School days, never in the spotlight. My attention was drawn to it. What could have made it so stale? And I began to recall; recalling everything I remembered about him…

“STEP TO THE FRONT OF THE LINE BROTHA, IT’S YOUR TURN NOW;” he quipped at me, with his Bantu nose over those thick smirking lips. And it was indeed his turn, and the turn of every Arab or Muslim like him. Growing up in America, short of having any sort of growing pains and watching Seinfeld before bed, he was only used to seeing the humiliation and degradation of the Black and Latino man on the 10 O’clock News. What should he care of it? They were wretched类人猿的类群！Right? So long as he prayed his 5 prayers and did well in school, he had not a care in the world. After all, he was a good Muslim, who could deny it? Could you? But it all changed that day, the day the Muslim Ummah became the Slave and West became the Master. Fretful of his future, worrying about: every stare gazed over him, every word he uttered, every passing siren. All he could do to remedy his weakness was to attest to his American ties and give himself a nickname. He did it very well, it was but a matter of days and you couldn’t make him out from any other Anglo-American. And although he let the mass of anti-Muslim insults go bye, at last he felt somewhat safe. But there were still no guarantees. Could he be next? And I recalled even further…

“LA ILAHA ILLA ALLAH,” the Iqama ended with. He was catching his breathe. He barely made it to Jum’aa, running and trying vigorously to wipe off the lipstick stains from his cheek and neck. You see, he spent the night over at his girlfriend’s. He never felt good about it but he was too weak to change. Hamdulilah, at least he had Salat Al-Jum’a. Eventually he lost his girlfriend, the guilt was unbearable after some time. And he happened to leave the ever-so-classically bigot-like image of Muslim men with her. And I recalled our college days, how strange they were…

“YO F*** THAT S***” they cussed at each other, his college frat that is. God knows at that point what they were cursing at! Every other word seemed to be some sort of colorful 4-letter scold. He himself would not curse, although dropping the occasional S or B Bomb. He was still a “good kid,” his friends would always tell him. Still praying and fasting but now, not doing too well in his studies. Classes were too boring and lengthy, and so he succumbed to the defeatist attitude of simply not going at all. Most of his time was spent “hangin’ out” or “chillin’ like a villian” at the Campus Hall. As the years progressed he left the frat and spent all his time laughing out loud at the Campus Hall with the other Arab guys and girls. It did not seem like a waste of time then. At least he wasn’t drinking or cursing at all. However his dire need to “pass” his classes lead him to ride on the backs of his heroic Muslim Brothers. After all, what is a Muslim Brotherhood for? The brothers were quite fond of him for his connections. He was a popular one and working at the mall, “the boy knew how to hook it up!” Those were his adventurous days, indeed they were. And I recalled some more…

“NO JUSTICE NO PEACE,” they all chanted together, Muslim or otherwise, coming from all walks of life. Rallying for the “cause” granted “NO JUSTICE NO PEACE,” they all chanted together, Muslim or otherwise. I recalled some more…

“ALLAHU AKBAR,” he led them in Isha’a. Hamdulilah, he had become religious now. He had replaced all his old friends with Muslims and stopped socializing with “Kuffaar,” as he called them, altogether. He no longer needed the cheap exposure to women, alcohol and fraudulent causes. He cared only for bettering himself now. Furthermore he gained much self-confidence. After all he was Arab, and “who could instruct others more about Islam than an Arab,” he always remarked? He quit his job downtown and spent most of his time in Dhikr of Allah. He grew older and his peers saw him as “the example” to follow. Ma sha Allah, he could talk the talk and stern talk it was, condemning and condescending people away. Moreover he had opened his own business; soon both wealth and popularity followed. However he never really associated with Pakis, they were too old-fashioned, or Turks because they were too liberal, or Sudanis because they were simply just not classy enough. Quite frankly, you had to be up-to-par to associate or even speak with him. At least he earned it. Right? And still again, I recalled his older years with his family…

“DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?” He exclaimed at the poor young fellow. The young man had come earnestly to ask for his daughter’s hand in marriage, but couldn’t pay a $35,000 dowry. “My daughter can only marry the best” he said. Although he knew the young man to be a good Muslim and had great potential, it would look shameful in front of the community for him to accept a mediocre dowry. He always gave his children the best in life, giving them the most expensive clothes, cars and endless freedom. This was also to compensate for the parental absence at home. Both him and his wife worked. They felt the need to succeed was to gain wealth first and then use it wisely, and so the wealth was being acquired. At work he was feared by his employees, much like in real life. He was stubborn and talked down to people; and unless people sucked up to him, he would not honor their request. It was hard to sincerely love him; it was hard for him to love at all! But that all changed since last night’s accident, his soul is with the Most Merciful now.

Holding the tough, black, clumpy mound in my hand, smelling the stench it emanated, I understood now better than ever. Ironic is it not? After years of knowing him from the sidelines, I am the one performing his autopsy. He had forgotten the warnings of the Most Wise when he told us that man is anxiously fretful in times of despair and ungratefully ineffectual in times of prosperity (Q 70:19-21). He forgot the swearing of our beloved messenger (s) that we would command good and prohibit
evil, at all costs and for all people (Q 3:104). We were to be the most beneficial people for all people, Black, Latino, White and all. Why are we dazed when Allah puts us to trial as we have ignored the affliction of those around us, are they not human beings? We did not pay any heed to the suffering of the Blacks and Latinos before us, and so our suffering comes amidst a surprising red carpet of sorrow.

Did he forget also the high price we pay for setting a dismal example for Islam? Did he not know what the Most Merciful meant by saying that, He did not create two hearts in any mans’ one chest (Q 33:4)? No man can lead a life of wrongdoing alongside a life of virtue; that one ounce-worth of guilt one possesses can turn one’s heart towards the Most Merciful, if it is fostered into righteous action. Did he forget that his poor impact on non-Muslims just destroyed Islam’s image and made rejecters out of them. People have pleading with the Most Merciful to spare them from being an excuse for those who rejected truth (Q 60:5).

He must have forgotten that by accompanying indecent curses and using them casually that he was debasing himself and turning into trash (Q 95:5). How would Muslims be any better if they spoke the language of disgrace. Aren’t we not sent to embody the best of behavior? Did he forget that wasting a minute of time amidst America was wasting a minute to potentially send an intelligible message about our Deen? That the use of time is asked upon on the day of Judgment, and that loudness is characteristic of Donkeys (Q 31:19)? Did he tend to the most important concerns or was he beguiled by his ostentatious Dunya (Q 31:33)? His fame and popularity made for everything our beloved messenger never wanted.

And did he not realize that half-heartedly fighting for any cause is a cause dead already? Or that if a true slave of Allah did anything, he or she would perfect it? All he and other people needed to do was rally in Allah’s name in their hearts; remembering Him in times of ease and difficulty. WHAT DO THEY ALL PROTEST FOR? For their ungratefulness? For materialism, selfishness, arrogance, laziness, self betrayal? Nations before us have stood as such and fallen just as easily. How can we endeavor to change anything if we have not changed the staleness of our own souls (Q 13:11)?

And he used religion to base his own superiority and bias over others. How could he rightfully condemn and condone others when he himself ailed of arrogance (Q 2:44). He never absorbed with his heart that our Prophet(s) affirmed all people and Arabs as equal except in Taqwa.

Surely if his heart knew that great Muslims of history married with Quran-memorization as dowry, he would not have wished otherwise. Surely if he knew that his in ability to show love was his heart coagulating at the hands of a lifelong heart disease—incurable by medicine (Q 2:10).

I have seen many cases like his, and each one never fails to shock me. And I continue contemplating: we are not actually the embodiment of peace nor justice; nor are we upholders of righteous behavior by our own actions. We do not understand that righteousness and peace of mind can only be obtained by remembering Allah always and giving from our time and effort in His sake (Q 13:28, 61:11). The truth is we do not “deserve” any holy land, or anything at all for that matter; we “deserve” much worse. Great scholars of our day insist that if we do not change our ways soon, we will fall as nations before us did, and that the Most Merciful would replace us with another people (Q 47:38). I on the other hand, insist that this time has already come to pass—for the hearts have gotten stale. We should all ask ourselves, when is it too late?

**Controlling our nafs takes practice, patience, and a lot of Du’a, for the Prophet (SAWS) said that Du’a is the essence of worship.**

Controlling our nafs takes practice, patience, and a lot of Du’a, for the Prophet (SAWS) said that Du’á is the essence of worship. Like any bad habit, we must train ourselves to guard our gaze. Every time we have the urge to look somewhere we should think twice and remember that even if we sneak a glance, Allah is All-Knowing of what we do. Practice will increase our strength over our nafs and soon we will develop control over our physical actions. In addition, we need to replace our bad habits with good habits so that we do not fall back into sin. Instead of going places where we know we are going to subject ourselves to haraam, we must avoid sin preemptively. We must be conscious of our level of sincerity. Lowering the gaze does not necessitate covering the face with one’s hands; however, if these things help, then if a person’s intention is pure, he/she will be rewarded.

I do not feel anything resembles ‘Iamam’ better than what Abu Huraira narrated from the Prophet (SAW) who said “Allah has written for Adam’s son his share of adultery which he commits. The adultery of the eyes is the sight, the adultery of the tongue is the talk, and the inner self wishes and desires and the private parts testify all or deny it.” (Sahih Al-Bukhari - Hadith 8.260 -Narrated by Ibn Abbas)

Most of us are unmarried Muslim youth, and we must take the following Hadith of the Prophet (SAWS) with an open heart and mind because it applies to us. We were with the Prophet while we were young and had no wealth whatever. So Allah’s Apostle said, “O young people! Whoever among you can marry, should marry, be-
From a Concerned Brother

The Hereafter. We always hear about it in lectures and read about it in books and of course the Qur’an, but do we really have any idea what it is? What will it be like and what will happen to us once we get there? However, before I try to answer that question, I want to remind us what we need to prepare ourselves for the Ultimate Reality.

Allah says in Suratul Hashr (59:18), “O you who believe! Fear Allah and let every soul look to what he has sent forth for the morrow. Fear Allah. For Allah is Well-Acquainted with all that you do.”

Suratul Zhariyaat (51:56) which says, “And I have not created the jinns and humans except they should worship Me”. Lays out how our two lives are related. By worshipping Allah in this world, we will save ourselves from Jannah. This life is nothing, just a temporary journey to our goal, the Heaven under which rivers flow, Insha’Allah. We cannot attain Jannah without worshipping Allah as He deserves to be worshipped. We are His Slaves and our purpose is to serve our Master?

Regarding our stay, the Prophet (saw) is reported on ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar, “Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveller.” We should not attach ourselves in this world so when we have to leave, a reality which we all must face, we cannot face due to our desires and material possessions. Whereas, if we treat ourselves as wayfarers, then we NEVER accumulate a huge amount of belongings because we would always be moving and carry our basic necessities. This does not mean that we subject ourselves to poverty, because poverty often times leads us to commit sins but we should adopt a middle way, one that will allow us to be respectful in this world yet also keep in us that fear of Allah mentioned in the Ayah of Suratul Hashr.

It is that lack of Taqwa that is plaguing the Ummah, an Ummah which was spreading Islam to the four corners of the Earth because its people were not afraid to give up everything to make Allah’s Deen Supreme at one time. Now it is that same Ummah, whose people are afraid to die, to give up everything when their Ummah needs them most. Why? Because our love of this life and hatred of death. Maybe it is because we do not understand Islam, maybe it’s because we cannot grasp the Ghaib or maybe it is because we do not love Allah as we say we do. For if we truly loved Allah, then we would do ANYTHING to please Him and not make petty excuses. We might fool others and even fool ourselves, but Allah is closer to us than our “jugular vein”; He is the reason we breathe and He will be the One to cause us to die. When we love someone—love of the unconditional, unrequited variety—then we do not really care whether there is recompense or not, we just do whatever comes to our minds to please our beloved. But we humans, we ‘abaadillah, we cannot even sacrifice a few minutes of our sleep to pray for Our Creator and Sustainer, so how do we expect ourselves to lay down our lives for Him? This is no video game where we can just press a button and give ourselves superhuman powers, we have to instill in us that love of Allah more so than fear of Him because fear causes us to do things because we HAVE to and love makes us do things because we WANT to.

Brothers and sisters, we have to step back and analyze our lives. How much, we have prepared for the Day when we will meet our Rabb? Can we say that we are satisfied? That, if the Angel of Death came to us today, will we be ready? I can say for me that the question is a NO. We are TOO involved in this world to take care of our Akhirah. Do we take time out during any part of the day to spend time with Allah? Whether that means extra nafsabil before we go to sleep or when we wake up for fajr, that is IF we wake up for fajr or reading some Qur’an, be it a line because even a dose of that medicine will work wonders for our spiritual health. How do we expect to stand in front of Allah on the Day of Reckoning with all our sins staring.
by Hassan Khaja

What to say about this land where sin is in and it doesn’t matter if you win, as long as the money’s coming in
But maybe I’m exaggerating and hating
It’s not that blatant
It’s really all about mating without procreating
The tension’s been kind of latent
But now I’m being inundated and I want to get into dating, just so I could have sex, forget about lovemaking
You know it’s the American way
Work all day, then go out at night to frolic and play
Have sex with someone girl who gets paid, to get laid, to get AIDS
She might be made but she’ll also die at an early age
Whatever happens, I know I’ve gotten to the stage where I could look at a blank page and let out all my rage

I won’t sound like a sage, I still manage to amaze
But maybe it’s just another phase or one of those days when I’m in some kind of a haze
The first rule in this world is to love what you never had
Throw out yesterday’s expensive rags, it was just a fad
Go out and buy a Gucci bag, the one that Susan Lucci had
Second rule is to consume everything you can
Don’t just eat a fried egg, drink the oil from the pan
And die for the oil in Afghanistan
Cut down a million trees to make a rubber band
I wanna die with time’s sands

That’s the devil in disguise
Whispering lies until their demise, and he doesn’t care about their cries while they’re being chastised
So now I’m kind of free-flowing, not knowing where I’m really going with this poem
But I know you shouldn’t cross my path when I spit these random paragraphs of wrath, in the past you might’ve laughed, not knowing that I might just be the master of this craft

Who would’ve thought I could get caught in the devil’s capers
Or get high off of a marker’s vapors
I don’t care if the NASDAQ tumbles or tapers, because honestly, I want to die tonight
I know it’s not right, but one night when I go out of my mind, I want to go out of my sight, and with all my might take flight and follow the light
I think that’s why I write this

Why be exciting when I could enlighten?
Bring peace to the fighting, and calm to incitement
And courage to the frightened
Make everyone’s dull senses heightened
Only in America, you see
Never the land of the free, always the home of the slave
Trapped in a cave of impulse to receive shade from the time when the clarity of reality is made
When you escape this worldly banality into the arms of spirituality
Where you’ll find no fallacy
Except when you approach the truth callously then you’ll only find malady
Remember that your women and the children you sired
Might just be fuel for the fire
Don’t worry about your attire or the Pirellis with the racing tires
They do no good if you’re a liar
But you’ll still chase it like you were a widow chasing her husband into the funeral pyre
I’m getting kind of tired
So remember, even if you got an enlarged prostate or an enlarged estate
Remember just prostrate
And if I fall really ill
Or the sister’s looks could really kill
Remember my will, if you will
And bury me with my anthem
by Sana Khan

They come in various colors, shapes and sizes. Unified amongst themselves while learning and growing from raw experiences; these individuals look beyond the barriers of ethnicity and wealth. Focused, attentive, and passionate they struggle towards establishing respect for themselves and what they do. These are the youth, the younger generation of the Muslim Ummah who flow forth within the community and stand firm in their cause. But what do they lack? They lack understanding and positive recognition of who they are and what responsibilities lie on their shoulders.

Bombarded with lectures, preaching and warnings, these youngsters are chided for not realizing the deception of this world, for being oblivious to the conditions of the Here-After, for forgetting the proper way to respect their elders and most importantly for not stepping up to furthering and practicing this Deen. But it is asked to you all; is it only the youth who lack in these warnings? Spend a moment or two and analyze yourself, both young and old have strayed or are straying yet we only focus on critically analyzing the younger generation.

Enclosed within this piece is some humble advice from a youth to a youth and also for those who hope to positively contribute to this Deen. The youth are at the forefront of tajdeed which is revival and our blessed Prophet (pbuh) made it known that we youth are tomorrow’s leaders.

It was put well by Malcolm X who said, “Revolutionaries are the children and young people…The young people are the ones who must quickly identify with the struggle and necessity to eliminate the evil conditions that exist.” This is so for two reasons: first, as youth we are the ones who must instill within ourselves what is correct and incorrect in accordance to this Deen. These kinds of qualities, if instilled at an early age, tend to pass down from generation to generation giving rise to respectable, honest, and hardworking leaders. With spiritual harmony within oneself there is a likewise effect on one’s surroundings. This kind of tajdeed brings one closer to the teachings of Islam and the spreading of Allah swt’s Mercy.

Second, it is the youth who are raised in this society. With a similar language and understanding of their surroundings these youth blend in yet retain their identity, abolishing any barriers put up by various outlets. Once a sister wearing hijab comes forth and speaks her opinion she is listened to, why so? This is because of her understanding of the society she lives in and the retaining of her own identity.

Tajdeed, revival or a turn towards Islam only comes into effect once the youth become aware. Awareness must exist not only of themselves but also of the issues around them. One must realize that before calling others to Islam one must first call themselves to Islam. The tree of imaan sprouts these two branches: dawah to oneself and then to others. After becoming aware the youth must begin to specialize.

Specialization must begin with an in-depth analysis of oneself. The youth must ask themselves: what am I good at? What issues am I interested in? With these questions in mind one should focus on issues that help them come closer to Islam. Pick an issue that burns the heart inside with passion and compassion. Thirdly, the youth must become informed. Knowing whom one’s sources are, where they are coming from and what viewpoints they hold can do this. The key idea is to become informed, and then inform to transform the norm. Lastly, the youth must be prepared. They should be prepared to invite people to the masjid, to invite people to learn more about them and lastly to invite themselves to learn more about Islam. If collectively done, these suggestions will lead to somewhat of a structural approach towards doing what one does best. Most importantly one will experience joy in pleasing the Creator (swt).

The youth are aware of the grave responsibilities that await them yet it is not fear that prevents them from actually coming together and standing firmly for this cause. What prevents them is the lack of respect that is given because it helps him lower his gaze, and whoever is not able to marry, should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power.” (Sahih Al-Bukhari - Hadith 7.4 Narrated by Abdullah)

Every Muslim should marry someday. However, since many of us are not ready to get married, we should remember that relationships with the opposite sex is prohibited outside of marriage. Even those who plan to marry should know that nothing is valid until Nikah. Marriage is not supposed to be a burden; it is supposed to free you from a burden.

In closing, I would urge everyone to fear Allah by following His commands and the Sunnah. Guard your Imanby lowering your gaze with the intention of pleasing Allah ‘Azawajal. Again, I seek refuge from Allah that I preach what I do not practice. If I have said something wrong it is of my own shortcomings and I ask your forgiveness and anything good is from Allah ‘Azawajal. This article is not meant to bash people or to degrade them. My purpose of writing this article is to remind myself and fellow Muslims of our duties to improve our Iman. May Allah help us to lower our gazes. May Allah give us Taufiq to purify ourselves to become worthy of the victory of Allah. Aameen.
us straight in our faces?? Remember, our book of deeds will be brought in front of us and we will see how great our lives truly were. How much time we gave to the TV and gossiping and how much time was spent on Zikrullah and performing good deeds and performing those extra 2 raka’ah of nafl after our daily prayers.

Salah is taken lightly by us. It’s the line between Kufir and Islam as the Prophet (saw) has said. If we do not perform Salah then we are rejecting Allah’s command, which is blatant Kufir. However, we have to be careful not to show off for that will lead to hypocrisy, and the lowest pit of Hell is reserved for the hypocrites. On the Last Day when our account is read out to us and we are rewarded for the good deeds we do, Allah will look to our prayers and after the fara’aid have been exhausted, He will take from our sunnah and naawafil. How will we feel when we won’t have any sunan or naawafil to be rewarded from? Many of us have this concept that because it’s ‘only a Sunnah’ we do not have to perform it. Are we so content with the state of our Iman that we believe that performing an act that the Prophet (saw) did will not benefit? Have our hearts become hard that our beloved Prophet’s life means nothing to us? He was the embodiment of the Qur’an, a walking Qur’an as Sayyidina Aisha (raa) answered when the Sahabah asked her about the personality of Sayyidina Muhammad (saw). Yet, we believe that because we perform our fara’aid, it will be enough to save us on the Last Day. We’re mistaken, so gravely mistaken, because the Iman of the best of us doesn’t even compare to the Iman of the least of the Sahabah and by knowing that alone should make us perform as many good deeds as possible. Spending an extra 5 minutes in prayers won’t hurt us, it will Insha’Allah go a long way in further helping us on the Day in which there will be no shade except the Shade of Allah.

Brothers and sisters, Waliyallah I love you all and Insha’Allah I pray that none of you takes this article personally, it is just a reminder to myself first and then to all of you. I’m just performing an obligation that Allah tells us in the Qur’an, again in Suratul Zariyayaat when He says, And remind for verily, the reminding benefits the believers.” The only thing that will go with us to our graves is the amount of good deeds that we did in this life. When even the Prophet (saw) needs Allah’s intercession on Yaum alQiyyamah, then how can we expect ourselves to enter Jannah without the help of Al-lah? We complain that Islam is ridiculed and the Muslims are like the foam in the sea and that it’s not right and may Allah curse the disbelievers. However, did we ever stop to think WHY that was so? Why is Allah punishing the Muslims? Maybe it is because we have forgotten Him, and therefore He has forgotten us. Remember Allah only helps those who help themselves. When, despite the suffering of the Ummah, we STILL do not pray, we STILL commit sins and do not try to fix ourselves, then how can we complain that Allah is not helping Islam? Miracles do not drop out of the sky people; it is the people’s actions that enable Allah to help them. When the Muslims were helped in the Battle of Badr, it was because of their Iman and their CONSTANT striving for Allah; we cannot even imagine ourselves in that state because we have been corrupted living in this world with it’s attractions and distractions.

Remember it’s never too late to come back to Allah; it is our intentions that Allah looks at. He knows what is in our hearts and if we are sincere or not. Remember we can fool others and even ourselves but we cannot fool Al-lah. Others might believe us when they see our actions and our dress, but only Allah knows whether we are doing it for Him or for other people. Let us make a promise with ourselves that we will Insha’Allah aim to better our Deen so that when we do die, we will have SOMETHING on our right side to put on that meezaan that will weigh our deeds. And, brothers and sisters, let us not forget the Ayah in Suratul Baqarah (2:186) in which Allah says, And when My slaves ask you concerning Me, then I am indeed near. I respond to the invocations of the suppliant when he calls on Me. So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright.” Du’a is the lost trait of the believer and of Islam, and what better way to avail of it then in the month in which Allah answers our prayers without holding back. The Prophet said that Du’a is the weapon of the believer so let’s use it to bring Islam in our lives and Insha’Allah to the world. I pray that what I have said that is right is from Allah and any mistakes I have made are from my own sinful self.

May Allah guide us all to the Straight Path and may He give respect and stature to Islam. May He give victory to Mujahideen wherever they are and may He allow us to abide by His Rules and by this beloved Deen of Islam, the only Deen in the Sight of Allah.

May I also ask all of you that Allah keep everyone on this Siratul Mustaqeem. Wassalamu ‘alaiakum

Arif Hussain

ADVICE continued from page

In Turkey . . .

Dec 1st:

Istanbul- Thousands of people turned out to demonstrate against Turkish participation in a possible war on Iraq. Turkey, a key strategic ally for Washington and the only Muslim-majority member of NATO, will receive a visit December 3, from a contingent of U.S. officials with promises of aid in return for military backing.

In Palestine . . .

Dec 1st:

Gaza City- An elderly Palestinian was found dead under the rubble of his house in Beit Lahia which the Israeli army dynamited. Another Palestinian was shot dead by soldiers earlier when Israeli armor stormed the area late night on November 30. These deaths were brought on by a recent demolition of homes including a five-story apartment building. The two deaths in Beit Lahia bring to 2,734 the number of people killed since the beginning of the Palestinian Intifada against the Israeli occupation.

In Bangladesh . . .

Dec 1st:

Dhaka- At least forty seven people were killed in Gaibandha in a stampede after thousands of poor gathered to receive the Eid-ul-Fitr zakat. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia directed the authorities to investigate the incident and expressed hope that people and local authorities would take “adequate precautionary measures for the proper management of zakat distribution to avoid recurrence of such incidence.”

In Kenya . . .

Dec 1st:

Kikambala-Kenyan Muslims living close to where an Israeli-owned hotel was blown up expressed growing fears their large minority community would suffer a backlash. Kenyan government officials are not ruling out that this plus an aborted missile attack on an Israeli plane taking off from Mombasa airport, was the work of Osama bin Laden’s Al-Qaeda network. But Internal Security Minister Julius Sunkuli said that none of the six Pakistanis and four Somalis still being held for questioning had yet been directly linked to the attacks or to Al-Qaeda.

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