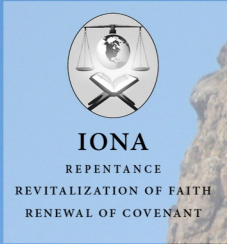


In the name of Allah, the most Compassionate, the ever Merciful



IONA MASJID COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER RAMADAN SPECIAL ISSUE

April - May 2021 | Ramadan 1442

Volume 15, No 5

Image: Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) first revelation was in the cave of Hira' on the Mount of Light (Jabal an-Nur)

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From His Glorious Book

"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous."

[Al-Baqarab, 2:183]

From the Tradition of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

"Give charity without delay, for it stands in the way of calamity"

[-Al-Tirmidbi, Hadith 604]

IONA Wishes Everyone

A Blessed Ramadan and a Joyous Eid

First day of Ramadan is Tuesday, April 13th | Eid is May 13th

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for Virtual Nightly

Quranic Wisdom

Starting at 7:00 PM

See Page 2

IONA Center encourages you to continue supporting the Center during the

pandemic by donating to the Masjid Budget



Join us **Live** for both Virtual Friday Sermons 12:10 & 1:30 PM

Zakat al-Fitr (Fitra) \$15 per person/per family to be paid before Eid





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Ramadan Mubarak

Ramadan will begin on Monday, April 12th, 2021 at sunset and the first day of fasting is on Tuesday, April 13th, according to the Fiqh Council of North America. IONA follows the Fiqh Council of North America for determining Ramadan and Eid dates.

Greetings from Ameer of IONA

Ramadan Mubarak and Kareem to you and your loved ones.

“O you who believe, fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those who came before, so you may achieve Taqwa.” [2:183]

I would like to, on my behalf and on behalf of IONA, wish you all a very blessed month.

Ramadan is a time to strengthen our connection with our Creator through fasting and nightly prayers. The fasting person has two joyous occasions according to the Prophet (SAW), the first occasion is when the believer breaks his/her fast and the second occasion is when he/she meets his/her Lord.

Aside from fasting, Ramadan is the month of al-Qur’an. *“Ramadan is the month in which the Qur’an was sent down as guidance to humanity.”* [2:185] May the Qur’an be our guide and companion in the early hours of the morning before the pre-dawn meal and throughout the month. Consider praying at least two rak’ahs before fajr commences and the pre-dawn meal ends. Make sure you drink a lot of water to remain hydrated during the long hours of fasting.

Let us, as we fast, remember the poor and the less fortunate ones. Give for the pleasure of Allah (SWT), for the reward of giving in Ramadan is multiplied by many folds. Remember your relatives who are in need among other people and organizations who are worthy of your charity. **Please consider a portion of your zakah or donation to IONA.** You may visit our website for online donations, <http://www.ionamasjid.org/donate>

Let’s embark on this spiritual journey with the purest of intentions, Ibadah solely for the pleasure of Allah (SWT). May Allah (SWT) make it easy on us.

Once again, Ramadan Mubarak to you and your families. May Allah (SWT) bless us, increase us in Iman and Taqwa, and accept our deeds during this great and blessed month, ameen.

April - May 2021						
Ramadan 1442						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		13	14	15	16	17
		1st	2	3	4	5
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
25	26	27	28	29	30	1st
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9	10	11	12	13		
27	28	29	30	1st		

IONA Presents

Nightly Qur’anic Wisdom in Ramadan

Join us Live for the Nightly Qur’anic Wisdom with Imam Mustapha Elturk, Ameer of IONA, as he reflects on different Qur’anic themes.

The episodes will be aired live on YouTube starting the first night of Ramadan, Monday April 12th at 7 PM (EST)

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An open invitation to repentance is issued in the Qur'an. By way of command, Allah (SWT) instructs, "O you who believe! Repent to Allah sincerely" (al-Tahrim, 66:8). The Arabic word for repentance is "tawbah." It is derived from the root word *taba* which literally means *to return*. Anyone who makes *tawbah* is in essence returning back to Allah (SWT) with the intent to mending his/her ways in return for forgiveness. Hence, O believers! Return to your Lord sincerely and remorsefully.

In conjunction with the ayah mentioned above, the Prophet (SAW) informed us of a beautiful supplication that guarantees forgiveness and Paradise. Who would not want to go to Paradise? We all beg for Allah's mercy and hope to be among the dwellers of Paradise. Shaddad Ibn Aws (RAA) shares the prophetic supplication known as "Sayyidul Istighfar" or "the Master Supplication for Forgiveness."

"The Master Supplication for Forgiveness is to say, 'O Allah! You are my Lord! There is no god except You. You created me and I am Your slave, and I shall honor Your covenant and fulfill my promise to You as much as I can. I seek refuge in You from all the evil deeds I have committed. I acknowledge before You all the blessings You have bestowed upon me, and I confess to You all my sins. So forgive me, for nobody can forgive sins except You.'" [sahih al-Bukhari]

The Prophet (SAW) commented, "If anybody recites it during the day with firm faith in it, and dies on the same day before the evening, he will be from the people of Paradise; and if somebody recites it at night with firm faith in it, and dies before the morning, he will be from the people of Paradise."

If one were to sincerely invoke this supplication daily, one is guaranteed paradise. We must realize that it is not the mere uttering of the words that qualifies one admittance to Paradise. It is to be fully conscious of what is being uttered. It is to say it, "with firm faith in it," with absolute certainty that if you are repenting sincerely, Allah will indeed forgive you.

The supplication begins with the statement, "O Allah! You are my Lord (Rubb)." The statement is not only an acknowledgement and recognition of God as our Master but also acceptance. We accept Allah (SWT) as our Lord (Rubb), Master, Sustainer and Nourisher. This constitutes the concept of "Oneness in Authority, (tawheed al-rububiyyah-Lordship)." The second statement "There is no god except You," deals with the concept of "Oneness in Divinity, (tawheed al-uluhiyyah-Godship)." The statement implies that He alone is to be worshipped.

Tawheed al-uluhiyyah-Godship in essence is to single out Allah (SWT) as the only deity in truth worthy of worship and similarly, tawheed al-rububiyyah-Lordship is to single out Allah as the only Master in truth worthy of our obedience. Worship and obedience to God out of love and reverence for Him is the Islamic concept of *Ibadah* or servitude.

The next statement demonstrates the status of humans in relation to their Master, "You created me

and I am Your slave." We acknowledge that our parents are the means of our creation. In truth, it is Allah (SWT) who created us and as we acknowledge this fact we must be reminded that we are owned by Him, hence, we are His slaves. In other words, we are to submit to and obey our Master unconditionally, willingly or unwillingly. True humble slaves of Allah submit to and obey Allah (SWT) out of love for their Creator.

The word slave may denote a negative connotation when used in relationship to humans, however, the title "slave" is the most honored title in the sight of Allah (SWT). Every Prophet and Messenger of Allah was described as a slave of Allah. The first words uttered by Jesus (AS) in his cradle were, "I am the salve of Allah" (Maryam, 19:30). To earn such a title is not easy. One must struggle hard to become a true humble slave of Allah.

After accepting our status with the Creator we confirm, "I shall honor Your covenant and fulfill my promise to You as much as I can." One may inquire, what covenant and promise? The covenant is the heavenly "Covenant of Alast." The spirits of all humans (past, present and future) were present before Allah (SWT) much before the creation of the universe. While assembled like conscripted soldiers, Allah (SWT) then asked, "Am I not Your Lord"? The entire congregation in one voice replied, "Indeed, You are, we bear witness" (al-A'raf, 7:172).

It is noteworthy to know that all humans in this world are being tested on the basis of the great heavenly covenant of Alast. So, when one says, "I shall honor Your covenant," it simply means that Allah (SWT) is my Lord and I shall do my very best to carry out my duties toward my Master while obeying His commands and living a righteous and honorable life.

Similarly, when we affirm, "and fulfill my promise to You," one must be cognizant of the promise he/she is making with Allah (SWT). What is that promise? Believers who perform the daily prayers are reminded of the promise we make with Allah (SWT). In each of the seventeen units (rak'ahs) we perform daily, after praising Allah (SWT), "Praise be to the Lord of the Worlds, the most Merciful, Ever Compassionate, the Owner of the Day of Reckoning," we promise; "You alone we worship (and obey), and to You alone we turn for help" (al-Fatiha, 1:5).

Again, we promise to worship and obey our Lord, Allah (SWT) sincerely and out of love for Him. To be true to one's promise, one must do his/her very best to fulfill the pledge at all times.

We shall always seek help from none other than Allah (SWT), simply because we are certain that Allah (SWT) has power over everything. The Prophet (SAW) taught us to seek Allah's help even if one needs shoe laces. We must be completely dependent on Him.

There is no harm in asking others for help but only when it pertains to matters that belong to this physical



"Praise be to the Lord of the Worlds, the most Merciful, Ever Compassionate, the Owner of the Day of Reckoning," we promise; "You alone we worship (and obey), and to You alone we turn for help"

(al-Fatiha, 1:5)





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Ramadan : The Month of Taqwa (continued)

world. Conscious believers turn to Allah (SWT) for help prior to turning to people because they know that it is Allah who is in charge and it is He who will facilitate for us the means to get helped.

As for matters that deal with the supernatural realm or the unseen, the only source of assistance is Allah (SWT) simply because He alone is the knower of the unseen. The Prophet (SAW) taught us a special dua for such assistance. It is called Dua' al-Istikharah (seeking goodness from Allah). Hence, *"and to You alone we turn for help."*

Therefore we pray, 'I will faithfully and to the best of my ability keep my pledge and promise to You. I shall do my very best to worship and obey You and I will need your help O Allah!'

After re-affirming our promise we seek refuge in Him, *"I seek refuge in You from all the evil deeds I have committed."* As humans who are not immune to sin or evil, each person by his/her own right is a sinner and we seek refuge in Him from the evil of our deeds. As grateful humble slaves of Allah (SWT), we acknowledge all favors and bounties of Allah, *"I acknowledge before You all the blessings You have bestowed upon me."* In other words, I could not have sustained myself without your great bounties. You have given me good health, a family, a job, a car, a house, etc. If we were to count the blessings of Allah (SWT) we would never be able to tally them.

Just as we acknowledge Allah's blessings, we say, *"I confess to You all my sins. So forgive me, for nobody can forgive sins except You."* We must keep in mind that this is a supplication made in private. Who are we going to hide our sins from? Certainly not Allah (SWT), for He knows everything about each and every one of us. Confessing one's sins in private with Allah (SWT) is a sign of humility. With one's head bowed down, remorseful of the sins committed, one begs Allah (SWT), *"O Allah! FORGIVE ME,"* because no one can forgive sins except You. Allah (SWT) is the ultimate and final Judge and only He can pardon.

'O Allah! You are my Lord! There is no god except You. You created me and I am Your slave, and I shall honor Your covenant and fulfill my promise to You as much as I can. I seek refuge in You from all the evil deeds I have committed. I acknowledge before You all the blessings You have bestowed upon me, and I confess to You all my sins. So forgive me, for nobody can forgive sins except You.'

Saying the dua faithfully in the morning and evening with absolute certainty that Allah is listening to us can only increase our chances for Paradise, according to the Prophet (SAW).

What's extraordinary about this dua is that the faithful believer invoking it becomes extremely cautious about his/her actions and deeds performed. One becomes more conscious of the consequences of one's actions and feels compelled to remain on the straight path. Otherwise, saying the dua and acting contrary to the promises made therein is a sign of

hypocrisy. It is only a mere lip service. One may be utterly disappointed to find his/her seat among *"the hypocrites in the lowest depths of Hell, and you will find no one to help them"* (al-Nisa', 4:145).

Sincere repentance is proof of one's faithfulness to Allah (SWT). One can easily verify whether his/her repentance is genuine or not. A believer who meets the five pre-conditions is indeed on the right track. The first condition is for one to acknowledge his/her sins just as mentioned in the dua, *"I confess my sins."* This is the humility part of sincere repentance. One is not being arrogant.

The second condition is regret. One must feel truly sorry and have a sense of remorse and regret in one's heart for the bad and evil deeds committed in the past. The third condition is to ask for forgiveness frequently. One must always ask for forgiveness from his/her Lord for what one committed. The Prophet (SAW) used to say daily 100 times, *"My Lord! Forgive and pardon me, Indeed you are the Oft-Returning with compassion (Tawwab), ever merciful (Rahim)."*

The fourth condition is to leave the sin immediately. Regardless of what type of sin and unto whom it is being committed one must stop sinning immediately. One must do his/her very best to leave sins behind and have deep faith that Allah is going to help. One must not give up.

And finally, the fifth condition is to refrain from returning to the sin. One must make a firm resolve never to return back to the sin. Fulfilling these conditions qualify the believer to receive Allah's Grace and Mercy.

In addition to the good news the Prophet (SAW) informed in the hadith of the "Master Supplication for Forgiveness," Allah (SWT) assures the believers success for their sincerity in returning faithfully back to Him.

"O you who believe! Turn to Allah in sincere repentance. Your Lord may well cancel your bad deeds for you and admit you into Gardens graced with flowing streams, on a Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet or those who have believed with him. With their lights streaming out ahead of them and to their right, they will say, 'Lord, perfect our light for us and forgive us: You have power over everything'" (al-Tahrim, 66:8).

There can be no better time than now while enjoying the blessings of Ramadan to learn, memorize and invoke the dua of "Sayyid al-Istighfar" daily while genuinely migrating to Allah (SWT). Al-Hamdulillah, we have the complete guidance. How can one go wrong?

Ameer Mustapha Elturk





Ramadan - The Month of Giving and Receiving



The month of Ramadan is the best month in the Islamic Calendar, because of the blessings one receives in it, if it is observed correctly. The fasting (siyam) in Ramadan is complemented with prayers (salah). The Qur'an that was revealed in Ramadan is meant to transform us from within into becoming God conscious humble slaves of Allah who are guided to paradise—the peaceful and safe eternal abode of unending bliss.

Fasting in these hot humid summer days for over 17 hours calls for utmost patience (sabr). This is our test from Allah, but as believers, we have to be patient on obedience (sabr 'ala ta'ah). As is well known, reward is proportionate to the level of hardship. Allah says in Surat al-Ra'd, "And those who are steadfast in seeking the favor of their Lord, and pray regularly and spend secretly and openly out of what We have provided them with, and ward off evil with good. Theirs shall be the final abode" (al-Ra'd, 13:22). May Allah make us of the dwellers of paradise and save us from the fire of hell (Ameen).

Ramadan is not only the best time to offer our supererogatory prayers (nawafil), but also the best time to give voluntary charity (sadaqah), which is over and above the obligatory charity (zakah). This is because the rewards for the acts of charity during the month of Ramadan are multiplied manifolds. The love for wealth is inherent in man. The Qur'an alludes to this, "And you have an insatiable love of wealth" (al-Fajr, 89:20). At another place, the Qur'an says, "Alluring unto man is the enjoyment of worldly desires through women, and children, and heaped-up treasures of gold and silver..." (Aal 'Imran, 3:14).

Ramadan comes to help us purify our souls from greed. Believers know and understand that the wealth they possess does not belong to them. It is a trust from Allah and a test to see how best they fulfill the trust they have been entrusted with. Ramadan encourages us to give despite our love and attachment for wealth. According to Ibn 'Abbas (RA), the Prophet (SAW) was the most generous of people, and he was more so during Ramadan. Among the ten great sahaba who were promised the good news of paradise, here in this world (al-ashara al-Imubashshara), all except Ali ibn Talib (RA), were very wealthy individuals. They were very generous, always giving for the sake of Allah, and they all passed the test.

Spending in the way of Allah can be done either at the legal level or at the spiritual level. There is a difference between the two. At the legal level, zakah, which is one of the five pillars of Islam, has to be paid by anyone who is entitled to pay it. It is

to give away 2.5% of one's total savings after meeting one's own and one's family's necessary expenses of food, clothing, housing, transport etc. It is calculated for a year (haul) and paid either in parts over the year or in lump sum.

The institution of zakah keeps wealth from stagnating. Money is put in the market and made to work. The recipients of zakah benefit from it. In this way, while the basic needs of the poor and needy are met, more jobs are created, and the community flourishes. The economic condition of the larger society becomes more vibrant. This divine system of distribution of wealth needs to be institutionalized and implemented. It is unfortunate and sad that there are people among Muslims who say that the income tax paid by them is a substitute for the zakah that they are obliged to pay. A true believer understands that zakah is Allah's right over a stipulated share of his or her wealth.

At the spiritual level, charity is given over and above the zakah. It is not an obligatory duty, but a voluntary action. Just as we offer the Sunnah prayers in addition to the five daily compulsory prayers, likewise, we should of our own will and volition give charity in addition to the zakah. Giving in charity is explained in ayah 215 of Surat al-Baqarah, which says, "They will ask you what they should spend on others. "Say, whatever you give should be for parents, close relatives, orphans, the needy, and travelers. Allah is well aware of whatever good you do" (al-Baqarah, 2:215). According to this ayah, our parents and relatives have more right on us than others. While our parents, wife, and children are not entitled for zakah money because we are responsible for them, our relatives are eligible for the same. However, the wife can give zakah to her husband if he is poor. Allah is well aware of any act of charity that we 2 do. Ayah 219 of Surat al-Baqarah explains charity at the spiritual level. "They will ask you what they should give away. Say, 'Whatever is surplus to your needs" (al-Baqarah, 2:219). Living in North America, there is great opportunity for da'wah work. This needs investment of resources—human as well as financial. To invest one's resources in calling people to Allah is to engage in charity at the spiritual level.

We learn from the Sirah that Tabuk was the last expedition of the Prophet (SAW). He asked the people to help the expedition with whatever they could. It is reported that Abu Bakr (RA) took all his money and household articles and heaped them at the Prophet's feet. "Have you left anything for your children?" asked the Prophet (SAW). Abu Bakr then responded by saying, "Allah and his

"They will ask you what they should spend on others. "Say, whatever you give should be for parents, close relatives, orphans, the needy, and travelers. Allah is well aware of whatever good you do"

(al-Baqarah, 2:215)





Messenger are enough for them.” Companions including Umar ibn Khattab (RA) who had given half his wealth for the expedition were stunned as they realized that whatever they did, they could not outdo Abu Bakr in the field of service to Islam.

Muslims understand that the poor and the needy have a share in their wealth, which can be claimed by the latter by way of right. The Quran says, “And those in whose wealth is a recognized right” (al-Ma’rij, 70:24), and in another place, it says, “And there was a share in their wealth for the beggar and the deprived” (al-Dhariyat, 51:19). We are reminded in ayah 177 of Surat al-Baqarah (ayat al-birr) that righteousness and piety (taqwa) are directly linked with good deeds that include giving to others. “Righteousness is not only that you turn your faces (in prayer) towards east or west; but (true) righteousness- is to believe in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, and the Messengers; to, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the poor, and to travelers and beggars and to set slaves free...” ((al-Baqarah, 2:177). We can see from this ayah that our relatives have a priority over others when it comes to giving in charity, and we should act accordingly.

Spending in the way of Allah, especially during Ramadan, is a highly meritorious act and a lucrative investment. “Those who recite the Book of Allah and establish salah and give of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a transaction that never fail” (Fatir, 35:29). Ramadan is the month when we offer the nightly prayers (tarawih). We listen and follow the recitation of the Book of Allah. Allah is thankful and appreciative of this investment made with Him and compensates the investor profusely with His blessings and bounties in both worlds. “He will give them their full rewards and give them more out of His bounty. He is forgiving and appreciative” (Fatir, 35:30).

Ayah 64 of Surat al-Taghabun tells us, “If you make a goodly loan to Allah He, will multiply it for you and forgive you. Allah is All-Thankful, Most Forbearing.” This means that whatever is spent in the way of Allah should be from lawful (halal) means for according to a hadith, “Allah is pure and accepts only pure.” Even though the Qur’an, by way of parable, mentions the rewards of good deeds to be up to seven hundred times, yet the compensation given by Allah for spending in His cause is incalculable. Allah (SWT) does not restrict His reward. The reward could be manifold over depending upon a person’s intention (niyyah). “Those who spend their wealth for Allah’s cause may be compared to a grain of corn which sprouts into seven ears, with a hundred grains in each ear: for God grants manifold increase to whom He wills; God is infinite and all knowing” (al-Baqarah, 2:261). Intention and sincerity are very important. All acts of charity should be done only to seek the pleasure of Allah (SWT). The Qur’an makes mention of such people who while feeding the poor people say, “We feed you for the sake of Allah alone, we seek neither recompense nor thanks from you” (al-Insan, 76:9).

We are also informed that spending is a source of inner peace and contentment and freedom from fear, sorrow, and grief. “Those who spend their wealth night and day, both privately and publicly, will receive their reward from their Lord. They shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve” (al-Baqarah, 2:274).

However, promise of such reward is only for those who are sincere in their charity and do not taunt, insult, or humiliate the recipients of the charity. “Those who spend their wealth for Allah’s cause and do not follow their charity with taunts and insults shall be rewarded by their Lord; they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve” (alBaqarah, 2:262).

Since spending in the way of Allah is linked with taqwa, it also becomes an expiation and atonement for sins. “Race each other to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the people who have taqwa” (Aal ‘Imran, 3:133). A true believer understands that even if he does not have enough to give and is going through hardship, the way out for him is to spend in the way of Allah. This may sound illogical but there is nothing illogical about the infinite wisdom of Allah. The Prophet (SAW) has asserted that one’s wealth will not be diminished by giving in charity. We are reminded again and again in the Qur’an that Allah (SWT) repays in full whatever one spends in His way. We have in Surat al-Anfal, “Anything you spend in the way of God will be repaid to you in full. You will not be wronged” (al-Anfal, 8:60). And we have in Surat Saba’, “Whatever you spend, He will recompense you for it. He is the best of providers” (Saba’, 34:39). Allah’s bounties and blessings are repaid to those who spend in His way, not necessarily through any form of tangible wealth but in many different ways. A great blessing is to be saved from accidents, calamities and hardships. Another blessing is to be blessed with good health and wellbeing. Having peace, tranquility, and contentment in one’s life are other forms of divine blessings.

The virtue of giving, especially during Ramadan, can hardly be over emphasized. It is self-evident from numerous ayat of the Qur’an and traditions of the Prophet (SAW). One such tradition says, “Save yourself from Hell-fire even by giving half a date.” Another one says, “Verily, Allah is generous and He loves generosity. He loves nobility of character and He detests vanity.”
3 Indeed, the month of Ramadan is the month of giving and receiving. Righteous believers are steadfast in seeking the favor of their Lord. They pray regularly and spend secretly and openly out of what they have been provided with. They ward off evil with good. While they do all this on a regular basis, they do so more consciously during the month of Ramadan. And in return, they are promised the eternal abode of paradise. “And those who exercise patience to gain the pleasure of Allah, who are steadfast in prayer, who spend for the cause of Allah privately and in public, and who keep away evil with good will have the eternal abode” (alRa’d, 13:22). May Allah make us of the dwellers of paradise and save us from the fire of hell (Ameen).



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ORGANIZATION THROUGH QUR'AN AND SUNNAH

Abu Malik at-Ash'ari (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: Cleanliness is half of faith (Muslim) Surely Allah loves those who are most repenting, and loves those who keep themselves pure and clean. (Baqarah:222)

Ibn Al-Hanzaliyyah said to Abud-Darda (May Allah be pleased with both) in a long narration that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, while coming back from an expedition: "You are returning to your brothers, so set your saddles and clothes in order so that you look tidy and graceful. Allah hates untidiness." (Abu Dawud)

Purification and cleanliness are all highly regarded in our deen to the point that it has been associated with our faith. Innate signs can even be observed in the smallest of creations. For example, the songbird is known for hauling chick 'diapers' away from its nest, as well as uneaten foods and broken eggshells. While building nests, puffins designate toilet areas in such a way that it protects the feathers of their young from becoming soiled. Ants quickly remove the dead to prevent disease spreading to other ants. In nature, this may be instinctive; while for some of us, it may be quite the battle. The following are tips on how we can bring organization into our homes:

Simplicity:

Prophet ﷺ said: The believer is **simple** and generous (Sunan Abu Dawood). One of the first ways to bring simplicity in our homes is to remove unused items. Statistics show that on average we only use 20% of the items in our households. If we remove the items we do not use, there's less to organize overall.

There are also physiological health benefits to having a simple, organized environment as well. Researchers from the Institute of Neuroscience at Princeton University conducted a study in which brain activity was measured using an MRI machine while participants were asked to focus on a task with and without distractive scenes. Results indicated that clutter can hinder the brain's ability to process information effectively. The authors noted that those who have trouble concentrating or children who struggle to complete tasks, may be experiencing a sensory overload and may benefit from having an organized environment.

Not only is it important to have simplicity and organization in our homes, we also need to extend this to our masjids. This begins with teaching our children at home the importance of keeping our surroundings clean. Every year during Ramadan, almost all masjids around the world suffer from the shoe throwing pandemic as well as

leaving bathrooms in disarray, and leaving a mess after suhoor. If we do not teach our kids this important quality of the deen, how will they learn to have respect of order and cleanliness in the House of Allah SWT? Both boys and girls should be taught from a young age to participate in household chores. Give them the responsibility of keeping shoes in order, helping with the dishes, vacuuming, and cleaning the bathrooms. Often these chores are viewed as jobs for the servant. It is quite the contrary, this was the sunnah of our beloved Prophet (ﷺ). These practices bring humility, the ability to serve parents and the community, as well as confidence. All of the prophets were shepherds as it is reported in Bukhari:

"Allah did not send any prophet but that he cared for sheep." The companions asked, "And you as well?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Yes. I was a shepherd with a modest wage on behalf of the people of Mecca."

Taking care of animals also entails removing the waste. It was not the servants who took care of this, the prophets themselves did.

Get Help from Others

For some of us, decluttering is a difficult task which is often linked to having an overwhelming attachment to items. Dr. Joseph Ferrari, Professor of Psychology at DePaul University in Chicago who studies the relationship between stress and clutter, suggests enlisting the help of others. He says:

"If you're going to declutter, don't touch the item. Don't pick it up. Have somebody else hold the pair of black pants and say, 'Do you need this?' Once you touch the item, you are less likely to get rid of it."

He also further recommends abstaining from acquiring more items as most of the items we acquire fulfill a want rather than a need. As believers we must be very careful to avoid having excessive "stuff", especially if we have debts to pay and we are purchasing unnecessary items. We take debts very lightly, while in fact it is a very serious matter for which we will be held accountable. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not offer the funeral prayer for one who had died with a debt of two dinars. (Musnad Ahmad).

Taking Care of Items Right Away

Research has shown that there is an association between clutter and procrastination. One explanation for this is that for many, decluttering can be an unpleasant experience which can then lead to a tendency to procrastinate. Make a conscious effort to overcome the urge to toss something for later and, instead, take a few extra minutes to put



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Sisters Corner (Continued)

away items in their proper place. With time, household organization will be less overwhelming. For major decluttering, try to set a whole weekend dedicated to decluttering. The longer it takes to declutter, the likelihood of procrastination increases. For items that have sentimental value and make it difficult to part with, such as children's art projects, take a picture and toss the project.

Easy Guaranteed Help Through Sunnah

One of the most underutilized actions that has tremendous benefits and only takes a few minutes is the dhikr that was shared with Fatima (radiyAllahu anha). When she related her fatigue and requested a servant, the Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

Shall I not tell you of something that is better for you than that? When you go to sleep, say Subhaan Allaah thirty-three times, Al-hamdu Lillah thirty-three times, and Allaahu Akbar thirty four times. (Bukhari)

Out of all the actions that have been listed above, this should be the first, most important step that should be taken. Scholars have written that this dhikr, through the immense blessing of Allah SWT, either gives a person the energy and strength to complete the task that would require the help of two or it makes the work easy for that person. After every fard salah, recite this dhikr with the intention of seeking help and ease and you are guaranteed the help of Allah SWT.

There is an incident recorded in Sunan Abi Dawud of some people of Iraq who were poor, wore woolen clothes, they had a small masjid, and used to do laborious work. The foul stench of perspiration would be so heavy in the air that it would bother others. The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered them to bathe on Fridays and to anoint with the best perfume and oil they had. Allah SWT blessed that community with wealth, clothes that were not woolen, vastness in their masjid, and ease in their work. The foul order

disappeared as well. Meaning, by taking out time from their hard work to bathe and perfume for the sake of Allah SWT, they gained the blessing of wealth and ease.

Alhamdulillah, our deen has so many practical ways to approach and organize life, if we make even a small effort, inshaAllah we'll see immense benefit in this life and the next.

Sr.Samreen Ahmed

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Truthfulness of a Young Boy

Abdul Qadir Jilani was an eminent Islamic scholar born in 11th Century CE, Persia. Early stories of Abdul Qadir Jilani describe him as a youth with a strong inclination for learning with a pious mother who encouraged her son to acquire knowledge. The following incident is narrated in a number of biographies of Abdul Qadir Jilani.

At the age of eighteen he asked permission from his mother to travel to Baghdad to pursue his education. Baghdad then was the hub of political, commercial and cultural activity, and the center of world learning.

On hearing this his mother was more than happy to send her son off to follow the path of higher scholarship. It was for such a purpose she had saved forty gold coins for Abdul Qadir. As she prepared supplies for his journey she sewed the coins into the lining of his coat for safekeeping. Before Abdul Qadir joined the caravan to travel to Baghdad, her parting advice to her son was, "Whenever you speak, speak the truth. Remember that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, 'Truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise...' and the Quran tells us "O you who believe! Be careful of your duty to God, and be with the truthful." (Quran 9:119)

In route to Baghdad the caravan was assaulted by a band of robbers. As the thugs began to extract all the valuables from the travelers, one of the robbers started to search Abdul Qadir's belongings. While searching, the robber asked Abdul Qadir, "Do you have anything valuable?"

Abdul Qadir calmly replied, "Yes."

On hearing this the robber frantically searched further but could not find anything. The robber took Abdul Qadir to his leader and said, "This boy says he has valuables but I cannot find anything on him." The leader of the robbers asked Abdul Qadir, "Are you hiding any valuables?"

Again Abdul Qadir answered, "Yes."

The robber asked, "What are you hiding?"

Abdul Qadir replied, "Forty Gold Coins."

Upon further searching the robber discovered the coins hidden in the lining of

Abdul Qadir's coat. Among all the chaos and panic stricken travelers Abdul Qadir's unfrazzled demeanor and admitting the valuables he was hiding was perplexing to the robber. The robber was now curious to know more about this boy who was not afraid and insisted on speaking the truth. The robber asked, "What is your name and where do you come from?"

He got a reply, "My name is Abdul Qadir and I come from the province of Jilan in Persia."

"Where are you going?"

"I am going to Baghdad."

"What do you plan to do in Baghdad?"

"I want to study with the greatest scholars to gain knowledge."

"Why didn't you hide the truth and keep your gold coins safe from us?"

Abdul Qadir related the advice his mother gave him and the directive of the Prophet and the Quran to always speak the truth. On hearing this the robber was overcome with remorse and exclaimed to his companions, "This young boy is fearless and has an unshakable faith in God. He has the courage to stand up against people like us. Indeed his mother has taught him wisely and he is a true example of being a Muslim." Holding his head in shame, tears started to roll down his face. He embraced Abdul Qadir and asked for his forgiveness. Abdul Qadir responded, "You only need to pray to God and ask for forgiveness and guidance. God willing you will amend your ways."

On hearing this the leader of the robbers told his henchmen to return everything that was taken from the travelers. Then he cried out, "O God this young boy has shown us the straight path. Please forgive us and guide us to the right way." This is how a simple moral value of truthfulness thought by a mother to a young boy affected a band of robbers to change their lives. Abdul Qadir Jilani went on to become a great scholar and teacher of Islamic jurisprudence.

By Majd Arbil. The story is originally told in the book of Irsyadul 'Ibad by Shaykh Zainuddin bin Abdul' Aziz al-Malibari, quoting the story of al-Yafi'i, from Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Muqatil, from Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani. (Mahbib)
Courtesy of: <https://islamcan.com/islamic-stories/truthfulness-of-a-young-boy.shtml>



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“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts)”
(al-Noor, 14:30-31)

Islam & Watching TV

The issue of watching TV is not free from numerous reservations from a shar'i point of view, such as uncovering 'awraat, listening to music, spreading corrupt beliefs and calling for imitation of the kuffaar. Allaah has commanded us to lower our gaze, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts)" [al-Noor 24:30-31].

Since lowering the gaze is the basis of protecting the private parts, it is mentioned first. Allaah has made the eyes the reflection of the heart: if a person lowers his gaze, the desire in his heart will be reduced, but if a person looks and stares, the desire in his heart will be provoked.

In Saheeh Muslim (1218) it is reported that Al-Fadl ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) was riding behind the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) on the Day of Sacrifice (Yawm al-Nahr) from Muzdalifah to Mina, when some women riding on camel-borne sedan chairs passed by. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) turned his [al-Fadl's] head away. This was prevention and denunciation through action, for if looking were permissible he would have approved of what he did.

The eye can sin by looking and that this is its zinaa. This is a refutation to those who say that looking is allowed in all circumstances.

It was also reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "O 'Ali, do not follow a look with a second, for the first look is allowable but not the second."

A look has the same effect on the heart as an arrow has on its victim. If it does not kill him, it will wound him. It is like a spark of fire in dried grass; if it does not burn all of it, it will still burn some of it. May Allaah have mercy on the one who said:

"Everything starts with a look, and big fires start from little sparks.

How often has a heart been dealt a fatal blow like

that of an arrow, with no need for a bow.

As long as a man's eyes are looking around, looking into the eyes of others, he is in a state of danger.

His eye delights in that which could destroy his heart. The joy that may lead to harm is not welcome."

Hence Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in al-Fataawa 3/227:

With regard to television, it is a dangerous device and its harmful effects are very great, like those of the cinema, or even worse. We know from the research that has been written about it and from the words of experts in Arab countries and elsewhere enough to indicate that it is dangerous and very harmful to Islamic beliefs ('aqeedah), morals and the state of society. This is because it includes the presentation of bad morals, tempting scenes, immoral pictures, semi-nakedness, destructive speech, and Kufr. It encourages imitation of their conduct and ways of dressing, respect for their leaders, neglect of Islamic conduct and ways of dressing, and looking down on the scholars and heroes of Islam. It damages their image by portraying them in an off-putting manner that makes people despise them and ignore them. It shows people how to cheat, steal, hatch plots and commit acts of violence against others. Undoubtedly anything that produces so many bad results should be stopped and shunned, and we have to close all the doors that could lead to it. If some of our brothers denounce it and speak out against it, we cannot blame them, because this is a part of sincerity towards Allaah and towards other people.

Whoever thinks that this device (TV) can be free of these evils and can be used only for good purposes if it is censored properly is exaggerating and is making a big mistake, because the censor may miss things and most people nowadays want to imitate the foreigners. It is very rare to find censors who are doing their job properly, especially nowadays when most people are only interested in time-wasting entertainment and things that turn people away from true guidance. Reality bears witness to that.

We ask Allaah to keep us safe from all evil for He is the Most Generous.

Courtesy to: <https://www.islamcan.com/youth/islam--watching-tv.shtml>





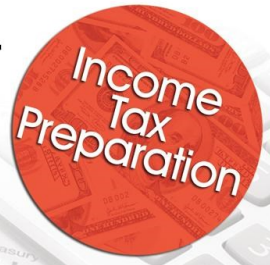
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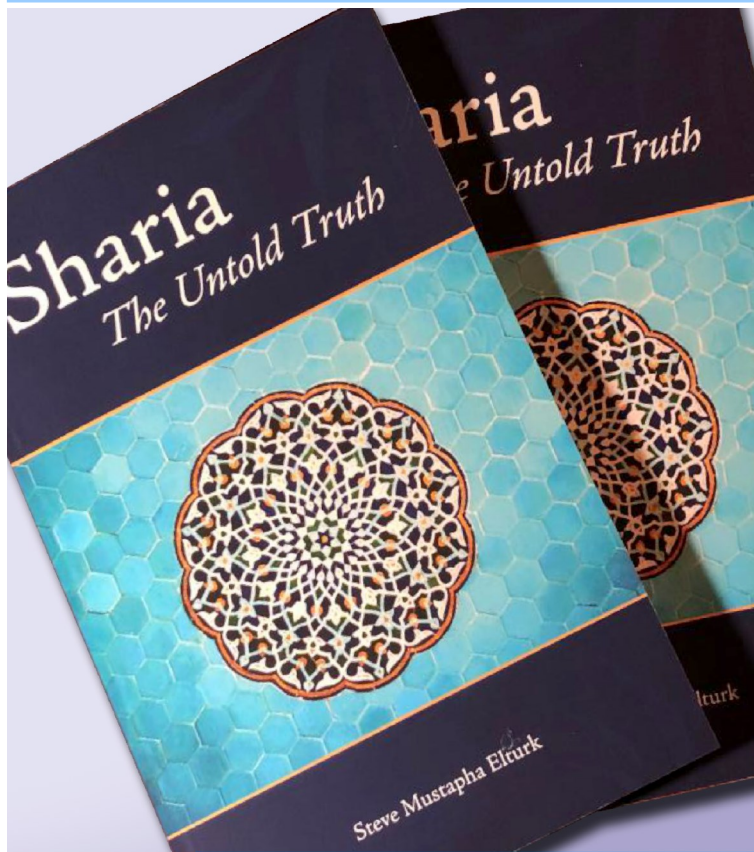


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Agenda



Week 1 & 2

Introduction to Data Science, Data Science life cycle, Data Science Methodologies, & Decision Management



Week 3 & 4

Data understanding, Data Exploring, Data Visualization, Statistical Analysis & Descriptive Analysis



Week 5 & 6

Python crash course, Data Quality Auditing, Data Conversion & Transformation



Week 7 & 8

Introduction to Machine Learning, Decision Tree & Logistic Regression



Week 9 & 10

Model Evaluation, Comparison, optimization & Deployment with Flask

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IONA Masjid - Salah and Iqama Timings for Ramadan (April-May) 2021

DATE	Imsak ~	Fajr	Iqama	Sunrise	Zuhr	Iqama	Asr-S*	Asr-H*	Iqama	Maghrib	Azan	Isha	Iqama
Tue 13 1	5:14	5:19	5:50	6:55	1:38	2:00	5:16	6:14	6:45	8:14	8:19	9:27	9:45
Wed 14 2	5:13	5:18	5:50	6:53	1:38	2:00	5:16	6:14	6:45	8:15	8:20	9:28	9:45
Thu 15 3	5:11	5:16	5:50	6:52	1:37	2:00	5:16	6:15	6:45	8:17	8:22	9:29	9:45
Fri 16 4	5:09	5:14	5:50	6:50	1:37	2:00	5:17	6:16	6:45	8:18	8:23	9:30	9:45
Sat 17 5	5:07	5:12	5:50	6:48	1:37	2:00	5:17	6:16	6:45	8:19	8:24	9:31	9:45
Sun 18 6	5:05	5:10	5:50	6:47	1:37	2:00	5:18	6:17	6:45	8:20	8:25	9:32	9:45
Mon 19 7	5:03	5:08	5:40	6:45	1:36	2:00	5:18	6:18	6:45	8:21	8:26	9:33	9:45
Tue 20 8	5:02	5:07	5:40	6:44	1:36	2:00	5:18	6:19	6:45	8:22	8:27	9:34	9:45
Wed 21 9	5:00	5:05	5:40	6:42	1:36	2:00	5:19	6:19	6:45	8:23	8:28	9:34	9:45
Thu 22 10	4:58	5:03	5:40	6:41	1:36	2:00	5:19	6:20	6:45	8:25	8:30	9:35	9:45
Fri 23 11	4:56	5:01	5:40	6:39	1:36	2:00	5:19	6:21	6:45	8:26	8:31	9:36	10:00
Sat 24 12	4:55	5:00	5:40	6:37	1:35	2:00	5:20	6:21	6:45	8:27	8:32	9:37	10:00
Sun 25 13	4:53	4:58	5:30	6:36	1:35	2:00	5:20	6:22	6:45	8:28	8:33	9:38	10:00
Mon 26 14	4:51	4:56	5:30	6:35	1:35	2:00	5:21	6:23	6:45	8:29	8:34	9:39	10:00
Tue 27 15	4:49	4:54	5:30	6:33	1:35	2:00	5:21	6:23	6:45	8:30	8:35	9:40	10:00
Wed 28 16	4:47	4:53	5:30	6:32	1:35	2:00	5:21	6:24	6:45	8:31	8:36	9:41	10:00
Thu 29 17	4:56	4:51	5:30	6:30	1:35	2:00	5:22	6:25	6:45	8:32	8:37	9:42	10:00
Fri 30 18	4:44	4:49	5:30	6:29	1:34	2:00	5:22	6:25	6:45	8:34	8:39	9:43	10:00
Sat 1 19	4:43	4:48	5:20	6:27	1:34	2:00	5:22	6:26	6:45	8:35	8:40	9:44	10:00
Sun 2 #20	4:41	4:46	5:20	6:26	1:34	2:00	5:23	6:27	6:45	8:36	8:41	9:45	10:00
Mon 3 21	4:40	4:45	5:20	6:25	1:34	2:00	5:23	6:27	6:45	8:37	8:42	9:46	10:10
Tue 4 22	4:38	4:43	5:20	6:23	1:34	2:00	5:23	6:28	6:45	8:38	8:43	9:47	10:10
Wed 5 23	4:37	4:42	5:20	6:22	1:34	2:00	5:24	6:29	6:45	8:39	8:44	9:47	10:10
Thu 6 24	4:35	4:40	5:20	6:21	1:34	2:00	5:24	6:29	6:45	8:40	8:45	9:48	10:10
Fri 7 25	4:34	4:39	5:10	6:20	1:34	2:00	5:24	6:30	6:45	8:41	8:46	9:49	10:10
Sat 8 26	4:32	4:37	5:10	6:18	1:34	2:00	5:25	6:30	6:45	8:42	8:47	9:51	10:10
Sun 9 27	4:31	4:36	5:10	6:17	1:34	2:00	5:25	6:31	6:45	8:44	8:49	9:52	10:10
Mon 10 28	4:29	4:34	5:10	6:16	1:34	2:00	5:25	6:32	6:45	8:45	8:50	9:53	10:10
Tue 11 29	4:28	4:33	5:10	6:15	1:34	2:00	5:26	6:32	6:45	8:46	8:51	9:55	10:10
Wed 12 30	4:27	4:32	5:10	6:14	1:33	2:00	5:26	6:33	6:45	8:47	8:52	9:56	10:10
Thu 13 1	Eid Mubarak	4:30	5:30	6:13	1:33	2:00	5:26	6:34	6:45	8:48	8:53	9:57	10:10

~ Imsak = Sahur Ends | * S = Shafi'i, H = Hanafi | # First Night of I'tikaf

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- Taraweeh will be limited to **Eight (8)** rakat only followed by witr Salah
- Please make **wudu** before coming to the masjid
- **Masks** MUST be worn all the time while in the masjid
- Please bring your prayer rug
- Absolutely **No children** under the age of 12
- **Elderly** and **sick** are to pray at home
- **No iftar dinners** or food is allowed
- **Sisters are welcome** with the same guidelines

For your safety and others, please follow these rules. Jazaka Allah Khair

Have a Very Blessed Ramadan