

*In the name of Allah,* **The Stony Brook Minaret** *the most Beneficent, the most Merciful*

*The official newsletter of the Stony Brook Muslim Students' Association*

**The Minaret**  
Volume XI, Issue I  
September 2011

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*Editors-in-Chief*

Mariam Shareef  
Maha Mamoor

*Editors*

Zanab Mian  
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*Writers*

Saad Yousuf  
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# STATE OF THE MSA

*Saad Yousuf, MSA President*

As I sit here staring at my computer screen I realize one thing; it's four in the morning. Where has the time gone? What have I done with my time? Did I make good use of it or did I waste it? Scholars in Islam have written that whenever Allah (SwT) swears by something in the Quran, it elevates the status of the thing that is being sworn upon. Allah (SwT) swears upon time in the Quran thus showing us that time is something that we should not mess around with. A very common mistake made by many college students is wasting time. If I could only offer one piece of advice to incoming freshman and even to those of us who have been in college for a couple of years now, I would say make sure your time is spent being productive. Every second missed is an opportunity missed.

In a hadith narrated by Ibn 'Abbas, which can be found in Sahih Bukhari, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "There are two blessings which many people lose: (They are) health and free time for doing good." Time should be viewed as a chance to do good deeds. Good deeds aren't necessarily only acts of worship or charity; good deeds can also include doing your school work, going to the gym, or spending time with your family. The most important thing is that anything you do in life must only be for the sake of Allah. I know it's cliché but, something that we need to keep in the back of our minds is that actions are based on intentions. You will be rewarded with whatever your intention was. If you go to school and your intention is doing well for the sake of a good job to provide for your family because Allah has commanded you, then inshaAllah (God willing) you will be rewarded for doing an action for His sake.

Here is some practical advice we could all use to help us make better use of our time: Step 1- Make a schedule. I know it sounds simple enough but actually putting down your hourly schedule on a piece of paper or on your laptop can go a long way.

Step 2- Make sure you put some free time on your schedule. Free time can help keep a person sane and it will be a good way to relieve some stress however make sure it isn't too long. You can spend your free time doing whatever you like but make sure it isn't your priority when things get hectic.

Step 3 – Keep to your schedule. Don't deviate from your schedule unless an emergency comes up. Consistency will allow you to get into a routine and eventually it will become easy for you.

"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.

**Continued on Page 4...**



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR *Chaplain*

*“My Mercy encompasses all things”* (7:156). Allah is a loving and a merciful creator; His mercy and forgiveness are two of His many favors upon us. To attain the absolute state of sincerity is to be able to fight our nafs and learn the tricks of the shayateen.

“The one who prompts and then hides away, who whispers in the hearts of mankind” (114:4-5). Shaytaan vowed to sit and sway us from the straight path, but Allah challenged him by telling him that he will remain powerless over his faithful and sincere servants. In order to



be amongst the righteous, we must make Allah part of our thought process and feelings. Our actions must be pleasing to Allah and our deeds must have the foundation of intention purely for the sake of Allah. In the end we have to ask:

*Are we the nafs that orders the heart to sin?  
Are we the self that holds itself accountable?  
Are we the self that lives to please Allah?  
Are we the self that is striving to please Allah?  
Are we the self that has been able to understand the inspiration and the  
spiritual orders of Allah?*

Have we come close to Allah as the hadith explains? Have we tried to understand what the Prophet (peace be upon him) was saying? He tells us that Allah, our Rabb, states, *“Oh son/daughter of Adam come closer to me with nafl, extra prayers, and I will become your eyes that you see with and your hand that you touch with.”*

In the end, sincerity leads us to the state of Ihsaan, to worship Allah as if you truly see Him, and if not, you realize that He is ever watchful over you. *How can you feel lonely when Allah is with you, how can you need when your Creator has all in his kingdom, how can you ask anyone else when He has all to give?*

He is the creator without partners, all kingdom and existence belongs to him and true favors come only from him and He is All powerful above everything.

May Allah bless you all. You are in my du‘aas—please keep me in yours!

Sincerely,  
*Chaplain Sanaa Nadim*

## State of the MSA

*Saad Yousuf, MSA President*

### Continued from Page 2...

Step 4 - Stay away from the Union balcony and lounge (just kidding, sort of). Don't worry freshman, you will get to know the Union balcony and lounge sooner or later. My piece of advice to you would be to limit the amount of time you spend there. Countless hours of precious time can be wasted there just watching youtube, socializing with friends, or even sleeping. If you must go because you ABSOLUTELY have to be around your friends sometimes when you're doing work (don't worry, I am guilty of this too), just make sure you actually get some work done.

It is narrated in a hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Take benefit of five before five: Your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free-time before your preoccupation, and your life before your death." One can notice a common theme amongst all the things listed – they all relate back to time and how you use it. InshaAllah I pray that we are not amongst those who waste their time and I pray that we can all utilize our time to the best of our efforts.



## Success Now and in the Hereafter

*By Maha Mamoor*

The world we live in is materialistic. We are attracted to money. As the imperfect human beings we are, we strive for economic prosperity. The education we receive in school is for future economic gain as opposed to increasing one's knowledge of the world and deen. We are coded to believe that economic wealth will lead to material pleasures when in actuality the pleasure we receive from objects will not last forever. We need to ask ourselves, what will last forever?

Instead of focusing on our values and morals we are focusing on our valuables and materials. As an Ummah, let's work harder on becoming knowledgeable about our deen on top of working for worldly pleasures. We have become slaves of production and consumption when we need to become slaves to our Master.

"Whoever is mainly concerned about the Hereafter, Allah will make him feel independent of others and will make him focused and content, and his worldly affairs will fall into place. But whoever is mainly concerned with this world, Allah will make him feel in constant need of others and will make him distracted and unfocused, and he will get nothing of this world except what is decreed for him." (narrated by al-Tirmidhi)

The hadith above further proves the importance of the Hereafter over this dunya. Allah (swt) will make things fall into place if we keep constant remembrance of Him. It is stressed repeatedly to be in this world as though you were a traveler. The only thing we will take with us to the Hereafter is our deeds, good or bad. Let's keep Allah (swt) in our mind all the time, inshAllah.

# The Spiritual Friendship

By Mishal Riaz

“Let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit.” -Khalil Gibran

Too often, we allow ourselves to grow complacent with our surroundings. We settle into a routine and as we get comfortable, filth can begin to collect in our environment; we listen to things we shouldn't, talk about things we shouldn't, look at things that are only going to harm us. When we allow the filth to build, we allow ourselves to become easy prey for shaytaan. Conversations involving backbiting and talk of dunya are the perfect opportunity for shaytaan to get a hold on us, and once he does, it's a slippery slope. To better protect ourselves from shaytaan, and to truly progress in the deen, we have to keep our environment pure; one of the most important parts of this is finding the right companionship.

Evaluate the people in your life and ask yourself, are these people pushing me forward or just holding me back? Does being around these people bring me closer to Allah, or closer to falling off the path? If your friends fall into the latter category, then perhaps it is time to find a new crowd. It's not easy to walk away from people we've grown close to, but when it comes down to it, we have to remember what's most important: doing what pleases our lord.

As difficult as fighting our desires can be, the reward is well worth it. Seeking out friends that place emphasis on the sharia and sunnah will benefit us tremendously—simply being in their presence can have an effect.

The Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings be upon him) stated “The example of a good companion and a bad companion is like that of the seller of musk, and the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows. So as for the seller of musk then either he will grant you some, or you buy some from him, or at least you enjoy a pleasant smell from him. As for the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows then either he will burn your clothes or you will get an offensive smell from him” (Bukhari & Muslim).

So many aspects of our lives become easier when we have righteous people by our side; simple acts of worship can be done in each other's company, and in times of hardship friends can remind each other to rely on Allah.

If you can't develop a relationship with the people you're looking for, then try to be that person for others. Deepen the bonds that you already have and inspire people to be better. No matter what, make sure that your companions are a source of strength for your iman, because at the end of the day every single aspect of our lives should be devoted to Allah.



## Two Words

By Sr Maryam Amir Ebrahim

He had never prayed two *rak`ah* (units of prayer) in his adult life. Born and raised in Egypt, he had continuously heard the *athan* (call to prayer) and the *iqama* (second call to prayer) rolling through the streets, calling the believers to prayer, but he had never voluntarily accepted the call. This included refusing to pray at the *masjid* on the first floor of the apartment building in which he lived; he passed by it day and night, on his way to work, on his way to spend hours at the local Hookah Café with his friends, and on his way home to his wife and children, only to start the routine of neglecting his prayers again the following day.

On one Friday, he was suddenly hit by a novel idea. “Why don’t I just try Friday prayer today? Just to see what it’s like? I’ll just **try** it,” the man thought. He came in late to the masjid; the *Khatib* (speaker) was already speaking. As the man was looking for a place to sit, he heard the words of the *Khatib*, “The Prophet (peace be upon him) has told us:

**“Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: ‘Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.’” (Bukhari)**

The man, preoccupied with having just entered and finding a place to sit, only heard a few of the *Khatib*’s words. He sat, perplexed, turning the fragmented words over and over in his mind, “*Kalimatan* (two words)... *habibatan* (both beloved)... *lil-Rahman* (to The Merciful)... *Subhan Allahi wa bi-hamdi* (Glory be to Allah and by His praise)... *Subhan Allah il-`atheem* (Glory be to Allah, the Immense).” He had lost complete focus on the rest of the *khutbah* (sermon), overtaken by these words he had heard in passing, working hard to make sense of what the words could possibly mean.

After the prayer, he approached the *Khatib* directly. “Is all what you’ve said in the *khutbah* today true?” he questioned. Surprised, the *Khatib* responded, “I’ve said quite a bit in the *khutbah* today. To what specifically are you referring?” The man replied, “You said some words... *Kalimatan*... *habibatan*... *lil-Rahman*... *Subhan Allahi wa bi hamdih, subhan Allah il-`atheem*.”

The *Khatib* smiled in recognition. “Yes, those are in fact from a blessed *hadith* (narration) from The Truthful himself. He told us:

**“Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: ‘Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.’”**

The man stood, overwhelmed, awestruck, in a daze. The words had penetrated through his heart and embraced his soul. Captivated, he continued to repeat the *hadith* of the Prophet (peace be upon him) over and over to himself:

**“Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: ‘Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.’”**

He walked out of the masjid in a trance and left for his home. Upon entering, he gathered his wife and children. “Have you heard,” he began to tell them, “the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him)? He has told us:

**“Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: ‘Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.’”**

From that moment, the man transformed. From his home, he would leave to work, from his work, he would go straight to the Masjid, and from the Masjid, he would immediately go back home to his wife and children. All the while, two words kept his lips moving and his tongue wet with remembrance, “*Subhan Allahi wa bihamdi, Subhan Allah il-`atheem*.”

Soon, his friends from the Hookah Café noticed his continued absence. They came to his apartment one day. “Where have you been?” they asked. “We haven’t seen you smokin’ hookah with us for a while.” A beautiful, wistful look came over the man’s face. “Haven’t you heard?” He replied to his old crew from the café, “The Prophet (peace be upon him) has told us:

**“Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: ‘Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.’”**

And this is how he spent his days; reminding his family, his friends, those in the masjid and those who passed by in the streets, about the beloved words to Allah, those heavy words on the scale, those words light on the tongue, “*Subhan Allahi wa bihamdi, subhan Allah il-`atheem.*” The man had gone from a person who never prayed, spent little time with family and frequented the house of hookah instead of the House of Allah *subhanahu wa ta`ala* (exalted is He), to a person who longed for Allah (swt), whose eyes were filled with tears, whose tongue, heart, and soul burned with the inscription:

**“Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: ‘Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.’”**

Soon, he fell ill. It had only been a few months since he had gone to the masjid, since he had first heard the beloved words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) by the *Khatib* in a *Jumu`ah* (Friday) *khutbah*. He told his son to go and to ask the Masjid administration to call upon that very *Khatib* to come visit him in his illness.

When he was informed, the *Khatib* remembered the man immediately and rushed to his apartment. Upon being let in, he saw the man, sleeping in his bed, the doctor sitting at his side. The *Khatib* sat at the foot of the bed and waited for the man to awaken. Finally, the man stirred and he noticed, at the foot of his bed, the very *Khatib* who had related the beloved, noble words of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The man looked at the *Khatib*. He then asked him, “Have you heard? The Prophet (peace be upon him) has told us:

**“Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: ‘Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.’”**

With that, the man passed away.

The *Khatib* in this story is the teacher of my Arabic teacher. My Arabic teacher related this incident to me and continued to stress that it wasn’t a story from books of the past, it wasn’t a story coined to tug hearts, it was the true story of a man who was completely disconnected from Allah (swt), but to whom Allah (swt) gave a passing thought to enter the masjid, and who Allah (swt) blessed with hearing the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) at a time and in a way which truly impacted his soul and final actions in life.

My teacher then told me, “The Prophet (peace be upon him) has said: ‘Convey from me, even if it’s just one *ayah* [verse]...’” (Bukhari).

We never know what word or action, done with a sincere intention, will truly be a means of impacting another person’s life to come back to Allah (swt).

Let’s stop judging people; let’s stop driving people out of mosques because “we” deem their dress, their swagger, their accessories, or language as something “unsuitable” to the House of God. Let’s stop assuming they’ll never be guided to “our righteous path” (since we’re so righteous, we guided our own selves, right?) and thus resolve to harsh words or disapproving stares. Perhaps those who “we” think are far from Allah (swt) will pass in a more honorable, beloved state to the One Who guides.

Let us be the first to cling to the beloved words to Allah (swt), “*Subhan Allahi wa bihamdih, subhan Allah il-`atheem,*” and let us warmly, sincerely and smile-fully be a means of helping ourselves and others come back to Allah (swt)—with His Power and Mercy—through relating the beautiful words of Allah (swt) and His Prophet (peace be upon him), through action and speech. We never know what small, miniscule act, may be a means of guidance for ourselves and another, and a means of possibly entering *jannatul firdose al`alaa bi ghayri hisaab*—The Highest Paradise, without any reckoning.

May Allah (swt) bless this man’s soul. *Subhan Allah*—if he had died like any other person who knows about the obligation of prayer and lazily defies praying, we would never know his story—he’d just be another person who passed away in another country, a person we may have never even known existed.

But perhaps because of his repentance and his sincere coming back to Allah (swt), Allah has blessed us with coming to know of him—so that his actions will continue to be rewarded even while he’s in his grave, every single time any one of us, because of his story, even across the world, remember to say, “*Subhan Allahi wa bihamdi, subhan Allah il-`atheem.*”

What will you do—so sincerely—that Allah (swt) will bless people with being transformed because of you,

# Welcome to the Stony Brook MSA!

*By Ammar Morgan*

Stony Brook MSA is more than just a regular MSA. This MSA is a support system. We are here to support all students as they progress on their journey through their university career. On this journey, there are bound to be mistakes, failures, and disappointments which sometimes can cause you to have regrets. If you take on too much regret, your entire college experience can be very distasteful. However, with the proper focus and attitude, this journey is sure to be filled with successes, happiness, and good fun. After a year of living and thriving in this MSA, I can say with absolute certainty that this MSA can help you attain that focus.

Upon entering university, it is very common for students to explore their newly found sense of freedom in which many students make mistakes that they will later regret. I am writing this to urge **you**, yes you, to encourage you to make the right decisions. If you use the MSA as a support system, then you will not have to go through your college journey alone. The MSA has students who have gone through what you have gone through, who were once new just like you are new. This MSA has people who share common goals, interests, friends and beliefs with you. We can be the treasure map to help you find the treasure of this university. All you have to do is get the map!

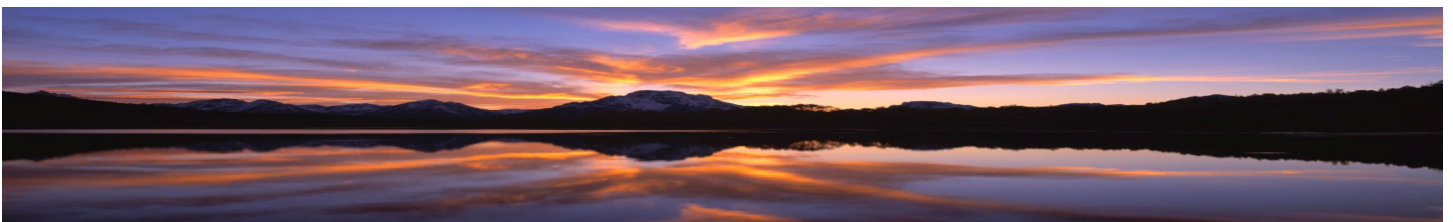
With this being said, it must also be said that the MSA is filled with students who are just like you. With this knowledge, you must be aware that we the students of the MSA can also waste time. It is ultimately up to you to stay on track.

As Muslims, we are taught that Allah SWT is the creator and sustainer of all things. We are taught this through the Qur'an and Sunnah. You should know, that in the times when you feel that there is great difficulty, that you have the tool of dua'a`. dua'a` is very powerful and is our primary way of asking Allah SWT for the different things that we want. You should do your best to make dua'a` as regularly as possible.

### **In a hadith it says:**

*Abu Hurairah (raw) narrates from Rasool-Allah (saws),  
"In the court of Allah, there is no greater thing than dua'a" (Ibn-e-Majah).*

Please remember that the MSA is here to help you. Please join us for our events throughout the semester, and when you can, please stop by the prayer room for whichever of the five daily prayers that you can make it too. The prayer room is located on the **second floor of the Union, in room 249**. Please join our mailing list, which can be done by e-mailing us at **sbumsa@gmail.com**. Visit our website **stonybrookmsa.com**.



# JOIN AN MSA COMMITTEE!

Committees are the way that members can play a larger role in the MSA. Whether it's by tutoring or organizing a community service project, they allow members to take on responsibility and be more involved!

## COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

One of the best things a Muslim can do is to serve others, and the Community Service Committee is here to provide opportunities to do just that. Our Community Service committee comes up with ways that allow our members to reach out to those in need, and is the median between the MSA and Community Service projects. (To contact the committee and/or be added to the mailing list, email [servesbumsa@gmail.com](mailto:servesbumsa@gmail.com)).

## DA'WAH COMMITTEE

The Da'wah committee works towards educating the larger Stony Brook community about our deen, and helping to showcase the beauty of Islam. This is done mainly through tables that are set up in large buildings where students can come by and ask questions or just pick up a brochure. (To contact the committee and/or be added to the mailing list, email [dawah.sbmsa@gmail.com](mailto:dawah.sbmsa@gmail.com)).

## MSED

Our goal is to create a learning environment by Muslims, for Muslims. We hope to help foster the intellectualism this MSA is so inherently blessed with (alhamdulillah) by fostering the learning environment that this community needs! If you ever wanted to help Muslims realize their intellectual potential or just needed help with your homework, MSED will insha'Allah provide you with the venue to do so, bringing a structured environment facilitating the exchange of knowledge. (To contact the committee and/or be added to the mailing list, email [MSEd@gmail.com](mailto:MSEd@gmail.com) We're always looking out for tutors or students who need help!).

## SPORTS COMMITTEE

The Sports committee serves to help maintain the strong bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood in our community by organizing sports events. Activities include involvement in official University intramurals as well as regular weekly games within the MSA itself. (To contact the committee and/or be added to the mailing list, email [sbumsa.sports@gmail.com](mailto:sbumsa.sports@gmail.com)).

## PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee handles marketing and spreading the word for upcoming MSA events via fliers, Facebook, word of mouth, etc., and in general presenting Stony Brook MSA to the larger campus community. (To contact the committee and/or be added to the mailing list, email [sbumsapr@gmail.com](mailto:sbumsapr@gmail.com)).

## WHAT IS THE MINARET?

The Minaret is the award winning monthly newsletter of the Stony Brook Muslim Students Association. It includes numerous articles, poems, comedy pieces and announcements written by the students themselves. The latest physical copy can usually be obtained from the prayer room or on the table after Jumu'ah. For your convenience, we will be uploading previous issues electronically and will release current ones as they become available. (To contact the committee and/or be added to the mailing list, email [minaret@gmail.com](mailto:minaret@gmail.com)).

## Prayer Times

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

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.*

***Interested in Writing for the Minaret?***  
 Email Submissions to [minaret@gmail.com](mailto:minaret@gmail.com)  
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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