

The Minaret
Volume XI, Issue II
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Islam has been global longer than the iPhone! Check out our newest edition to the Minaret, "Islam around the World!"



*Those who are thankful got it down on paper.
We call it the Shuker Rush!*



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"The Stony Brook Minaret" is dedicated to expressing the views, concerns, and ideas of Muslims living in America and especially in the Stony Brook community. It seeks to promote and achieve community empowerment and the global success of Muslims by instilling the Ummah with the spirit of Worship, the love of Allah (SWT) and the example of Muhammad (SAWS). It also serves to correct the mainstream media's misinformation about Islam and Muslims and to provide non-Muslims with accurate information about Islam.

The views expressed in letters, articles, cartoons, and advertisements do not necessarily reflect those of The Stony Brook Minaret staff, or the Muslim Students Association at Stony Brook University.

Note: We have decided to include Arabic du'as & the name of Allah in this issue of the Minaret, so please treat this newsletter with due respect.

STATE OF THE MSA

Adam Ranginwala, MSA Vice President

Bismillah. Alhamdulillah As Salatu was Salam alaa Rasulillah SalAllahu alyhi wasalam

Inna mal amalu bi alniyaa - Certainly actions are according to intentions. This is one of the *few* hadith of our Prophet (S) narrated by Umar bin al Khattab (R) and *the first* hadith in Imam al Bukhari's Sahih. For many of us, we have a copy of Sahih Bukhari, the first most authentic book of Islam after the Quran, on our bookshelves placed neatly next to the copy of the Quran. But have you ever asked yourself, flipping over the front cover of the text, why Imam al Bukhari placed this specific hadith as the opening of the book? Could Bukhari have just randomly compiled the +2500 ahadith and *this* hadith by chance ended up in the front. Of course not! There were tremendous and awesome amounts of wisdom in placing this powerful hadith as the opening.

Seemingly, this hadith has nothing to do with what the first chapter of the book is entitled, "Revelation." In reality however, Bukhari is reminding the reader to check yourself before starting your study of hadith. Are you doing this for the sake of Allah alone? Are you seeking this knowledge to please Allah or are you doing so in order to be called a person of knowledge or piety?

"Check yourself before you wreck yourself." Check your intentions before doing **anything**. Ask yourself: Why do you want to study Medicine? Engineering? Political Science? Why are you getting up in the morning to pray Fajr? Why do you follow the balcony (and now Court View Lounge) crowd to the Prayer Room at Maghrib time? Are you joining the crowd in order not to be an outcast or are you doing these actions *mukhlisal lahudeen-sincerely* for Allah's sake alone. Your intentions for everything must have the pursuit of Allah's pleasure at the end of it. If it does not, "Check yourself before you wreck yourself." When you have the wrong intentions you will have to face serious consequences on the Day of Judgement.

"O mankind! Be conscious of your Lord and fear a Day when no father will be able to save his son, nor will a son be able to save avail his father. Certainly, the promise of Allah is truth, so do not let the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver (Satan)."

-Surah Luqman 33

The **only thing** which will benefit us on the Day of Judgment will be our actions which were done with pure, sincere intentions. Anything else will be harmful for us. If you truly make Allah the end goal for all your actions you will never have any grief. Allah will take care of you and will take away any pain or worry you have. Keeping up on good deeds will cause Allah to love you, and when Allah loves one of his servants, "I (Allah) become his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. If he asked [something]

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR *Chaplain*

Some thoughts and reflections...

Spending in the Way of Allah

"Who is he that will loan to Allah a beautiful Loan? For (Allah) will increase it manifold to his credit and he will have (besides) a liberal reward." {57:10}

"For those who give in Charity, men and women, and loan to Allah a Beautiful Loan, it shall be increased manifold (to their credit) and they shall have (besides) a liberal reward." {57:18}

"The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it groweth seven ears, and each ear hath a hundred grains. Allah giveth manifold increase to whom He pleaseth; and Allah careth for all and He knoweth all things." {2:261}

Mercy

"We have sent you (Oh Muhammad) as mercy to mankind"

"Seest thou one who denies this judgment (to come) and this man is then further described as then such is the man who repulses the orphan (with harshness) and encourages not the feeding of the indigent" {107:1-3}

"My mercy encompasses everything" **Hadith**

"My mercy supersedes my anger" **Hadith**

"To spend of your substance, out of love for him, for your Kin" {2:177}

"And spend something in charity out of your substance which we have bestowed on you" {63:10}

"When your brother is out of your sight mention him as you would like him to mention you when you are out of his sight"

Sufyan thawri

"Sincerity means that one does not seek recompense for what one has done" **Abu Bakr (radi Allahu anhu)**

"He who does not thank people does not thank Allah."

"Patience none shall receive it (paradise) except those who are patient and none shall attain except those with a good chance."

Forgiveness

"Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; but turn away from the ignorant." {7:199}

Humbleness

"Allah does not love those who are vain and arrogant."

"Prophet (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) said a person cannot enter paradise when an atom weight of arrogance in his heart."

"Righteousness is good morality and wrongdoing is what wavers in your heart and you do not want people to know about."

Love

"For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean." {2:222}

"Allah shall bring a people whom he will love and they will love him" {5:54}

"None of you believe unless you love for your brother what you love for yourself." **Hadith**

In this issue, I just wanted to share the words of Allah (swt) along with a few words of wisdom. We should remember the story of Prophet Ismael (alayhi salaam). When Allah (swt) tested him, commanding the Prophet to give up his son for sacrifice. Prophet Ismael (alayhi salaam) put his trust in his Lord and submitted to the will of Allah (swt). And the moment he completely surrendered to the will of Allah (swt), he was rewarded. Allah (swt) saved Sayedna Ismael (alayhi salaam) and relieved Sayedna Ibrahim (alayhi salaam) from his painstaking test. They were both rewarded for their faith and servitude, and were then highly respected amongst all of mankind. They were revered for building the Kabah, where the revelation of Islam was established, and may Allah (swt) be pleased with them both. Peace be upon you all. With your pens in your hand and your exploring minds, keep in mind that you must keep Allah (swt) in your thoughts at all times. May we love our fellow brothers and sisters for His sake. May our lives be filled with peace and harmony. May our faith be strong and our hands extend to one another with acceptance and tolerance. May the love of Allah (swt) bless us every day.

Sanaa Nadim

State of the MSA

Adam Ranginwala, MSA Vice President

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from Me, I would surely give it to him....” (Sahih al Bukhari). Your intentions will lead to good deeds which will make Allah love you and be pleased with you. Allah will become our hearing, our seeing, in everything we do we will have Allah in mind and this will only increase Allah’s love for us.

Yaa Allah! Listener and answerer of duas! Make our intentions for your sake alone, for you pleasure alone! Protect and shield us from shaytaan’s whispers and save us from arrogance, showing off and hypocrisy. Oh Allah! Only You and I know what my true intentions are and so if my intentions are not for Your sake alone, help me to realize and change this. Yaa al Ghafoor al Raheem forgive our sins because certainly we are sinners! Put life back into the soil of Somalia and ease their suffering. Oh Allah! Put our heart on the deen and make us strong in faith and will! Make the best and most easy day of my life the Day of Judgment and give us all a good end! Oh Allah pour down your blessings and favors upon this MSA and this Ummah! Ameen!
Thumma Ameen!

“Check yourself before you wreck yourself.” -Iman Suhaib Webb

Why Do I Love You?

By Gareth Bryant

Some would consider me the fool because I love You.
It’s hard for them to understand that loving You is true.
Those who believe and say that You do not exist, mock me because I love You.
They’re only damning themselves for not acknowledging You, if they only knew.
You are the one who gives me life, as well as relief after all my strife.
You shaped my body & made my intellect to be as sharp as a knife.
Oh, Allah...I love no one more than You!!!
You are the reason for all of the good I do.
Oh, Allah...You have honored me, by guiding me to Islam!!!
The way of truth, the only true salvation, not invented by man.
Oh, Allah...you have given me mercy that I don’t even deserve!!!
I been sinful & ungrateful; yet, my life you’ve chosen to preserve.
Oh, Allah...I love no one more than You!!!
You are the reason for all of the good I do.
Your kindness is boundless, Your bounties glamorous.
Without You, I am simply left misguided and friendless.
It is You, Oh Allah, who protect me from all adversity!!!
There’s no god, except You; You alone possess divinity.
Oh, Allah...I love no one more than You!!!
You are the reason for all of the good I do.
You see every one of my sins; yet, instead of punishment, choose to overlook my evil.
Never will there be one who forgives like You; Your dispense of mercy has no equal.

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Setting the Standard

By Reem Zobny

We are reminded again and again to keep company that brings us to the remembrance of Allah (swt) and to avoid company that takes us away from it, but how often do we reflect on the true weight of this advice? We may recognize the impact our companions have on our actions and even on our words, but do we recognize the impact they have on our thoughts? What about our hearts? And we neglect the underlying problem, the reason for the change in our actions, that is, the standards we let others set for ourselves. Above our actions and our speech, one of the most dangerous things we can take from our companions is their attitude, often an attitude of complacency. And we let the actions of others dictate our own potential.

Coming to a university like Stony Brook, many of us are blessed with the opportunity to be in the presence of more Muslims than ever before and with this amazing new gift we begin to see the wide range of Muslims that make up our community. While some struggle to pray, others struggle to stop listening to music, and yet others struggle to memorize their final Juz of the Quran. This struggle, however seemingly impressive or seemingly simple it may be to you, is what makes them most beautiful. But everyone here is on his or her own journey and letting how far he or she gets on their own path dictate where you go on yours, is a mistake. Decide for yourself. Remember, what's right for others is not necessarily right for you.

Things we once knew to be displeasing to our Lord may become the norm, but that does not make them any more acceptable or less grievous. It's thinking like this that sets us all up for failure, regardless of how far along we are on our spiritual journey. While having examples in our companions is important, we were already given the ultimate example - that of our beloved Prophet (peace be upon him). Until our expectations for ourselves align with what he wanted for this Ummah, we will not succeed.

We have all heard people say things along the lines of, "I know that it's the right thing to do but I'm just not ready yet," or "I'm just not at that stage in my life yet." Says who? Your family can believe in you, your friends can believe in you, but nothing is going to change until you believe it for yourself. Let go of the person you know yourself to be and embrace the one you have the ability to become. Verily, never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves [Quran 13:11]. This change does not always announce itself dramatically and truthfully; we may never feel "ready," but that does not mean that we are not. Not only do we underestimate our own strength, we underestimate the mercy and the help we have in Allah. "...And if you come to Me walking, I will come to you running." [Hadith Qudsi 15]. If you do something purely for the sake of Allah, know that your struggle will never go unnoticed by Him and He will *never* leave you to fend for yourself.

Above all, do not let what other people decide is okay, be okay for you. A teacher and friend once shared a beautiful piece of advice; she said that if we were ever unsure if we should be doing something, we should ask ourselves how we would feel if our local Imam walked through the door. What about our mother? What about our beloved Rasulallah (pbuh)? Could we still partake in that action? Would we still be at that café late at night? Would we still be laughing at those crude jokes in the movie theater? Would we still speak about others in the same manner? And surely these are only people; the One we should ultimately be concerned with pleasing and the One who *is* watching us, is Allah, the Most High. Think of Allah and know that He is there. The people you are with may not see anything wrong with the situation, and maybe for them, they truly are not at a level of understanding to *see* what is wrong. But we will not be held accountable according to their level of understanding, we will be held accountable according to our own and we will be the ones asked to explain our actions on that Day when we do not have anyone to blame but ourselves.

The human being was designed differently from the rest of creation, and in Allah's (swt) most beautiful design, we were given a will of our own. It is because of this ability to choose, that we will sometimes go astray, but it is also because of this ability that we are given the opportunity to choose for Allah (swt), to put aside our own pleasure and do that which is most pleasing to the One who has given us everything. So let us believe in our ability to choose. Let us choose that which is better and that which is most beloved to our Creator and not to His creation. Let us choose for the One who has given us the ability to choose.

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“Those who have mercy will receive the mercy of the Most Merciful. Have mercy on those who are on earth, the One in heaven will have mercy on you.” (Tirmidhi)

Shukr Rush was created as a reminder for us to have faith in one another. It is so often that we can't help but concentrate on the negative things around us and disregard the good in everyone. Shukr Rush is a means through which to allow us the opportunity to read about the good in the Muslims, and on a grander scale, humanity around us. This will be a collection of short, anonymous anecdotes that help in reminding us to be grateful, for that is the meaning of Shukr.

As I attempted to walk out of Administration, it began to pour. The world outside the glass doors became drenched in gray and the people walking about scattered every which way. Umbrellas burst into the air in all directions and I slowly pressed myself against the wall groping my bag for the umbrella which I knew I had left in my room. So I stood, waiting, watching as others strode out into the haze, the thought of sprinting to the library in my mind. A sister walked up to the doors. She glanced outside in a fearful manner and took a step back. I had seen her around before and noted that she seemed to have a slight disability which hampered her stride. After a few minutes of standing around, I began a light conversation. She had also forgotten her umbrella but unlike me, she was in a rush. We bantered for some time and all the while I noticed her apprehensive peeks toward her watch as well as the doors. Finally I decided staying dry really wasn't worth much at the moment and asked if she wanted to try and make a quick getaway to the library together.

We stepped out into the rain, getting drenched to the bone instantly. She swayed and walked a few paces behind and repeatedly told me to make a run for it and go on without her. Yet I couldn't move any quicker, some part of me kept me at her elbow. As we drew closer to the library, I felt the rain pound harder on my back. I could barely see my path but I had no intention of leaving her and walking ahead. I kept up our conversation and tried my best to help her along when out of the blue the rain stopped tapping my head. As I looked around I spotted a brother's smiling face as he held his umbrella over all three of our heads. He greeted us and said, "I felt like joining the party, that way we can all get drenched together."

We always hear a little kindness can go a long way. Yet lately, it seems that we rarely feel it. It doesn't take much to help out someone. As people and especially as Muslims we should always consider stretching out a hand to another, not for ourselves, but for the sake of Allah (swt) and for all we know, we may inspire our fellow brethren to do the same.



Weak is the Seeker

By Fawzia Syed

"...Weak is the seeker and that which He seeks." - Surah al Hajj, ayah 73

In this verse of the Quran, God paints a picture of our lives. He tells us that we, humans, are seekers and that what we seek in this world is weak. All of it is weak, *in comparison to God*. If we are not seeking Him, isn't all else lowly in comparison? **And** the fact that what we seek is so weak and pathetic, so too are we - *the seekers*. *Weak is the seeker and that which he seeks*.

This is our perpetual state in this world: one of seeking and one of weakness. For it seems that no matter how many reminders come to us, we remain heedless. We continue to seek this world and its adornment. Not God. This world is all that we ever think about. Even though we know this world is but a few seconds compared to eternity. Think over *eternity* and what it means. Think over the 60-70 years you *may* live in this world, by God's will, and compare it to eternity.

"...For the life of this world is nothing but a provision of vanities." - Surah ali 'Imran, ayah 185

Where are you going? What are you running towards? What are you seeking **now**?
If you have never taken a moment to stop and ask yourself this, please do. Please do, right now.
Ask yourself what it is you want in this world. What it is you desire?
And then--if you haven't done so yet-- give it a Divine purpose. Connect it to God.

"Whatever is for God, lasts and stays connected, and whatever is for other than Him, is cut off and separated."

If you are seeking a college degree, remember, it will do you no good once you leave this Earth. In your grave, a degree will simply be a piece of paper you received-- nothing more. Unless you connected it to God. Unless somehow you sought Him through it. *Maybe* this piece of paper will weigh more than just a piece of paper for you. *Maybe* you sought His pleasure through this piece of paper, because you knew it would please your parents. (The pleasure of God, is in the pleasure of your parents.) *Maybe* you sought His pleasure through this piece of paper, because you knew it would allow you to serve His creation. *Maybe* you sought His pleasure through this piece of paper, because you knew it would be your livelihood and your future family's livelihood. So whatever it is you are seeking now, connect it to God. Because really, if you seek anything else, will it last? I mean, will it last after your 60 years are up?

"All that is on the Earth will perish, except for the Face of your Lord..." Surah Rahman, ayah 27.

As long as you are not seeking God, you are weak; know that. As long as I am not seeking Him; I am weak. We may have everything we sought in this world in our possession and we may look powerful and beautiful on the outside, but we will always be weak and empty inside if He is not what we are seeking. So seek Him in this world and you will no longer be weak.

"Get yourself out of this limited world of diseases to the wide world of the hereafter, which has what the eyes have never seen. Nothing is impossible there, and love is not lost. O you who sold yourself for the sake of something that will cause you suffering and pain, and which will also lose its beauty, you sold the most precious item for the cheapest price, as if you neither knew the value of the goods nor the meanness of the price. Wait until you come on the Day of mutual loss and gain and you will discover the injustice of this contract. "There is no God but Allah" is something that Allah is buying. Its price is Paradise, and the Messenger is its agent, and you will be pleased to part with a small part of this worldly life to obtain it. The part you lose is a small part of something that as a whole is not worth a mosquito's wing." -Ibn ul Qayyim al Jawziyyah

I Saw Her Die

By Omar Shareef

I don't know why I'm not deeply bothered enough by death... emails can come in announcing janazahs for people I've never heard of, Masjid announcements are made about folks back home in the old countries who have passed away, and of course the constant news reports coming in detailing scores of people losing their lives due to natural disasters, starvation, murder, war, and oppression.

I'd usually hide behind my utterance of "inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon" and use that as my personal consolation to distance myself—it didn't happen to anyone I know, so I can safely detach myself emotionally from news of other people's deaths and just offer a typical generic dua before going back to my usual business, right?

It sounds heartless and shameless to admit to something like that- in our society death is something so trivialized and diminutive that its nearly desensitized us from realizing the sheer gravity of it. But that's blaming society for something that my own heart should be trembling about. Allah (swt), through His immaculate wisdom and infinite mercy, made me a witness to someone's death- He placed me only a few feet away to see with my own eyes what someone's last moments were like, and to this very moment I can never forget what I saw that day.



I was shadowing an Intensive Care Unit physician during one of my summer hospital internships a few years ago. The ICU was busy as always, but it had a much heavier atmosphere than what I was used to in the Emergency Department. The patients here weren't typical emergency cases—these people were in a league of disease severity far above those of the rest of the hospital. Only the most critically dire and immediately life-threatening cases were sent here to the ICU to be stabilized, so it was a rather eye-opening experience for me to see it all for the first time.

The ICU only had a few beds, but in each room there was a patient strapped up and hooked to a monstrous mechanical collection of automatic pumps, IV drips, monitors, screens, and all sorts of gadgets and machines. You couldn't hear anything in the ICU except for the muffled shuffling of doctors and nurses, and the synchronous beeps of the EKG heart monitors.

The patients were mostly old men and women- frail, sickly, and motionless save for the slow rhythmic heaving of their chests as the intubation tubes placed down their throats pumped air directly into their lungs. It was painful seeing them in such a state- just by looking at their feeble weak bodies you could tell that they were completely at the mercy of the machines and IV drips that were sustaining their stabilized conditions. You didn't need a medical degree to know that they were teetering on the edge of death and the next heart attack or lung failure would offer no guarantee of survival.

For the doctors it was a matter of extending life for as long as possible—death was imminent, but their job of providing stability by any means at this critical point would serve as the last defense against the patient completely submitting to their condition. The doctors and nurses were lively and talkative—for me it was a stomach-churning exhibit of human fragility near the end of our lives, but for the ICU staff it was just a typical morning.

It was during the usual ICU rounds that the physician I was shadowing introduced me to one of his patients. She was a Haitian lady; I remember her being somewhere in her late 70s, but she was one of the better stabilized patients who thankfully wasn't intubated. She was a jolly and talkative woman, a rather fresh breath of air given the state of the rest of the ICU patients, and she only spoke Haitian, which wasn't an issue since the physician I was with was Haitian as well. I couldn't understand a word she was saying, but she shared a

few laughs with the doctor and had a bright ambiance about her that brought much needed cheer to the dreary ICU.

I asked the doctor about her after we left her room—she was a proud single mother of 10 children, most of whom grew up to take jobs as nurses, PAs, and hospital technicians right around the area. Despite her current condition, she was deeply religious and considered her disease a trial from God that she had to overcome. The doctor said she was faring much better relative to the other patients, and that her positive outlook was certainly instrumental in her determination to recover sufficiently enough to leave the ICU. I found her to be quite a remarkably strong-willed person, and I had the doctor agree to take me to meet her again the very next day.



I was running a bit late the next morning and walked into the ICU about 10 minutes after 8 AM, only to be met with a “Code Red” emergency declaration- one of the ICU patients was experiencing heart failure and every available staff member was called to assist. I rushed alongside one of the nurses, following a blaze of white coats headed for one of the patient rooms. I trailed the nurse into the familiar patient room and when I got my first glimpse of the Code Red case... my heart sank.

It was the Hatian mother—sprawled out on her bed as her EKG went wild, screeching out a siren of beeps warning of her erratic heartbeat. I was pushed to the side as one of the doctors entered, and I pressed my back up against the wall and watched as the ICU team went quickly to work attempting to stabilize her. The Hatian doctor barked out quick orders to everyone- he had a team of respiratory therapists take turns performing chest pumps on her as he yelled at a nearby nurse to prepare an epinephrine injection to boost her falling heart-rate. He quickly injected her and waited a moment to see if there was any effect. Nothing. Her EKG was wailing and her heart clearly wasn't returning to normal.



He instructed the respiratory therapists to stop pumping as he charged the defibrillator. Quickly removing her gown from the way, he shouted “**CLEAR!**” and pressed the charges to her chest. Her entire body heaved ferociously and dropped back onto the bed. Everyone in the room glanced with bated breath at her EKG to see if it had worked. It didn't.

It was at that point that my throat became dry and my knees buckled. I swear to you, I remember so clearly how deeply I was gripped by tension and fear—my whole body froze and I could only look on in horror as she rapidly deteriorated right in front of me. My heart was pounding and my stomach was turning over the sight of her. She was dying- her heart was failing and she was quickly dying right in front of me.

The doctor motioned for the respiratory therapists to continue their chest pumps—with each pump her body heaved and the EKG showed an erratic spike. Another epinephrine shot was administered, this one having a stronger dosage than the last. I felt helpless watching the entire team rush about her- I was so useless, just a silent observer standing there frozen—watching her fight for her life. Nothing was working on her, and her time was running out fast.

The doctor grabbed the defibrillator again and charged it. He yelled at the respiratory therapists to get out of the way and pressed the charges against her chest, shouting “**CLEAR!**” as the shock-wave passed through her, heaving her body upward again and dropping her back onto the bed. Her EKG showed so sign of stability.

I remember making dua for her at that point. She wasn't even Muslim—I knew she wasn't Muslim, but I didn't want to see her die. I repeatedly made dua to Allah (swt) to save her, and I whispered it to myself while still clinging to whatever hope I had left that she'd somehow miraculously survive this.

The doctor asked the nurse to prepare another epinephrine injection. He stuck her again with the syringe as the respiratory therapists kept pumping away at her chest. Again, she showed no positive response at all to his attempts, and her time was nearly up.

I looked on in horror as the rest of the ICU staff in the room fell silent. Her EKG monitor flatlined- the long unending beep of the EKG was the only sound in the room, a morbid signal that her heart had finally given up the battle and succumbed to death.

One of the respiratory therapists was still pumping away at her chest—he was still trying in vain, despite the undeniable truth that her heart would never again beat. The doctor motioned at him to stop. “That’s enough,” he said solemnly, “I’m calling it.”

The time was 8:25 AM. In the span of just 15 minutes that Haitain mother lost her life, and I was a witness to her death.



It’s different. It’s truly different. You can watch people die in movies and TV shows, see footage of warzones or disaster-struck areas, and attend funeral proceedings, but that’s not really witnessing death. This was the first time in my life that I saw someone actually die—maybe I was too sheltered growing up, or maybe I still held on to a child-like naivete that seeing death was something I was tough enough to handle. But you truly don’t understand how scary it is until you see it happen right in front of you.

I remember slowly making my way to one of the nursing stations and sitting down. I needed time to compose myself so I could gather my thoughts on what I just saw. I don’t know how much time passed- maybe it was another 20 minutes or so, but I remember feeling like I was frozen in time. Things finally snapped back for me when I heard the ICU doors opening again.

They shuffled in slowly and silently. One by one, her children began to enter the ICU—it’s true, they were all middle-aged people, and a few of them were wearing scrubs. I didn’t want to look at their faces—I couldn’t. But the doctor was called to another part of the emergency department, and seeing me sitting in the corner, they must’ve mistaken me as one of the staff members.

One of the daughters walked up to me, and I remember tensing up when she approached. She didn’t ask me if I was a doctor, or if I was in charge of her mother’s care. Maybe she knew just by the look on my face. With tears in her eyes she asked me, “how did she go?”

I told her that her mother truly fought hard to survive, and that the ICU staff did everything they could to try and save her. I apologized to her and offered her my deepest condolences. She stayed silent, but nodded her head.

She led her siblings into her mother’s room, and despite sitting further down the hall I closed my eyes and looked away. I wish I could’ve covered my ears... but I heard their wailing. Their sobs. Their crying echoed into the hallway and one of the nurses closed the door. But you could still hear their muffled grief.

That was too much for me. It was too much. Seeing her die shook me to the core, but seeing her children react to her passing just tore at my very soul. I couldn’t be there any longer—I got up and left the ICU in a hurry and rushed to the hospital lobby to compose myself again. I couldn’t stop thinking about her. About her kids. About everything that just happened. It was a swirl of sympathy and uneasiness that penetrated my heart and just wouldn’t let go.

I remember calling my mom from the hospital lobby. Maybe she remembers this conversation better than I do, but I remember just repeating to her that I love her and asking her to forgive me. Of course she felt worried; when your eldest son calls you and just repeats in a shaky voice that he loves you, what parent wouldn’t feel that something was seriously wrong- she told me she loved me too, and kept asking me to tell her what was wrong and to explain what happened.

I told her what I saw, what I experienced, what I heard, and what it did to me. It felt better to tell her everything. It always does. And I just remember her assuaging me and rebuilding my resolve to focus myself

and place my faith in Allah (swt). You really can't ask for more love and understanding than that. Mommy, I love you—I always have and always will.

To this day, I haven't forgotten that Haitian mother and her kids. It still bothers me, and even as I write this I only need to close my eyes to see her again on that ICU bed. I didn't know her at all- I saw her talking to the doctor for 3 or 4 minutes, and I knew nothing about her aside from the few words the doctor shared with me about her background. But her death still shook me so badly that I can't forget it.

Even now, I can't help but think to myself—what if that was **my** mom in that bed, strapped to those wires and machines? What if that was her final battle to survive her disease- and that I would be the one shuffling into the ICU moments later to find that one of my doors to Jannah would forever be sealed? It hurts to think that- it hurts so much, and I'd **never** want that to happen- but I'm sure the children of that Haitian mother felt the same about her before she left them. May Allah (swt) protect and preserve my mother and have mercy upon her.



It takes a profession like medicine to show you just how fragile and precious our health and our life is, and it takes a deen like Islam to show you how best to appreciate a gift like that by always being grateful. Every single life on this Earth is precious- every heartbeat and breath of air a priceless blessing, and every morning that we rise is a testament to Allah (swt)'s mercy.

When you receive that e-mail announcing some stranger's janazah, or when that announcement is made that so-and-so has passed away, or when you read or hear that droves of nameless faceless people have lost their lives- don't turn your head away, rationalize your thoughts, and emotionally detach yourself from it. We're Muslims, and every death that we hear of or know of is a chilling reminder to us, so don't cower and hide- give due respect and acknowledgment to it.

When we say "inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon," we should say it with sincerity and genuine passion- we owe it to the one whom Allah (swt) has taken back... and truthfully, that's how I would want "inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon" to be said by others when that time finally strikes for me.

www.muslimmedicine.net

“Every soul shall have a taste of death: and We test you by evil and by good by way of trial: to Us you must return.” [Surah Al-Arbyyaa: 35]

GOT SUGGESTIONS?

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS
ABOUT THE MSA, PLEASE TELL US!

SOMETHING LEFT UNSAID CAN BE SOMETHING LEFT UNDONE.

SBUMSA@GMAIL.COM

Islam in Spain

By The Dawah Committee

Once upon a time in a land once called the gem of the world, there thrived a civilization, unprecedented throughout all of known history. This was a place where science met religion but did not conflict. This was a place where people of different faiths lived side by side with one another, working together and contributing to a society that is revered by the world to this day. This was a place where people, before converting to Islam in droves, were so impressed by the Muslims that they wanted to emulate them in every aspect of life. This was Al-Andalus and this is its story.

In the year the 711, Muslims of North Africa led by Tariq bin Ziyad (Rahimuhullah) answered a distress call made by their non-Muslim neighbors in Spain under the oppressive rule of the Visigoths, sparking a string of liberating conquests that laid the groundwork for what is known today as Al- Andalus. For nearly 800 years after that, Muslims ruled in Spain; that's more than three times the time our country, the U.S of A, has even existed! It's almost mindboggling to conceptualize a period of time that long but what's even more mindboggling is the number of contributions made to the world by such a culturally rich society.

When the Muslims came, they brought with them the tolerance Islam dictates—something unprecedented in Europe. Because Jews and Christians were given freedom to practice as they wished, a new society developed that enabled the exchange of information between Western and Eastern cultures, an exchange was previously prevented by the religious barrier imposed by the intolerance of previous government systems. It was in Al-Andalus that the knowledge of the Greeks and the Romans—the good and, well, the bad—was translated into Arabic and introduced to the world. Building on this knowledge and using much of their own, the Muslims of Spain made advancements in medicine, pharmacology, mathematics, chemistry, architecture, physics, astronomy, history, geography and navigation that turned the known world on its ear. Physicians like Ibn Sina and Al Zahrawi made breakthroughs that paved the way for world medicine, with some Andalusian procedures being used many centuries later. Islamic scholarship also thrived, giving rise to the likes of Ibn Hazm al Andalusian (Rahimahullah) and many others, whose works are still studied today. This pursuit of knowledge that was so characteristic of Al-Andalus was in fact in many ways simply a reflection of the importance Islam places upon knowledge.

In the backdrop of all of this success was a unique culture that developed from the mixture of people that made up Muslim Spain. In the early years, less than 25% of all of Spain was Muslim, giving the ruling authority to the minority. As time went on, Spain underwent a complete transformation. Thousands of individuals—literally, thousands—converted to Islam by choice, (forced conversions just weren't a Muslim thing) eventually bringing the Muslim minority into a majority of about 75% by the dawn of the new millennium. Everything Muslim was just “in.” Arabic was the *lingua franca* of the time, much as English is used today. It was the language of intellectualism, scholasticism, literature and love. The non-Muslim citizens that remained non-Muslim were nonetheless obsessed with Arabic and the culture the Muslims brought. The average citizen was able to speak Arabic, read Latin and speak a dialect of Spanish—not to mention those that learned Hebrew, Aramaic and other languages. Latin was abandoned at the expense of Arabic, being said to not fulfill the needs of the people. The obsession with Arabic reached such heights that a Christian luminary complained:

“Por cada cristiano capaz de escribir una carta en latin para un amigo' hay mil que se expresan en arabe con elegancia y escriben poemas mejores en esa lengua que los mismos arabes.” – Alvaro de Cordoba

Translation: For every Christian capable of writing a letter in Latin to a friend, there are 1000 that express themselves in Arabic with elegance and write poems in this language better than the (same) Arabs.

Non-Muslim women were so obsessed in emulating their Muslim counterparts that they wore the *khi-maar* (observed hijab) and even the *niqab* as it was considered a sign of dignity. As all of this occurred, the Muslim population was booming, reaching its near-peak level at 75%. Can you believe that 75% of Spain at one time was Muslim? There came a time in Muslim Spain's history when Muslims were culturally and ethni-

cally the same as their non-Muslim counterparts. When the Muslims were driven out later on, the question of whether or not it would be okay to kick out so many Spaniards from Spain arose. What happened to all those Muslims? Some food for thought to leave you with.

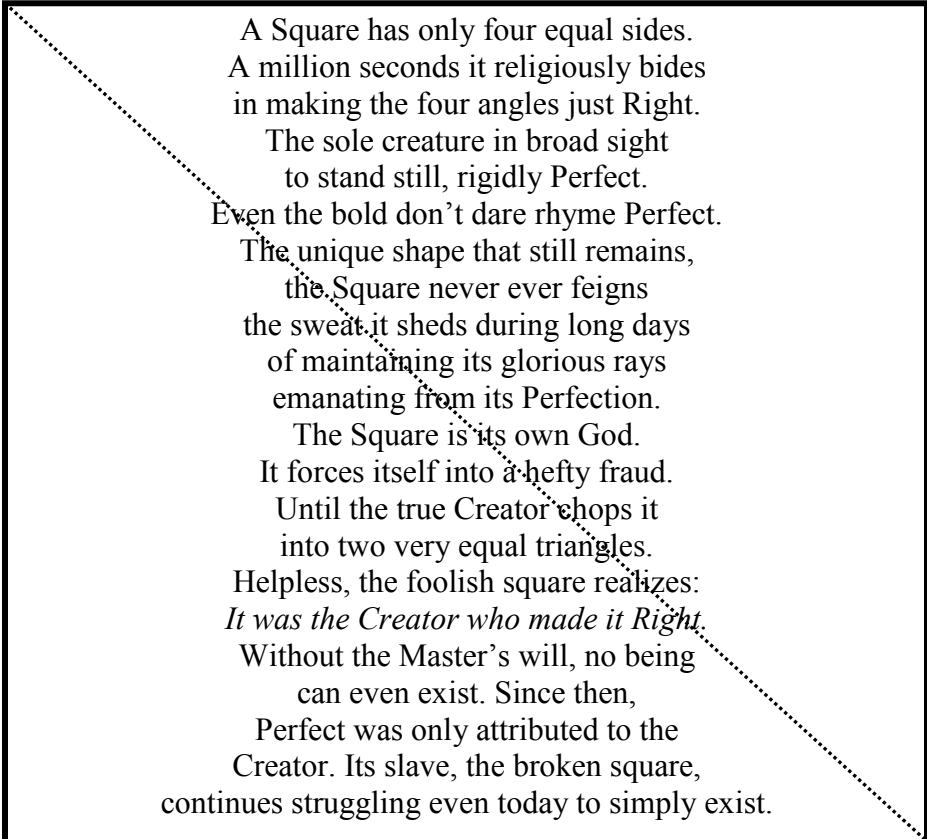
At the pinnacle of its excellence, the capital of Al-Andalus, Cordoba, had libraries with 500,000 books, running water in every home, tens of hospitals and medical schools, a number of public baths, well-lit streets in every direction for ten miles, much like we have today, and a population that enjoyed liberty. This population, which was becoming increasingly Muslim, was becoming more culturally mixed by the day. One great example of such diversity is Abdur Rahman III. Born to a father of the Umayya dynasty and a Spanish mother, Abdur Rahman, with his blonde hair and blue eyes, ruled Spain for several years. This multicultural trend, spawned from the vast number of interracial and interreligious marriages, was overwhelmingly common in Muslim Spain and continued until the Muslims fell completely in 1492. Sadly, as the story goes for almost any civilization, the Muslims of Spain became obsessed with opulence, decadence and ostentation. Abdur Rahman III himself had a palace that was decked out in gold and silver, had a mechanically levitating throne, mechanical lions and birds that would make sounds, a bowl of mercury (talk about hazardous) that would reflect light in every direction, lush gardens and so much more. Along with getting too accustomed to the good life, internal strife really did the Andalusis in. See how straying from the example of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) can cause destruction?

Nonetheless, looking back at Muslim Spain, one can't help but feel ashamed. It was a time when Muslims were at the forefront of the world in almost every field and were looked at as the bringers of truth and justice. The Muslims of Spain were intellectual powerhouses, whose discoveries paved much of the way to the Renaissance. They were Muslims who lived with a purpose. They were Muslims who left a legacy. So my question to myself, and you, is, where are we now?

Viva Al Andalus.

The Imperfect Square

By Qurat-ul-ain Gulambussein

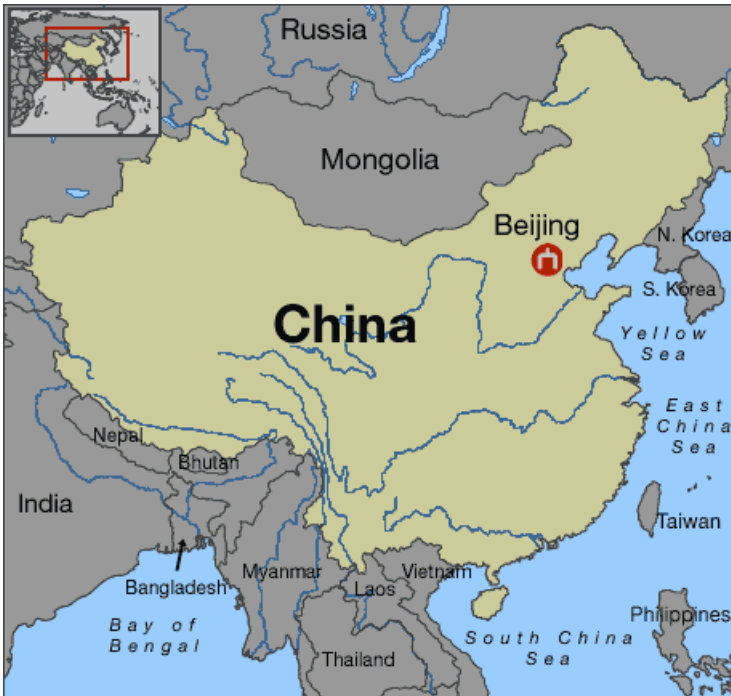


A Square has only four equal sides.
 A million seconds it religiously bides
 in making the four angles just Right.
 The sole creature in broad sight
 to stand still, rigidly Perfect.
 Even the bold don't dare rhyme Perfect.
 The unique shape that still remains,
 the Square never ever feigns
 the sweat it sheds during long days
 of maintaining its glorious rays
 emanating from its Perfection.
 The Square is its own God.
 It forces itself into a hefty fraud.
 Until the true Creator chops it
 into two very equal triangles.
 Helpless, the foolish square realizes:
It was the Creator who made it Right.
 Without the Master's will, no being
 can even exist. Since then,
 Perfect was only attributed to the
 Creator. Its slave, the broken square,
 continues struggling even today to simply exist.

Islam in China

By The Dawah Committee

The Sahabi Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas was a maternal uncle of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and one of the ten people promised Paradise by the Prophet (PBUH). This companion is renowned for his vast journeys across the Asian continent, spanning from Syria to the Indian subcontinent, in an attempt to spread the message of Islam. He journeyed with a broad "open-minded" mentality and a heavy emphasis on learning about other cultures and traditions in an effort to realize that goal. One of his diplomatic ventures was to the far-off land of China. In 7th century China, he is credited as having introduced Islam to a country with a rich cultural and spiritual heritage. After him, a few Muslims chose to remain in China and spend the rest of their lives learning the Chinese language and the intricacies of the role of religion and spirituality in the daily lives of the Chinese.



This tradition was inherited by their posterity, but Islam remained as an unknown to the majority of the Chinese populace until the 15th and 16th centuries, when a number of Chinese Muslims had attained sufficient knowledge of both Islam and the "Three-Teachings" of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. One of the most important scholars was Liu Zhi. Along with Wang Daiyu and other prominent Chinese Muslim scholars of the time, he contributed to the Han Kitab, which was essentially a compilation of treatises which tried to explain Islam through emphasis on true understanding of the Confucian tradition. Although many modern Muslim scholars and laymen deny such a treatise, (they see it as taking away from the true spirit of Islam) it is hard to answer how else one would go about explaining such a strange way of life to a people who could relate only through similarities in their own Confucian lifestyles. The Arabic language, dialect, and culture was and still is a very alien culture to the Chinese, but Muslim Scholars, like Liu Zhi, emphasized a true understanding of Confucianism (and by extension Neo-Confucianism through its contributions to metaphysics) and other traditions as the first step for a Chinese student into the world of Islam, a rich heritage in and of itself.

The "Han Kitab" term itself connotes this mentality with its clever combination of the word "Han", which in the Chinese language means the "Chinese people", with the word "Kitab", which is the Arabic word for "book". The idea that there is an objective truth and reality that has been taught by prophets (or "sages" as said in the Confucian tradition) and that Islam is the perfect and ultimate embodiment of that knowledge is what manifests itself in the "Han Kitab" tradition. Historically, Chinese Muslims have led great positions of leadership and command through diplomatic voyages and conquests, even as personal emissaries of Chinese emperors. Today Chinese Muslims constitute a very small minority in the country that is heavily centered in the Northwestern and Western portions of China. Although they generally have the freedom to freely practice Islam, they unfortunately suffer through heavy discrimination and civil conflicts with the rest of the populace. Interesting Fact: Chinese Muslims today number around at least 25 million people. Although that estimate is only about 2% of the Chinese population as a whole, it is the same number of total Muslims in Saudi Arabia, which interestingly enough constitutes 2% of the world's Muslim population.

The Liar

Anonymous

he opens his mouth and what come rushing out are a number of lies in which he tries to be wise
to hide under his disguise and spit plain lies- to get you to believe him until the day that he dies
he wants you to follow him so he can take control- and lead you down a path that you think isn't pa-
trolled

so you take the risk to take a stroll when you know you're already on parole
and think it won't be so bad saying "im just following what I was told"

when you don't realize that the troll that told you these lies that blinded you from knowing your role
doesn't care at all about you but only wants for his virtual copper to turn to virtual gold

and so he persists in his lies so that you can reach your demise

going and stealing her innocence, stealing his pride-still looking for just another one to chide
constantly looking for a place to hide for he knows deep down in his heart: he doesn't want to lie

but he feels he has no choice and that this is his only way to get by

for if he ever speaks the truth, he won't be able to get up and fly

above and away so that others won't question and won't see why,

the misery and torture his soul suffers for him being who he wants to be-cunning and sly

But if he continues down this dangerous road and goes further to transgress beyond the degree

the day will come when even if he tries, he simply won't be able to flee

When it will be too late and the Angel of Death arrives, his misery won't be a mystery and his life will
have no more of this glee

That he felt every time he opened his mouth to trick you into believing in his treachery

And so he will lie with his eyes gazing into the sky looking at the ones that will carry out the order of the
Most High

For this is what he thought he didn't deny until he told all of his lies

For this is the day that he will perish and none of lies will come to his surmise

And this is the day that he will lie there dying as a victim of his own lies

he himself is lost and wants not to be alone

for where he's going all that company won't make him feel at home

HADITH OF THE MONTH

*"O child of Adam! Verily I should continue to pardon you as long as you call upon
Me and hope for My forgiveness, whatever your sins may be I care not."*

*"O child of Adam, even if your sins should pile up as high as the sky and you asked
for My forgiveness, I would forgive you."*

*"O child of Adam, if you came to Me with an earth full of sins and met Me not
holding anything as My equal, I would meet you with and earth full of forgive-
ness."*

-Hadith Qudsi (34)

Prayer Times

Day	October	Hijri	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Asr (H)	Maghrib	Isha
Sat	1	3/11	5:35	6:48	12:43	4:00	4:50	6:35	7:50
Sun	2	4/11	5:36	6:49	12:42	3:59	4:48	6:34	7:49
Mon	3	5/11	5:37	6:50	12:42	3:58	4:47	6:32	7:47
Tue	4	6/11	5:38	6:51	12:42	3:57	4:45	6:31	7:45
Wed	5	7/11	5:39	6:52	12:41	3:56	4:44	6:29	7:44
Thu	6	8/11	5:40	6:53	12:41	3:54	4:42	6:27	7:42
Fri	7	9/11	5:41	6:55	12:41	3:53	4:41	6:26	7:40
Sat	8	10/11	5:42	6:56	12:41	3:52	4:39	6:24	7:39
Sun	9	11/11	5:43	6:57	12:40	3:51	4:38	6:22	7:37
Mon	10	12/11	5:44	6:58	12:40	3:50	4:36	6:21	7:36
Tue	11	13/11	5:45	6:59	12:40	3:48	4:35	6:19	7:34
Wed	12	14/11	5:46	7:00	12:40	3:47	4:34	6:18	7:33
Thu	13	15/11	5:47	7:01	12:39	3:46	4:32	6:16	7:31
Fri	14	16/11	5:48	7:02	12:39	3:45	4:31	6:14	7:30
Sat	15	17/11	5:50	7:03	12:39	3:44	4:29	6:13	7:28
Sun	16	18/11	5:51	7:04	12:39	3:42	4:28	6:11	7:27
Mon	17	19/11	5:52	7:05	12:38	3:41	4:27	6:10	7:25
Tue	18	20/11	5:53	7:06	12:38	3:40	4:25	6:08	7:24
Wed	19	21/11	5:54	7:07	12:38	3:39	4:24	6:07	7:22
Thu	20	22/11	5:55	7:09	12:38	3:38	4:23	6:05	7:21
Fri	21	23/11	5:56	7:10	12:38	3:37	4:21	6:04	7:20
Sat	22	24/11	5:57	7:11	12:37	3:36	4:20	6:03	7:18
Sun	23	25/11	5:58	7:12	12:37	3:34	4:19	6:01	7:17
Mon	24	26/11	5:59	7:13	12:37	3:33	4:17	6:00	7:16
Tue	25	27/11	6:00	7:14	12:37	3:32	4:16	5:58	7:14
Wed	26	28/11	6:01	7:15	12:37	3:31	4:15	5:57	7:13
Thu	27	29/11	6:02	7:17	12:37	3:30	4:13	5:56	7:12
Fri	28	1/12	6:03	7:18	12:37	3:29	4:12	5:54	7:11
Sat	29	2/12	6:04	7:19	12:37	3:28	4:11	5:53	7:09
Sun	30	3/12	6:05	7:20	12:37	3:27	4:10	5:52	7:08
Mon	31	4/12	6:06	7:21	12:37	3:26	4:09	5:51	7:07

First 'Asr Time: *In the standard method (which is used by Imams Shaafii, Hanbali, and Maliki) the Asr prayer time starts when the shadow of an object is equivalent to its height .*

Second 'Asr Time: *This is used by Imam Abu Hanifa, where the Asr prayer time starts when the shadow of an object is twice its height.*

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JazakAllah Khair to all of our writers, editors, and Sr. Sanaa for all your dedication and efforts. And a special thanks to the Muslim Student Association for making this newsletter a successful part of this community. Through your thoughtful writing and hard work all of you make my job so much more easier. Once again JazakAllah Khair for everything!

-Mariam Shareef and Maha Mamoor