AROUND THE WORLD...

by Ayan Afridi

In the US...

November 13:
A new Eid ul-Fitr stamp is going to be released in October 2001 by the United States Postal Service. It will be featured at 9:15am to 10am (EDT) on CSPAN. This has been something several Muslim groups have been seeking since the early 1990s.

In Kashmir...

November 20:
There is talk of a Ramadan cease-fire from India’s side. Hezbul Mujahideen, Kashmiri mujahideen Group, said it would only match this if a larger peace process follows it. Another mujahideen group, Al-Badar Mujahideen, rejected the ceasefire, and stated that it would be carrying out different operations throughout Ramadan. They are reported to have said, “Al Badar rejects the ceasefire and announces that our jihad (struggle) will continue until Indian forces withdraw from occupied Kashmir.”

“We will enhance our actions and launch an operation named Gazwa-e-Badar in Ramadan to cope with this new conspiracy” the group stated.

There was a cease-fire agreement earlier this year, but it collapsed when India refused to allow Pakistan to be a part of the negotiations concerning Kashmir.

November 18:
The Indian Army has launched grand operation in Kupwara, Baramula, Islamabad, Batgam and some other districts of the valley including Jammu, Poonch, Rajuri, Udhampur and Doda at the advent of winter season in a bid to crush down the freedom movement.

November 17:
Mujahideen clashed with Indian troops in the Pulwama Bazaar killing two of the soldiers. The troops retaliated by besieging the bazaar and beating shopkeepers and common people later in the day.

In Jammu, the Mujahideen ambushed Indian troops patrolling the area. The troops fired mortar shells into residential homes causing fires, 4 martyrs, and a few injuries.

In Palestine...

November 20:
Two Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza region as a result of clashes. Palestinians claim, one boy Abdul Rahman Dahshan, 14, was killed by live fire in the Khan Yunis area. IDF claims they have not fired live ammuni

by Dr. Khaled Abu-e-fadl

Professor of Islamic Law at UCLA

Every night my heart splinters like the dissipation of thought. Every night melts the heart that has become frozen by the indifferent cold. I stand before you burning in the inferno of my soul confronting what my delusions have allowed me to ignore. I stand humbled by the silence, a mere beggar at Your door. In the silence, I am banished by reproach, I am rehabilitated by hope, and I confront the turbulence of my soul. What do I say to that who knows the sigh before it leaves the heart? What do I say to that who can see the glimmer of light in the midst of the darkness in my mind? What do I say to that who indulges the pretenses of my intellect but rekindles the truth in my heart? What do I say to that who observes my ostentatious pretext take me to heights of self-deception, but every single time receives me when I fall apart. What do I say to that who knows the end before the start?

If I say I love You I fear that my notion of love is terribly flawed. If I say forgive me I fear that my presumptuousness will set us apart. If I say take me I know that your hands only touch the purified. My God, I am in fear of my fear. The filth on my hands begs to be purified, and before I seek to touch You have I cleansed the impurities clinging to my heart? No, I do not say or talk. I sit here stubbornly clinging to this singular spot. Adorned by the silence of this night, I listen to the reproaches of my soul, God, we are but a luscious cover of skin punctured by holes. We covert to intake and emit through enthralled skin punctures until we eventually rot our very core. Mesmerized by the pandemonium of senseless noise in life, we are oblivious to the corruption of our mind and soul.

The silence I know. I know that I am tired of the discord in my thoughts. I know that I am tired of the clamor of my breath, and the racket of my heart. I am sickened by the clangor of my teeth, and the bedlam gushing from my mouth. I am tired of the bawling of tears, and the dissonance of dreams. I know, so I strive to ignore the moaning of my body and its lecherous holes. I strive to escape every single distraction of noise or sound, and in the truth of silence I know what cannot be ignored. There comes a moment in time when all the voices will fall silent before the Lord. The silence of humility is broken only by the whispers of self-reproach (20:108). I must live this moment now for we are coming from.

Almost immediately afterwards, we ran into a series of suspicious ironies that were to cast an initial pall over the proceedings. First, we were initially told that the event would be in the College Ave. Rutgers Student Center MPR at 1:00 PM. When we got to the room at 12:30 PM, it was empty. No chairs, no podium or stage nothing. Naturally we were all concerned; perhaps we had read the information wrong? So we asked the RSC info desk about events taking place that day and they informed us that indeed the forum was going to take place, but instead that it was going to take place in rooms 410-411, not the MPR. This was only about 15 minutes or so before the event was to take place, so we hurriedly tried to place a number of calls letting people know that it wasn’t in the MPR as we had previously told them but rather that it was in the new rooms. We all wondered aloud if this wasn’t done to possibly throw off potential crowds, but giving the other group the benefit of the doubt, we proceeded upstairs to prepare our case.

When the forum began, thankfully, it was not what we expected and had many more supporters than the

by Tony Aschettino

When Mostafa, the ISRU amir asked me to be a part of the panel that was going to represent the Palestinian side in the forum about the Al-Aqsa Intifada, I accepted and viewed it as a point of great honor. Before this, we had debated the merit of participating in such an event: we viewed it as a point of great honor. Before this, we had debated the merit of participating in such an event: we

FORUM BRINGS LITTLE PROGRESS

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All Praise and Glory be to Allah The Most Gracious without Whom nothing good can happen.

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MCMC Announcements
MCMC offers the following educational programs on regular basis:

Tehfizul Quran/Quranic recitation: Mon-Fri 4:00-8:00 PM
Weekend School: Saturday: 9:30 AM-1:00 PM, Sunday: 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
Quranic Memorization & Tajweed for women: Monday-Thursday 12:00 1:00 PM
Physical Education For Men: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 6:30 PM—8:30 PM
Weekly Lecture: Friday after Maghrib
Weekly Seminar: Sunday Morning 10 AM- 1:00 PM
Monthly Program: Last Saturday of the month after Asr Prayer. Program includes dinner, lecture by Islamic scholars with question and answer session.

Amir’s Statement
As we approach the home stretch of the semester and the term papers, project and exams that come with it, we are also entering the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan — the most blessed of all months for us as Muslims. Too often in the past, we see Muslims in general getting very religious and performing more aspects of worship.

Don’t get me wrong… we should absolutely be increasing the number prayers (nawaafil) we perform, our time in the masjid, etc. But it should be just that — an increase. I am sure many of you have seen our brothers and sisters in the masjid every night of Ramadan for the Taraweeh prayers; at community iftaars at the local masjid; spending the night in the masjid for Laylatul Ul-Qadr to perform I’tikaaf; and finally at Salaatul ‘Eid at the hotel/convention center each community rents insha’ Allah.

But after ‘Eid, oftentimes you don’t see those same brothers and sisters of Ramadan until ‘Eid Ul-Adha. Ramadan has become a yearly fad…a time when people “become” Muslim for a month, then go back to “normal” after ‘Eid prayers are over.

We want to change that mentality, starting with this Ramadan. I want everyone to look forward to this Ramadan as a more of a springboard and a new beginning — instead of the yearly show most of us put on for a month. We want to use every Ramadan as a measuring stick we use to see how much we have improved since the last Ramadan…instead of how much we have to catch up on in the next 30 days to make up for how much we have declined over that same time period.

May Allah bless all to take advantage of this month to improve ourselves both in Ramadan and beyond Insha’ Allah. May Allah bless us all to do well on all our exams, papers and projects Insha’ Allah.

Niyah (Intention) of Observing the Fast:
“After completing the prayer, prostrating, and the Fajr prayer, the person must say: “I have the intention of observing a Fast today of the month of Ramadan.”

Dua’ (Supplication) Upon Breaking the Fast:
“O Allah! In You do I believe, and In You do I put my trust, and for Your pleasure did I Fast and with Your provision do I break it.”


tion into the area.

Along the northern Border a Lebanese man has been shot in the leg by IDF troops.

November 19:

From the Palestinian Information Center.

Occupied Jerusalem- Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have launched a boycott of US goods in solidarity with the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation. Dozens of youths set fire to various US-made products over piles of US and Israeli flags at the Bas, Rashidie and Bourj ashamali refugee camps near Tyre.

At the entrances of the camps, young men and women held banners calling for the boycott of products made in the US. “Actively show your support for the children of the intifada, who throw stones against Israeli tanks and who face shots with their bar chests,” one banner read. The protesters also raised a picture of 12-year old Faiz Mohammad Faizan, Taleban’s deputy commerce minister, said Taliban had no security concerns about opening the Hairaton border, which was closed by Tashkent after the Taliban captured the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif in 1998.

“Our talks are going on through ambassadorial level in Pakistan about this issue. We are discussing the details and hope for the reopening of Hairaton soon,” he told Reuters.

November 9:

It seems some sources are reporting a joint chemical attack from Russia and the US will take place and also claim that many troops have been gathering around bordering countries. The times of England and The World Tribune report that reprisal raids are expected from Washington, for the October USS Cole bombing.

In Indonesia...

November 20:

The MILF, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, is opening up to the idea of talks between Hashim Salawat, chairman MILF, and President Estrada. Meanwhile, over the weekend 46 Muslims from 2 different action groups have surrendered as offensives against rebel groups continue. On Friday, 21 muslims from the MILF surrendered to the offensive forces in Basilan province and in Marawi City, said the armed forces Southern Command.

In Iraq...

November 13: (BBC)

Iraq has announced an agreement with the United Nations to embark on dialogue without preconditions - a move that could lead to the lifting of sanctions.

In an apparent second diplomatic triumph for Iraq, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) softened its position on Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The OIC adopted a final statement on the Iraq-Kuwait dispute, which represents a considerable shift towards the Iraqi position. It agreed to change its description of the invasion from “aggression” to “situation” and indirectly called on the US and UK to end patrols of no-fly zones over Iraq.

President Saddam Hussein showed his most uncompromising face in a message to assemble leaders. He urged all Muslims to fight to liberate “greater Palestine” from “accursed Jews”, the most extreme language heard at the meeting.

In Malaysia...

November 20:

The Islamic oppression continues. 38 Mosques in Kedah are accused of spreading anti-government feelings amongst their members during Jumuaah Khutba. The Imans will be gathered for questioning to meet with the State Religious Committee chairman Fadzil Hanafi.

In Iran...

Mohsen Rezai, the Secretary General of Iran’s Expediency Council, is calling for the creation of an Islamic security belt for Palestine around the border of Israel to protect from IDF attacks.

“We, the revolutionary forces in Iran — who feel that an unacceptable offence is being committed by international circles and governments — have decided to create an anti-Zionist movement,” he told reporters in Tehran.

In Chechnya...

November 17:

Three Mujahideen have become martyrs as a result of a ten-hour battle in the northern area of Grozny.

November 9:

Military and political analysts in Moscow are realizing the strength of the Chechnian Mujahideen. They are talking about the Chechnian situation as if it is an embarrassment to the Russian Government. Some say that Russia is losing the war and they have squandered their chances for peace, because the strength of the Mujahideen is severely underestimated.

Learn Your Islam

by Jahan-Zaib Gilani

Over the summer, I came in contact with Muslims who didn’t have a true understanding of the basic principles of Islam. I plan to use their example to illustrate my topic. It is true that most Muslims today don’t have a solid understanding at all, but theirs is an admitted ignorance, and they generally leave the claim of knowledge up to the scholars. However, the ones that I came across believed in all their hearts and, I assume, with clear consciences that they were on the true path of Islam. One may think that this is nothing to be shocked about considering there are numerous splinter Muslim sects that exist, each with their own variance of beliefs and rituals. To know this shouldn’t discourage the believer, knowing how the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said that his ummah would split into 73 sects, and that only one of them will be on the straight path. But had these individuals belonged to any particular sect, I wouldn’t have been appalled at their deviant theories. I would have thought that these people were practicing Islam the only way they know how, the way their parents taught them. Whether they are on the true path is a separate discussion altogether.

After talking to these people, I came to learn that they don’t belong to any sect or ideologically driven splinter group, but that they are of mainstream Islam. Yet it was hard to discern the epistemology of their beliefs seeing how their talk was indicative of many different sources, namely: the legitimacy of secularism which is from the Europeans, the partial temporality of the Quran and Sunnah which is from the Aga Khanis (believing that the Quran and Sunnah pertain only to the time of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace), theological rationalism which is from the Mutazilites (believing that Islam is a philosophy and that it can be derived from logical thought though traditional scholars have always affirmed that Islam is derived from revelation), and the rejection of shariah (Islamic law) which only Allah knows the origin of. Never was I more disappointed about the modern-day reality of the loss of knowledge than when I met these people. I didn’t hate them, I hated what they believed. It broke my heart to hear untruths attributed to Allah, His Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace), the Quran, and Islam in general.

However, nothing happens without the will of Allah and I believe that my seemingly unfortunate encounter did have a silver lining. I always knew the importance of knowledge: how we know Allah, how we can emulate and follow the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace), how we can strive for contentment in this world even without material gain, how we can work for Jannah, and how we can be examples to the rest of humanity. But this time, thanks to my eclectic buddies, I was given a practical example of the magnitude of the crisis that this ummah is in. I began to think “how many of our brothers and sisters are falling prey to deviant beliefs?” This situation, by the will of Allah, helped to increase my reverence and appreciation of knowledge. It was a wake up call. And I learned that there is no greater job for the believer today than to acquire authentic knowledge and to make Allah’s Pleasure his intention. The Truth has to be sought. It is no wonder that the scholars of Islam have always given much time and energy to the topic of acquiring knowledge. Because of his insufficient insight, the common man sometimes criticizes the scholar for “harping” on the issue, believing him to be impractical. Is there a more important issue for us to be worried about? Jannah is given by Allah by His Mercy, Allah will judge our actions and deeds, and our actions are based on knowledge. For example, a believer obeys his parents because the learned taught him that obedience to the parents is paramount to achieving a high status with Allah. Not having knowledge of one’s religion plunges the soul into the darkness of ignorance, a vast wilderness in which the human being risks the danger of being very far from Truth. Making a mistake in belief can destine a man for the Hellfire. For example, believing that Allah is unaware of the specifics of creation is disbelief. It is very important to learn our religion and to learn it properly. Realistically, many of the Muslims today are ignorant of the fundamentals of Islam. However, this ignorance is not compounded with arrogance, for most Muslims will admit they don’t have knowledge. Trusting in the learned of this ummah is the common man’s
by Shadie El Masry

There are certain issues that, whenever they come up, send the Muslim community here in America into a frenzy: Ramadan moon sighting Sunni/Shi’ite issues, Eid moon sighting and the elections. Whenever they come up, popular debate is aroused. With the Muslim population reaching significant numbers in the US (5-8 million, Jews number ~ 3 million), the elections are and will continue to be the most dubious of these issues. In this briefing, I’d like to share with you an inclusive conclusion I believe is acceptable by Islamic principles and will create no animosity. To give a brief intro: regarding politics we should be intensely involved locally rather than nationally. Regarding national elections, I see that two positions are acceptable: 1) Vote based on the Islamic ideal of least harm. 2) Not our system; don’t vote. First however, we must all have the attitudes that politics is not our ultimate savior & we must accept different opinions as long as our cause is one.

To start off, we have to remember whom we turn to for help. It’s definitely not politicians. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said that we do not turn to mushriken for help. In other words, Muslims are victorious because they have a relationship with Allah and He gives them the tools and then victory. Politics therefore, is secondary, even tertiary. So there is no reason politics should disunite us. Within politics, I restate a position that makes most sense to me, which is that we should be deeply entrenched in local politics, for the obvious reason that it is practical and we can get real things done for the community. We can get mosques and schools and community centers up with ease if we have voting power and a relationship with the local leaders. We can influence where funding goes and where it doesn’t, etc. etc. Furthermore, there’s a concept we should all know: sphere of influence & sphere of concern. If you focus on sphere of influence, it’ll expand into your sphere of concern. When we work on our sphere of influence, it’ll grow. Few people are now interested in local politics. We should jump on this and take control. We can do it. You don’t have to be some big kahuna. From here on in, I will commit to little-by-little being more involved in my local politics. If we unite on this and follow our community leaders, we’ll soon have strong influence over towns, then districts, then counties. We’ll influence public schools, we can vote against the teaching of Darwin’s Evolution Theory and other things like that. Focus on your sphere of influence; it’ll expand to your sphere of concern.

Regarding national politics, both parties have had a unilateral support for the state of Israel and that is our number one issue since it concerns our 3rd holiest sight, Masjid al-Aqsa. So right off the bat, we have a problem with the Republicans and the Democrats. Also, it costs millions to have a decent lobbying organization for things to be done at a national level. Considering this, I think we have priorities. I think our money should go into educating and inculcating faith in the next generation, giving alternatives to public schools, and teaching Arabic. Many Muslims are not affluent. This means shelters are needed. There’s no need for a Muslim to be on welfare. I’d rather money go to helping the needy Muslims where the effect is tangible rather than to politicians where it is not and Muslim media organizations uncovering the unfair cover age we constantly witness. All these are way more important than national politics, because again they are practical.

About the actual voting, I do not see how voting can be shirk as long as the intention is based on choosing the candidate of least harm. If one has faith in a kafir candidate, then that is problematic, because Allah is the only doer of things. You can have metaphoric faith in a Muslim, but that’s only because he or she is close to Allah, but you definitely cannot have faith in a non-Muslim. Do not extend this to say that all non-Muslims are evil, because obviously there can be decent and good non-Muslims, given their context. The second opinion is what usually upsets political Muslims. It shouldn’t because it is a valid opinion. People should be tolerant to different opinions, otherwise, that’s narrow mindedness. Namely it is the choice not to vote because this is not a system Allah and His Messenger would approve of peace be upon him. It argues that if I vote and an unjust law is enacted as a result, then it is part my fault. The way laws are legislated is not our method.

Today, we are witnessing history in the making as American lawyers work overtime to elect the highest officer in the land. We are witnessing the implementation of the single most success-producing ideal: discipline in following the laws. I’m not talking about who gets elected, I’m saying that the Americans follow their rules, and this is why they succeed. We must reflect upon this. The key to success nationally and individually throughout history has been the following of laws: if you do this, you will succeed; if you don’t, you’ll fail. When the Muslims were successful, they were a rule-abiding people. They respected their rules and their leaders and scholars: outward rules, spiritual laws, political laws, economic laws, scholastic laws. Today, I see that the Americans follow their man-made laws more than the Muslims follow those of Allah Himself and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is why the kuffar have their heels on our neck. The Muslim Ummah will succeed by Allah not by politicians. We should be more concerned about avoiding the haram and praying on time more than anything else. These are spiritual laws and those are the first two steps. If you follow them, Allah will give you success, and He does that by showing you what to do and giving you the drive and creativity to do it.

It’s scary when I realize that Allah is now giving us Muslims the most wicked of nations in the history of the world* as exemplars. When we turn back to following Allah’s laws, we will see good things happen. Until that day, nothing will benefit us. *In his book Out of Control, former cabinet member of the Carter Administration, Zbignew Brzezinski, shows that the West has killed more people in the last hundred years than all of the world’s wars in the last 1000 years with liberal estimates. At the head of the “West” he has America. It is a fact that no country has ever declared war on America, yet America has been involved in more wars than any other nation in the last 100 years. Strangely, it calls its department to be the “Department of Defense.” “Defense” against whom? It used to be and should be the Department of War. The Prophet peace be upon him said, that in the end of time, people would give bad things sweet names.

Ignorance

continued frompage 3

maintains that knowledge can be claimed by anybody as long a you can articulate your views. This is contrary to the Muslim tradition of submitting to those who “know.” Those who “know” are the scholars, the men and women of this ummah who have learned the Islamic sciences from qualified teachers whom have been licensed to teach religion from their respective teachers. This chain of transmission has been preserved from teacher to student and can be traced back to the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace). Islam is the only religion on the planet that has this tradition of isnad which is another proof of the validity of Islam as the final message to mankind. This is how we know what we’re practicing is correct, because it is the direct teachings of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace). This brings me back to my earlier mentioned friends. In my discussions with them, they made it painfully obvious that they don’t believe in any obligation to learn Islam from traditional scholars. Rather, they trust in Western scholarship to learn their religion. This method of learning, incidentally, usually stems from an inferiority complex of the Muslim to the Western model. The Muslim subconsciously believes that the West could offer us a better understanding of our own deen since they rule the world and author all of modern thought. “If you’re not modern, then you’re backward.” Muslims have to understand that our scholars don’t want us “stuck” in the past as is the common belief. We are to live in the present using the past as our model for there is no better model of human civilization to follow than the model of Dar al-Islam during the life of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace). And the proofs of Islamic civilization can be seen many times in history where Muslims established Islam and promoted an Islamic lifestyle.

Muslims have also fallen into the practice of trying to learn directly from books without the guidance of scholars. This can sometimes lead to a stunted understanding of Islam because the teacher can explain the text thoroughly. This supports the tradition that Islam has always been transmitted from human to human, not from book to human. Only a human can deliver the true message of Islam to another human, as was done by our Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) to his sahaba.

In conclusion, I’d like to touch upon today’s dilemma of the Muslims. We, at this time, are experiencing our darkest hour. We have never been as disgraced, impoverished, confused, weakened, desperate or dispersed in history than we are today, right now. By Allah, this can be directly attributed to the loss of knowledge. We have left the acquisition of knowledge, therefore we do not know Allah and His Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace). We don’t know them, therefore we have faltered in our practice of Islam. We have faltered in our practice of Islam therefore we are deprived of much success in this life. Allah still continues to give us all levels of success despite our state of disobedience. As for the “seemingly” wretched state we’re in, praise be to Allah that He has chosen for the sins of the Muslims to be expiated in this world. It is a blessing in disguise, if we only knew.
Enjoin the Right and Forbid the Wrong: An Interview with Sis. Aminah Asilimi

contacted by Madiha Abbas

“My name is Aminah Asilimi. I am a Muslim. I am a mother, I am a grandmother. I was born and raised in America, so I am an American. I come from a family of Cherokee and Irish heritage, so I guess I am Cherokee and Irish. In other words I am a lot of things. I am a Muslim, mother, grandmother actually great grandmother too; all this and other stuff. I was born in Oklahoma and spent my early childhood there but most of my life was actually spent in Colorado. Before becoming a Muslim, I hardly ever traveled and in the last 43 years, which is why I have become sort of a Bedouin, I am always on the go, never in one place very long. I call Kentucky my home at this time. I love Kentucky. I love fresh air, tall trees and mountains and Kentucky has all of that.

Q: What do you do in terms of promoting Islam?
A: I serve on the advisory boards of CAIR and AMC but not when you talk about promoting Islam, that’s defending Islam. It’s different. Promoting Islam is quite simply seeing Islam because if they see Islam, they cant help but love it. People see Islam through you, how you behave with them. I try to live Islam, which is why my website is called ‘liveIslam.org.’ I try to live Islam. I try to remember the proper way to great people and see to it that I do it. So, I am always smiling. I make sure that my dealings with people are always in line with the Sunnah, always. They must be. So, I live Islam and try to let them see that through me. I have the constant struggle of gaining more knowledge so I can answer questions, address issues always according to Quran and Sunnah in a way that they understand so I don’t have an answer ready for everything. I trust in Allah to help me understand the person, so that I will understand the best way to answer them. I follow the Sunnah and listen. Listen to what the person is actually saying. I try not to guess what they are going to say and not to prejudge their intention in what they say. The Quran and Sunnah teach you some very important concepts in communication. To put in just a few words, listen without defending and speak without offending. That’s the model for communication. I am always ready to answer questions. I am always ready to answer the big one that people always want to know which is why I am running around in a scarf and long dresses and stuff like that. I am always remembering to break barriers with laughter and smiles so I joke, I play with people a lot. As an example, once while I was in Virginia, I was very thirsty and I went to a 7/11 for a giant coke that my son nicknamed the ‘bladder buster.’ The lady behind the counter did what was a very typical thing to seeing that the ears are covered. She said very loudly ‘what are you?’ I knew what she meant but I looked at her and said, ‘well, I am a woman.’ She said, ‘no, what are you?’ I look down like I am confused and then accidentally notice my scarf and say, ‘oh, you mean the scarf? I am a Muslim.’ This was a long time ago when they used to think only African Americans were Muslims, not white people. She looked at me and said, ‘well you are not black.’ I looked down on myself and said, ‘oh my God, you are right!’ Of course everybody in the store cracked up laughing. I was, as it turned out, the only white person in the store. Everybody in the store ended up coming to the cash register and talking to me about Islam. I stood there and I finished the whole ‘bladder buster,’ talking to people about what the Quran and Hadith said. I was introducing Islam to them and I didn’t even live there. I went back six years later and just happened to meet that woman at a lecture I was giving. She came to me and said, ‘I used to work, I know you don’t remember me, and Astaghfirullah I didn’t, but she said, ‘I used to work at a 7/11’ and then she related that story and I remembered right away. She said, ‘I just wanted you to know that I am a Muslim now,’ which to me was obvious since she had the scarf on and everything. Then, she reached over and grabbed this man by the hand and pulled him over. He said, ‘I was at the store at that time buying a pack of cigarettes and now I am her husband and I am a Muslim too.’ See, you never know when you are going to have a chance to share Islam with someone who is really, really ready. And just from that little time and that little break, it opened the door to what they wanted and they took Shahadah. I didn’t know about it for six years. So, what do I do to spread Islam? I live Islam. I love Islam.”

Q: Would you say that just living by the book is something Muslims can do today to spread the word of Allah?
A: “Oh yeah. I mean if we just began by remembering to greet everyone with a smile and peace. Remember in honey, there is a cure for everything. So, a lot of people go out and buy giant jars of honey. Actually what it’s talking about is that there is a honey that comes from the heart, a honey that comes from the mind and honey that comes from the tongue that will solve all the problems. The honey comes from the Rahma (Mercy) of Allah. Think about it, if you have a bad day how much a kind word from someone changes it all around. There are also medical properties involved with honey. If you have bad allergies, if you get locally grown honey that is not heat processed, the closer to where you live the better, it will actually end the allergies. It really works.”

Q: Could you please express your thoughts about Jihad and terrorism?
A: “Now when it comes to Jihad, let me clarify that it can only be done for Fesabeelillah (for the sake of Allah). It is not done for poverty, not land, not done for finances or any kind of a personal gain. You are allowed that is your personal struggle and we go through that every minute of everyday. Am I going to pray or not, am I going to wear hijab or no, am I going to go on a date or not, am I going to say a bad word here or not. You know that is Jihad. The physical Jihad of carrying a weapon people talk about, that’s the one that has all the rules. The first rule is that it has to

continued on page 8
that who does not rehearse the inevitable is most certainly a fool.

My God, I live drowned in the noise of words and thoughts. I live drowned in the endless humming of distractions and sounds. Presentations, performances, speeches, arguments saturate the fibers of life. And, this life is but a harangue of incoherence masking the embarrassments of vice. Even the pretensions of beauty are but a boisterous shroud cast upon our pain and strife. God, I realize that I use every being that emits a voice, I use every distraction of desire or thought, I use every pain or pleasure, I use every bit of disappointment or hope, I use every single moment of noise to avoid listening to my soul. You swear by the self-reproaching soul, (75:2) and I swear by You of the agonies of the reproaches of my soul. Such is the virtue of silence-in silence we are confronted, splintered and, ultimately, restored. Our inner prophet speaks and we mute the voice. We emit and inhale odious fumes of talk. We talk in conferences, we talk in programs, we talk in gatherings and we talk in meetings. For every moment of delusion, doubt or ignorance we give a talk. We emit and inhale fumes of talk. We talk to cover the anxiety of guilt and torment of fear. We talk because there is so much to conceal. We talk so that the self may not speak. Between the boisterousness of acts and words we drown the silent dignity of our being. The noise of frivolity becomes our distorted sense of meaning. If only we would embrace the silence, we would find the divine voice. We use the pedantry of legalism, the pomposity of activism, the sophistry of scholasticism and the unmitigated hypocrisy of formalism to mute the voices. We hide in robes and scarves, we hide in beards and miswaks, we hide in pamphlets and tapes, we hide in an endless stream of chat groups and oratories from one true fact. The day will come when there will be only the silence, the soul and a Lord who knows the sigh before it leaves the heart.

**A collection of these essays in Conference of the Books: The Search for Beauty in Islam will be published in March by University Press of America. Those who pre-order the book now, get 30% off from the cover price. Customer service number is 1-800-462-6420. Dr. Khaled makes no profits of this or any of his books.**

The Muslim Center of Middlesex County is organizing the Community Iftar program. The Iftar program will be held at MCMC in Piscataway, on every Saturday and Sunday in the month of Ramadan. The expenses for the Iftar are shared by the community collectively as well as on an individual basis. Anyone who would like to participate in the program and contribute should contact the MCMC administrator’s office by calling at 732-463-2004, or by calling at 732-805-0374. This program provides an opportunity to the community to come closer and also a chance to know each other.

**Blessed indeed is the Night of Power! When the Mercy of God’s Revelation breaks through, The darkness of the human soul! All the Powers, of the divine world, Speed on their mystic Message of Mercy, By God’s command, and bless every nook And corner of the heart! All jar Are still in the reign supreme of Peace, Until this mortal night gives place To the glorious day of an immortal world!**

**Far Exalted is He Above Having a Son** *(taken from thetruereligion.org)*

One day, Al-Baqilani - a Muslim Scholar and judge - entered the court of the Roman Emperor while he was among his monks and priests. Al-Baqilani mockingly said to one of the priests: “How are you? How are your family and children?” The Roman Emperor exclaimed: “We were told that you are the most articulate among the Muslim scholars and the most knowledgeable; don’t you know that our priests are deemed above having a wife and children?” Al-Baqilani answered: “How is it that you can’t deem Allah above having a wife and children, but you can them? As if they were more sacred than Allah!”

The Roman Emperor was moved by what he heard and from then on felt a great deal of respect for Al-Baqilani.

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**Between The Past And The Future**

**by Imam Ibn ul Qayyim al Jawziyyah**

Your life in the present moment is in between the past and the future. So what has preceded can be rectified by tawbah (repentance), nadam (regret) and istighfar (seeking Allah’s forgiveness). And this is something that will neither tire you, nor cause you to toil as you would with strenuous labour. Rather it is an action of the heart. Then as regards the future (then it can be corrected) by withholding yourself from sins. And this abandonment is merely the leaving of something and to be at ease from it. This also is not action of the limbs, which requires you to strive and toil. Rather this is a firm resolve and intention of the heart - which will give rest to your body, heart and thoughts.

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**But then your attention must be directed to your life in the present - the time between two times. If you waste it, then you have wasted the opportunity to be of the fortunate and saved ones.**

So, as for what has preceded, then you rectify it with repentance. And as for the future – then you rectify it with firm resolve and intention. Neither of these involves any hardship or exertion of the limbs. But then your attention must be directed to your life in the present - the time between two times. If you waste it, then you have wasted the opportunity to be of the fortunate and saved ones. If you look after it, having rectified the two times – what is before and after it, as we have said – then you will be successful and achieve rest, delight and ever-lasting bliss. However, looking after it is harder than that which comes before and after it, since guarding it involves keeping to that which is most befitting and beneficial for your soul, and that which will bring it success and well being.

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**The Beloved Prophet**

If envy is a sin then I am the incurable sinner for I envy every eye that ever caught a glimpse of you. I envy the waves that carried your voice, and the air that touched your cheeks. I envy even the ground that once served you, and I confess to you that despite my indulgent sins, my shamefaced whimsies and ugly flimsies, I confess to you, “I love you.” My confessions are as silly as my muted words. You have been loved by so many more substantial than I, and what good does my silence or confession possibly do? So many moments have I sat sheltered by the night in the midst of these books, my mind fulfilled but my heart calling for you. Only my shame restrains my words from filling pages of books and from whimpering into the night, “I long for you.” This Conference of the Books, in countless days and nights, ignited by your memory, calls upon the world to ponder your legacy. For all the enlightenment of books, the brilliance of beauty, and the purification of light coalesced in the moments of time that hosted your life - Muhammad, Ahmad, Abu al-Qasim, al-nabi al-‘amin, the messenger of God. Permit me my Prophet, my own beloved Prophet, to tell you that I do not know you from the majestic debates of this Conference, I do not know you from the learned lectures of teachers, or from some infatuated delusional dream. No, I do not know you from the books full of sayings you reportedly said, and I even do not know you from all the reports about your life and about your likes and dislikes. I know you from a moment in time in which I fell in love with you. I know you because God taught you, praised you, and honored you. I know you because God comforted you, consoled you, and empowered you. I know you because God loved you. My Prophet, I know you through a heart that loves.

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**INTROSPECTIONS**

**continued from page 1**

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RAMADAN: THE SOUL’S REJUVINATION

by Alya Khan

To live in a state of spiritual satisfaction, to be obliged for the things we have been blessed with, to apprehend more about Islam and oneself, that is Ramadan. Replenishing the mind and body with such rectitude, the holy month of Ramadan has been observed from every corner of the globe for over a thousand years. It is the blessed month when the Holy Quran was revealed to the beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The account of varied events during the month of Ramadan affirms how this month is of such bliss. For instance, a day after Hijrah, the hypocrites of Al-Madinah built their own mosque (Masjid al-Dirar) in order to destroy the unity of the Muslims. In Ramadan, the Prophet (pbuh) ordered this mosque to be destroyed. Another event is the renowned Battle of Badr. The Prophet (pbuh) and 313 of his companions on the seventeenth day of Ramadan, 3 A.H., went to intercept a caravan of their own goods that left Makkah. There, they met the well-equipped army of Quraish, ready to eliminate the very presence of Islam. Though the Muslims were outnumbered three to one, Allah gave them victory on this day of Ramadan. The list of these events goes on, but the most notable event was the revelation of the Holy Quran to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). While in the cave of Mount Hira, Angel Gabriel came to the beloved Prophet (pbuh) with the first five ayat of Surah Al-Alaq. One of the ayat of the Quran states that, “Ramadan is the month in which was sent down the Quran as a guide to mankind also clear signs for guidance and judgement.” Ayat 2:185.

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims worldwide observe in fasting, “sawm” from dawn to dusk and constant prayers. Fasting in Ramadan is not just about a physical diet, but a spiritual diet. Not only are food, drinks, and sexual activity forbidden, but there are five things which can destroy a person’s fast: telling a lie, slandering, denouncing someone behind their back, a false oath, greed or covetousness. These actions and characteristics are always emphasized against, but it is especially important to avoid such habits during the month of such blessedness and purity. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) is reported to have said, “If one does not abandon falsehood in words and deeds, Allah has no need for his abandoning of food and drink.” (Al-Bukhari). Muslims must be aware of such a warning, for it does no good to not eat and drink, and then begin gossiping with friends. There are specific regulations for fasting and its acceptance is dependant on two conditions. 1. Abstain from food, liquids and sexual activity from dawn to sunset. 2. Intention (niyyah) must be made everyday before dawn. This can either be done in the night before going to sleep or right before Fajr (eating before fasting), which should be as close to Fajr as possible. A fast is broken if one eats or drinks intentionally or deliberately throws up, etc. Such days can be made up after the month of Ramadan but also require the payment of Kaffarah (a penalty). Then there are things which do not break the fast such as, eating or drinking unintentionally, brushing teeth, swallowing things which are impossible to avoid like one’s saliva, street dust, smoke, etc., etc. When a Muslim is in a situation when fasting will endanger his/her health, breaking the fast is permitted. In addition to such conditions, there are certain people who are exempt from fasting. Some of these people are children who are not of adolescent age, the insane, the ill, etc.

To see such flexibility in the month of Ramadan is only a glimpse of Allah’s mercy overall. Fasting, being the third pillar of Islam, is not an act just to please Allah, but it benefits the individual’s soul as well. Taqwa is gained as the Quran states, “O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed upon you as it has been prescribed upon those before you, so that you may attain taqwa.” (Surah al-Baqarah 2:183). Here, taqwa means to make a shield between oneself and Allah’s anger, and the Hellfire. Fasting is known to give a person self-restraint, along with this is patience and a strong will. In the Holy Quran, Allah mentioned patience more than seventy times and has commanded patience in more than sixteen ways. Naturally when one sacrifices, patience and restraint inhabit the soul. There are a number of other characteristics that Muslims achieve while fasting such as the striving for ihsaan (righteousness and sincerity) and staying away from riyyaa (showing off), improvement of manners, recognition that oneself can change for the better, becoming more charitable, awareness of the ummah, discipline, teaching the young, and then to improve one’s health.

The spirituality and the faith of a person are not the only qualities that stem from Ramadan, but are accompanied with profound medical benefits. It is ironic that many people believe that fasting will have the believer weak, for in reality, the calorie intake of Muslims fasting is at or slightly below the national requirement guidelines. The lack of water during the day is actually beneficial when many think the opposite. Abstinence of water during the day causes concentration of all fluids within the body and causes slight dehydration. In a study done on plant life, it has been shown that slight dehydration and water conservation actually improves longevity. Some physiological effects of fasting include the lowering of blood sugar, cholesterol, and the systolic blood pressure. An experiment done on worms once again reiterates this concept; one worm that was alternatively fed and fasted was alive and active after nineteen generations of its relatives and had out lived the average life span of worms. An interesting fact Muslims should note is that ten extra calories are used for each rikat of the prayer. Thus, an extra prayer at night provides exercise and better utilization of food. Prayers are not for exercise, but they do mildly improve joints. Even the recitation of the Quran is beneficial to one’s health for it improves memory. With such benefits of purity, satisfaction, happiness, and medical benefits, how can anyone deny their right to fast? Muslims have been blessed during Ramadan to reach such an elite level and it is unfortunate that some may take it for granted. With our prayers, our will, and our faith, Muslims will arise with such purity and blessedness that the soul of the believer will not just improve, but it will rejuvenate.
be Fesabecerillah. It has to be for the sake of Allah. It can’t be a matter of personal anger. The second is that you must declare war. I can’t just get mad, smack you on your head and say that we are at war. What you do is say look what you said or what you did was wrong and I am not going to put up with it. Get ready I am about to punch you out. You have to warn the person that you are going to fight them before you fight them. Now, in the course of Jihad, you can’t injure a woman, a child or a man who is not actively involved in the fight. You cannot destroy property except under certain circumstances. There was an instance when Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) was given permission to cut down some trees in an olive grove. He did not harm the entire olive grove because Allah knew that this particular Jew was in love with his property and would actually give up rather than watch his trees cut down. So, the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) only had to cut down a few trees before the Jews gave up. That was a matter of treatment. You have to really study the Sirah of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). Now, if you cannot injure a person, I don’t know, it really hard to kill a person without injuring them right? So if you cant injure a person who is not involved in the fighting, if you cant destroy property, if you have to warn people ahead of time, could you explain to me how and act of terrorism could be acceptable as Jihad. See it can’t be. An act of terrorism is absolutely forbidden in Islam.”

Q: What is your stand on the Palestine issue and Jihad?
A: “Has a war not been declared? Oh, but there was. There has been. Now, I happen to be Cherokee Indian and if you don’t think I understand what is going on there, I really, really do understand what is going on their cuz we kinda got booted off our land. We don’t have any land now in this country. Before the white man came, we owned all of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, North and South Carolina, Georgia and Virginia and that’s just my tribe ok. And know we have nothing. Whenever I go out and I ask these people that Columbus brought here. I say how would you feel if I came to you and I said to you the house you are living in was where my great great great great grandfather was born. Get out, I want it back. Oh, you can keep living here but you can’t vote. You can’t have equal rights, but you can keep living here and serve us. Well first of all, if I come to somebody and say that you have to get out of this house because it is mine hereditarily, they will say, oh ya like for sure, and pull out a shot gun and blow me away, in the reality of it. I can take and prove it to you using the Bible that the Jews are not Gods people. That there is this heavy guilt trip that Americans in particular have over the Holocaust and so when they chose this land to establish a Jewish state, they forgot that it was already occupied and owned and it was known as Palestine. You can check the history books, the history books list it as Palestine not as Israel. Everybody recognized it as Palestine before. How can they justify just giving a chunk of it because the people said we are the chosen people. God said you disobey me and I will scatter you unto the winds. And that’s what he did. He scattered, God scattered the Jewish people. So now, America is playing God. God scattered them but we are going to bring them back together.
**POETRY**

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, “The truest poetic verse ever said by a poet, is: ‘Indeed! Everything except Allah, is perishable.’” It is this framework of truth that my poetry is written.

Allah says of the poets in Sura Al-Shu’araa verses 224-227:

224 And the Poets it is those straying in Evil who follow them: 3237
225 Seest thou not that they wander distracted in every valley?
226 And that they say what they practice not?
227 Except those who believe work righteousness engage much in the remembrance of Allah and defend them selves only after they are unjustly attacked unjustly attacked. And soon will the unjust assail ants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take!

**GAME CORNER**

**Puzzle:**

All the words listed below appear in the puzzle horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THE LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. THE LEFTOVER LETTERS SPELL A WORD.

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N A U D H I W A R A T
R A R C R A T F I Y F
E O D D D O O G R Y A
C N A A O G R E T I S
I G Q A M O T B I N T
T A Q W A A F I F H I
A R E W O P R L A N
T T E S N U S H U B G
I B A D A H A G D I D
O R U H A S W A I T A
N A R U Q I M M O N B
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WORDS: BAD, DUA, FASTING, FOOD, GOOD, HABIT, IBADAH, IDULFITR, IFTAR, MAGHRIB, NIYYA, POWERR, QADR, QURAN, RAMADAN, RECITATION, SAHUR, SAWM, SUNSET, TAQWA, TARAWIH.

Unscramble these words to form five Islamic words.

**TISGNFA**

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**MSILA**

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**WAADH**

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**ERVES**

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**MGAPIGLIRE**

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**To Western Women**

When you look at me all you can see
Is the scarf that covers my hair
My word you can’t hear
Because you’re too full of fear,
Mouth gaping, all you do is stare.
You think it’s not my own choice,
In your own “liberation” you rejoice.
You’re so thankful that you’re not me.
Think I’m uneducated,
Trapped, oppressed and subjugated.
You’re so thankful that you are free.

But Western women you’ve got it wrong-
You’re the weak and I’m the strong,
For I’ve rejected the trap of man.
Fancy clothes- low neck, short skirt,
These are devices for pain and hurt,
Always jumping to the male agenda,
Competing on his terms.
No job share, no baby-sitting facilities,
No feeding and diaper-changing amenities.
No equal pay for equal skill-
Your job they can always fill.
Is this liberation?

A person with ideas and thought,
I’m not for sale, I can’t be bought.
I won’t decorate anyone’s arm,
Nor be promoted for my charm.
There’s more to me than playing coy.
Living life as a balancing game- mother,
Daughter, wife, nurse, cleaner, cook, lover-
And still bring home a wage.
Who thought up this modern “freedom”
Where man can love’em and man can leave ‘em.
This is not free but life in a cage.

Western women you can have your life.
Mine- it has less strife.
I cover and I get respected
Surely that’s to be expected-
For I won’t demean the feminine
I won’t live to a male criterion.
I dance to my own tune,
And I hope you see this very soon,
For your own sake- wake up and use your sight!

Are you so sure that you are right?

**LAMENT OF THE QURAN**

As an ornament do they adorn me,
Yet they keep me and sometimes kiss me.
In their celebrations they recite me.
In disputes they swear by me.
On shelves do they securely keep me
Till another celebration or dispute, when they need me.

Yes, they read and memorize me,
Yet only an ornament am I.
My message lies neglected, my treasure untouched.
The field lies bare, where blossomed once true glory.
Wrong is the treatment that I receive
So much to give have I,
but none is there to perceive.

**Mahir-ul-Qadri**

**Love of Allah**

The love of the Beloved must be unconditionally returned.

If you claim love yet oppose the Beloved, then your love is but a pretence.
You love the enemies of your Beloved and still seek love in return.

You fight the beloved of your Beloved.

Is this Love or the following of shaytaan?

True devotion is nothing but total submission of body and soul to One Love.

We have seen humans claim to submit, yet their loyalties are many.

They put their trust here, and their hope there, and their love is without consequence.

**Imam Ibn ul Qayyim al Jawziyyah**

Excerpted from An-Nooniyyah

Quoted in “Al-Walaa wal-Baraa” of Muhammad Saeed al-Qahtani

**Aisha**

**P R I L**

**Answers:** Fasting, Islam, Dawa, Verse, Pilgrimage and Five
Causes That Bring About the Love For The Lord of the Worlds
by Imam Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali

(1) Recognizing the bounties Allah has bestowed upon His slaves. These bounties [are so many that they] cannot be counted or enumerated. [Allah says:] “If you count the blessings of Allah, never will you be able to count them.” [14:34]

Hearts naturally have love for those who do good to them. Love for a blessing is from the general aspects of thanking the one who has bestowed a bounty. It is said that, a thanks is with the heart, tongue and limbs.

(2) Another cause is to have knowledge of Allah by His Names, Attributes and Actions. The one who knows Allah, loves Him. Whoever loves Him and obeys Him. Whoever obeys Allah is honored by Him. Whoever Allah honors, He will have him live close to Him. Whoever lives close to Him, has attained the glad tidings.

(3) One of the great causes [that leads to having love of Allah] is the specific knowledge that comes about through pondering over the creation of the heavens and the earth and what Allah has created. In the Qur’an, there is much mention of the signs of Allah that indicate His Greatness, Power, Majesty, Perfection, Eminence, Compassion, Mercy, Strength, Subjugation and other of His beautiful Names and exalted Attributes. Whenever one’s knowledge of Allah is strengthened, one’s love for Him is also strengthened and one’s love for obeying Him is also strengthened. He will then experience the pleasure of worship, whether it be in prayer, remembrance or other forms of worship.

(4) Another cause that will bring about love for Allah is to act towards Allah with sincerity and purity while going it be in prayer, remembrance or other forms of worship. He will then experience the pleasure of worship, whether it be in prayer, remembrance or other forms of worship.

(5) One of the greatest causes that bring about one’s love for Allah is increasing one’s remembrance of Allah. Whenever a person loves something, he remembers it more often. And it is through the remembrance of Allah that the hearts find tranquility. In fact, one of the signs of having love for Allah is the constant remembrance of Allah by one’s heart and tongue.

(6) One of the causes that brings about Allah’s love for His slave is reciting the Qur’an often and pondering over its meaning, in particular those verses that contain Allah’s Names, Attributes and Actions. Having fondness for that action will lead the slave to love Allah and Allah to love Him.

(7) Another of the causes of love for Allah is remembering what has been mentioned in the Qur’an and Sunnah concerning the believers seeing their Lord in the Hereafter and visiting them and gathering together on the Day of Abundance. That will bring about love for Allah.

Instinshaq Naseemul-Uns min Nafahati Riyaadil-Qudus, pp. 22-30
Quoted in “The Delight of Faith” by Abdullah bin Jarullah al-Janullah
Transl. J. Zarabozo; Dar as-Salaam, 1996

Sahih Muslim Book 006, Number 2484:
Narrated Anas:
We were with the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) on a journey. Some of us had been observing the fast and some of us had not been fasting. We got down at a place on a hot day. Most of us had the cloth for shelter. There were also those amongst us who sheltered (themselves against the rays of the) sun with the help of their hands. The observers of the fast fell down (on account of weakness). Those who had not observed it got up and picked tents and watered the mounts. Thereupon the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: The breakers of the fast have taken away the reward today.
How to Seek Laylatul-Qadr
by Shaykh Muhammad Nasir-ud-Deen al-Albani

Laylat ul-Qadr is the most blessed night. A person who misses it has indeed missed a great amount of good. If a believing person is zealous to obey his Lord and increase the good deeds in his record, he should strive to encounter this night and to pass it in worship and obedience. If this is facilitated for him, all of his previous sins will be forgiven.

"Whoever stands in prayer with the imam until he (the imam) concludes the prayer, it is recorded for him that he prayed the whole night...'" [Recorded by Ibn Abi Shaybah, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmithi (who authenticated it), an-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, at-Tahawi (in Sharhu Ma'an il-Athar, Ibn Nasr, al-Faryabi, and al-Bayhaqi.

Praying Qiyam

It is recommended to make a long Qiyam prayer during the nights on which Laylat ul-Qadr could fall. This is indicated in many hadiths, such as the following: Abu Tharr (radhiallahu 'anhu) relates: “We fasted with Allah’s Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) in Ramadan. He did not lead us (in qiyam) at all until there were seven (nights of Ramadan) left. Then he stood with us (that night - in prayer) until one third of the night had passed. He did not pray with us on the sixth. On the fifth night, he prayed with us until half of the night had passed. So we said, ‘Allah’s Messenger! Wouldn’t you pray with us the whole night?’ He replied: ‘Whoever stands in prayer with the imam until he (the imam) concludes the prayer, it is recorded for him that he prayed the whole night.’...” [Recorded by Ibn Abi Shaybah, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmithi (who authenticated it), an-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, at-Tahawi (in Sharhu Ma'an il-Athar, Ibn Nasr, al-Faryabi, and al-Bayhaqi. Their isnad is authentic.] [Point of benefit: Abu Dawud mentioned: “I heard Ahmad being asked, ‘Do you like for a man to pray with the people or by himself during Ramadan?’ He replied, ‘Pray with the people’ I also heard him say, ‘I would prefer for one to pray (qiyaam) with the imam and to pray witr with him as well, for the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: ‘When a man prays with the imam until he concludes, it is recorded that he prayed the rest of that night.’” [Masa'il]

Abu Hurayrah (radhiallahu ‘anhu) narrated that the Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: “Whoever stands (in qiyam) in Laylat ul-Qadr [and it is facilitated for him] out of faith and expectation (of Allah’s reward), will have all of his previous sins forgiven.” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim; the addition “and it is facilitated for him” is recorded by Ahmad from the report of ‘Ubaadah Bin as-Samit; it means that he is permitted to be among the sincere worshippers during that blessed night.]

Making Supplications

It is also recommended to make extensive supplication on this night. ‘A’ishah (radhiallahu ‘anha) reported that she asked Allah’s Messenger (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam), “O Messenger of Allah! If I knew which night is Laylat ul-Qadr, what should I say during it?” And he instructed her to say: “Allahumma innaka ‘afuwwun tuhibbul ‘afwa fa‘afwa ‘annee - O Allah! You are forgiving, and you love forgiveness. So forgive me.” [Recorded by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and at-Tirmithi. Verified to be authentic by Al-Albani]

Abandoning Worldly Pleasures for the Sake of Worship

It is further recommended to spend more time in worship during the nights on which Laylat ul-Qadr is likely to be. This calls for abandoning many worldly pleasures in order to secure the time and thoughts solely for worshipping Allah. ‘A’ishah (radhiallahu’anha) reported: “When the (last) ten started, the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) would tighten his izaar (i.e. he stayed away from his wives in order to have more time for worship), spend the whole night awake (in prayer), and wake up his family.” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]. And she said: “Allah’s Messenger (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) used to exert more (in worship) on the last ten than on other nights.” [Muslim]

Adapted from “The Night Prayers: Qiyam & Tarawih from works by Muhammad Nasir ud-Deen al-Albani (and other scholars)”
SEEKING THE LOVE OF ALLAH

by Sameera Iqbal

Nov. 24th Princeton NJ- Imam Hamad Chebli, from the Islamic Center of Central Jersey, opened up a three-day spiritual retreat, themed “Seeking the Love of Allah” for young Muslims at the Dorrnal Forestal Conference Center Princeton, New Jersey. The first message of the weekend was a hadith stating that a Sahabah asked Aisha (R) how the Prophet (pbuh) lived his life and she replied “Kana qalaquhu al Quran,” meaning “He took the Quran as guidance.”

The youth association, Muslim Leaders, organized the conference. Amber Malik, and Omayma Mansour, Rutgers alumnus, were two of the organizers, along with Ramy Nasr, Mashal Malik, and Ameer Ali. Muslim Leaders held their first conference in April 2000, also at Princeton and it was very well received by conference goers, just as this one was.

Speakers at the retreat included some very well known leaders from across the country such as Imam Hamad Chebli, as mentioned before, Sr. Mona Hassan, Br. Saffet Catovic, Br. Motiz Charaf, and Imam Abu Bakr Haniff. Imam Siraj Wahhaj, Imam Ibrahim Negm, and Br. Ahmed Morsi, all New York based leaders, also spoke.

Attendees were able to experience all types of workshops, ranging in topic from “Political and Social Jihad,” with Brother Saffet Catovic to “Purifying the Nafs”, with Imam Ibrahim Negm, and “The Lost Legacy,” with Br. Ahmed Morsi. Brother Saffet Catovic has been active in the Bosnia Jihad for many years and gave a poignant account of the conditions he witnessed in Bosnia. Br. Ahmed Morsi’s topic, “The Lost Legacy,” touched the hearts of many conference goers, among them Hajara Azeem of New Jersey. “He gave me proof of Allah’s beauty and showed me how everything in the world has a purpose. He showed how a tree is actually an upside down lung (taking in carbon dioxide and emitting oxygen). There are so many connections in the world and I want to learn more about them,” she said.

Two of the highlights of the weekend included a shahadah and a marriage ceremony performed by Imam Chebli. Dayyan Flowers took her shahadah on Sunday, Nov 26 and was then joined in matrimony with Ayman Hajiya. Both Dayyan and Aymen are from Somerset, NJ. The couple did not attend the conference but wished to take their vows at the conference and share their happiness with everyone.

Certainly one of the most memorable moments of the conference was when Br. Syed Vickar Ahamed, of Homdel, NJ distributed Qurans, entitled The Interpretation of the Meaning of the Quran, which he wrote for younger children, age 10 and up. He also distributed two small books, The Names of Allah and The Infinities of Human Thought: Ninety Nine Divine Doors, which he authored to all of the conference goers. The presentation of the gift was an emotionally stirring moment for the conference goers. Mona Abdullah, of Teaneck, NJ, said, “It was the perfect gift to give Muslim youth. It was very generous on his part and it was beneficial on our part.”

The end of the conference, Sunday, was when most con

Sahih Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 120: Narrated Sahl:
The Prophet said, “There is a gate in Paradise called Ar-Raiyan, and those who observe fasts will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection and none except them will enter through it. It will be said, ‘Where are those who used to observe fasts?’ They will get up, and none except them will enter through it. After their entry the gate will be closed and nobody will enter through it.”

The Staff of Nasihah and ISRU wish all Muslims a blessed Ramadan and an Eid full of joy and happiness.