



Rocket Science



Shawwal/Thulqadah
1432

September 2011

*In the name of
Allah, most
Gracious, most
Merciful*

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Eid mubarak!

Fast of Shawwal

All of us at the Mount Albert Islamic Trust wish all our readers Eidul Fitr Mubarak! We hope that you have had a blessed and peaceful Ramadan, and that you have increased your taqwa, and can continue in the highest of iman for the coming year. We ask your forgiveness if we have offended you in any way, and for any shortcomings of this newsletter.



As our newsletter is entitled *Rocket Science*, because we pray jumuah at Rocket Park, we felt it was only appropriate to have an Eid card with an outer space theme!

And don't forget the rewards for fasting any six days in Shawwal (except Eidul Fitr). Abu Ayub (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: "Whoever fasts Ramadan and follows it with six days of Shawwal, it will be as if he fasted for a lifetime." (Narrated by Muslim, Abu Dawood, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisaa'i and Ibn Maajah)

123456 The virtue of fasting
six days of Shawwaal

The name *Muhammad*

A report has just been released of the 100 most popular baby names in England and Wales for the year 2010¹. If it is of any interest, for boys they are, in descending order, Oliver, Jack, Harry, Alfie, Charlie, Thomas, William, Joshua, George and James. In fact, nine of those names were also in the top ten the previous year: George rose from 11th to 9th, while Daniel dropped from 10th to 11th.

Names clearly go in and out of fashion. William and Harry are there surely because of Prince Charles' sons. One name in the extended list that does not go out of fashion is Muhammad. In light of this, it is surprising that Muhammad is only #31 in the list, especially since the BBC reported on 6 June 2007² that "Muhammad is the second most popular name for baby boys in Britain, new research has found." (Jack was first.) So, how could it have fallen so far so fast?

The answer is in the way the names are scored. Of the 5,991 new-born boys in 2006 named after the Prophet (saw), the name was spelt in 14 different English ways: Mohammed (2,833 boys), Muhammad (1,422), Mohammad (920), Muhammed (358), Mohamed (354), Mohamad (29), Mahammed (18), Mohammod (13), Mahamed (12), Muhammod (9), Muhamad (7), Mohmmed (6), Mohamud (5), or Mohammud (5). However, the compilers of the 2010 figures have treated these as separate names. This seems unreasonable, as all these children are clearly named after the same person, Rasulullah (saw). The differences are just variant ways of representing his Arabic name in English spelling. Counting them separately would be like saying that Jonathon, Johnathon and Jonathan are totally different. Or Catherine, Katherine, Katharine and Kathryn.



So, looking down the list, we see that Mohammed is at #17, Muhammad #31 and Mohammad #67. No other variant spellings are in the top 100.

Spelling	Rank in 2009	Rank in 2010	Number
Mohammed	16	17	3,105
Muhammad	36	31	2,451
Mohammad	62	67	1,020
Total			6,576

This total of 6,576 would in fact put the name 4th in the list, after Harry with 6,862, and well ahead of Alfie with 5,478. And, given that there were 11 other alternative spellings in 2006, adding them together might well put it higher still.

Ibn Asakir and Hussain Ibn Ahmad stated that the Prophet (saw) said, "If a son is born to you and, out of love and respect for me and to obtain the blessings of my name, you keep the child's name 'Muhammad', then the father and child will both enter Jannah."

1 www.statistics.gov.uk/babynames/babynames.html
2 news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6727101.stm

only #31?

variant spellings

*reward for
naming a son
Muhammad*

Drawback of the high life

*less than 12
hours*

Alhamdu lillah! For us Muslims living in New Zealand, Ramadan at this time of year is very kind. At the beginning of the month, we fasted less than 12 hours. And even at the end of this Ramadan, the period was less than 13 hours. Also, since Islamic lunar dates move roughly 11 days earlier each solar year, next year's Ramadan will be even kinder.

We might then spare a thought for those living the high life in the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building, in Dubai. Opened in 2010, it has 163 floors and is 828m (2,716ft) high.

In a report on BBC News¹, Ahmed Abdul Aziz al-Haddad is quoted as telling Reuters, "Burj Khalifa is almost one km (0.6 miles) high, which means people in higher floors can still see the sun after it has set on the ground."

*iftar two minutes
later*

They should therefore break their fast two minutes later than people living at ground level.

Another Dubai cleric, Mohammed al-Qubaisi, was more precise, saying that people living above the 80th floor should fast for an extra two minutes, while those on the 150th floor and higher should wait for three more minutes.

*three minutes
later*

Mr Qubaisi also said that there have always been precedents, and that under Islamic rulings, people living on mountains should also break their fast after those at ground level.

While the start time of the fast is not mentioned, the height of the tower or mountains means that people living up high will also see the sun in the morning earlier than those at lower altitudes, and therefore should start fasting a few minutes earlier.

imsak earlier

1 www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14437334



shotgun attack

hajj

forgiveness

*wrong to
stereotype*

Muslim compassion

A few days after the 11 September attacks, Mark Stroman shot three men working in Dallas area convenience stores who he believed were Muslims. Carrying a double-barrelled shotgun, he walked into the petrol station where Rais Bhuyian, a Bangladeshi-born naturalised US citizen, worked. He asked Bhuyian where he came from. As Bhuyian recalled, "That's a strange question to ask in a robbery. As soon as I said 'Excuse me?', I heard an explosion and felt the sensation of a million bees stinging my face." The gunshot left Rais Bhuyian blind in his right eye. Stroman killed two other men in convenience stores: Vasudev Patel, an Indian immigrant who was Hindu, and Waqar Hasan, a Muslim born in Pakistan. For Patel's murder, Stroman was sentenced to death.

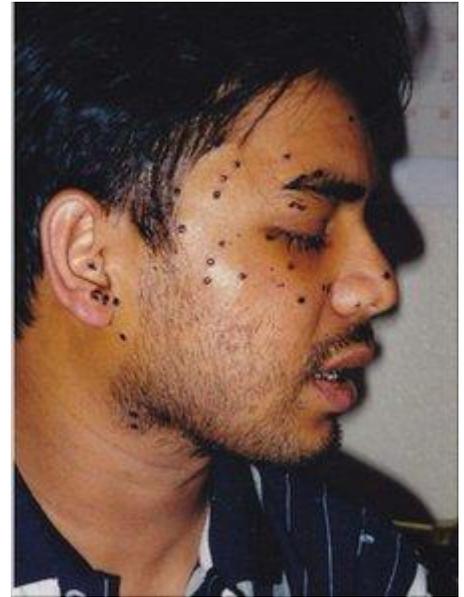
He blamed the shootings on the loss of a sister in the collapse of one of the World Trade Centre towers, although prosecutors said in court documents that there was no firm evidence that she ever existed. At the time of the attacks, Stroman was free on bond for a gun possession arrest. He had previous convictions for burglary, robbery, theft and credit card abuse, had served at least two prison terms and was paroled twice. He had been involved in an armed robbery at the age of just 12, and was a meth addict. He told authorities he belonged to the Aryan Brotherhood, a white supremacist prison gang.

As he played dead until his attacker left, Bhuyian made a promise to Allah (swt) that he would make the hajj pilgrimage. While in Makkah, he thought more deeply about the attack and decided what he would try to do. "If I can forgive my offender who tried to take my life, we can all work together to forgive each other and move forward and take a new narrative on the 10th anniversary of 11 September." He fought to save his attacker from the death sentence by starting an online petition.

Stroman realised his mistake. "I had some poor upbringing and I grabbed a hold of some ideas which was ignorance, you know, and hate is pure ignorance. I no longer want to be like hate, I want to be like me. No matter what I do or say is going to change the fact that even you are going to view the Muslims as suspect. If you get on the airplane and you see one, you might not be wanting to, but you are going to watch that person. We live in different times now, but it's not right to stereotype them and I'm the first to admit I did that."

Bhuyian argued, "He did what he did, but now he is a different person, and can talk to the people – those who are as ignorant as him – so there is a chance we can live in a better society. Execution is not a solution in this case."

Stroman was executed by lethal injection on 20 July 2011.



www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-14199078
www.post-gazette.com/pg/11203/1162103-153-0.stm

Cambridge

More mosques for UK

Plans are underway to build or expand three mosques in the UK.

In Cambridge¹, 70 km north of London, the current mosque in Mawson Road is inadequate. Muslims have to worship in shifts or pray in the street. A "buy a brick" appeal has been launched to raise about £500,000 this year towards the overall cost of £15m, of which one third has already been raised. During Ramadan, bricks were being sold for £1.40. The new mosque, which will include a prayer hall for 1,000 worshippers, an underground car park, a restaurant and a park, will be on a one-acre site in Mill Road. The head of the mosque's moving team, Dr Tim Winter (Shaykh Abdal Hakim Murad), said, "Cambridge is not just any old county town. It is one of the world's great cultural hubs. You can't ignore the fact that on our doorstep we have some of the world's great architectural exhibits. So it has to be a structure that's really quite striking, not just the average British mosque, which is a brick cube with an aluminium dome on top." The new mosque will be friendly to the environment: water from the wudu unit will be recycled to irrigate the gardens, the roof will be covered in vegetation, and large glass windows in the roof will ensure it can be naturally lit even on grey winter days.



Artist's impression of the interior of the planned Cambridge mosque

Peterborough

There are plans for a £2m expansion of the Burton Street mosque in Peterborough², 125 km north of London. It was originally built in 1978, shortly after the Shia Khoja Muslims arrived in Peterborough from parts of east Africa. Community president Raza Hussain Rahim said, "We were made so welcome when we arrived in this city." The new mosque will be "a community centre and we are part of that community. Our members here contribute to a number of professions including medicine, dentistry, law and accountancy."

Hereford

The 90-strong Muslim community of Hereford³, 190 km west of London, currently meet at the Kindle Centre. A total of £20,000 has so far been raised towards a dedicated mosque. The local imam, Zack Pandor, said, "The Muslim community has been growing year on year. ... It's a religious county and hopefully it'll be seen as a very positive contribution - but it's very early days. We've still got a long way to go."

1 www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-14446488

2 www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-13035895

3 www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hereford-worcester-14371910

Abdur-Rahman bin Awf

This article describes another companion who was promised Paradise while still alive.

His name was `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf bin Abdul-Harith bin Zuhrah. His name during the pre-Islam era was Abd `Amr or Abdul-Ka`bah. He said, "My name was Abd `Amr. When I reverted to Islam, the Prophet (saw) named me `Abdur-Rahman."

Like many Arabs of that era, he had the nickname Abu Muhammad. His mother was named Ash-Shifa' bint `Awf bin Abd bin Al-Harith bin Zuhrah. He was born on the 10th year after the year of the Elephant.

Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf was light in complexion. He had lustrous eyes with long eyelashes. His nose was convex and the neck long and elegant. He had protruding upper teeth and heavy hair under his ear-lobes. His hands and fingers were thick and masculine. His hair was curly. Overall, he was handsome with a nice complexion. He had a limp due to wounds inflicted on him on the day of Uhud.

Like all other sahabas, `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf (ra) was a true follower of Islam who used his wealth as a means to attain the pleasure of Allah rather than an end in itself.

Like Abu Bakr Siddique (ra), Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf was one of the pioneers to revert to Islam. He too, like Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam, reverted to Islam through Abu Bakr Siddiq (ra) while the Prophet (saw) was preaching Islam mostly in secret and in seclusion. He was one of the prominent persons who reverted to Islam who didn't hesitate due to fear of persecution. They submitted to Allah's Messenger (saw) freely because they realised truth when they heard it.

Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf (ra) too suffered the share of harassment the rest of the believers suffered. Along with many of the others, he too left Makkah for Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia). Later, he migrated to Al-Madinah in the company of the early Muhajirun, leaving behind all of his belongings.

Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf was one of the elite and chosen companions as regards truthfulness of belief, sincerity of the creed, fighting in the way of Allah and spending for the sake of Allah. This showed his perfect and deep faith in Allah and the Messenger of Allah (saw).

It was his great deeds that qualified him to be one of the ten whom Allah's Messenger (saw) gave the glad tidings of Paradise. The following hadith confirms this.

"Ten are in Paradise. Abu Bakr is in Paradise, `Umar is in Paradise, `Uthman, Ali, Az-Zubair, Talhah, Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf, Abu `Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah and Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas." Sa'id (the narrator) counted these as nine and kept silent about the tenth. The people said, "We ask you by Allah to tell us who the tenth is, O Abul-A'war (the father of the one-eyed)." He said, "Since you have asked me by Allah, Allah's Messenger (saw) said, 'And Abul-A'war (referring to himself) is in Paradise.'"

Anas (ra) narrated, "While `Aishah (ra) was in her house, she heard a noise outside. She asked, 'What is that?' It was said, 'A caravan of seven hundred camels of `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf has come from Syria.' Aishah (ra) further said, 'Allah's Messenger said, "I have seen `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf entering Paradise crawling." Upon hearing that, `Abdur-Rahman said, "Indeed, I would enter it standing." He gave the whole caravan in the way of Allah.'"

appearance

persecution

Abyssinia

Muhammad the tenth

giving away a caravan

charity

The following hadith is a lesson for the wealthy people and glad tidings for 'Abdur-Rahman (ra) regarding Paradise. Ibrahim bin Abdur-Rahman reported from his father that Allah's Messenger (saw) said, "O son of 'Awf! You are a wealthy man and you will not enter Paradise except by crawling. So, spend in the way of Allah that He will give your feet speed." 'Abdur-Rahman said, "What shall I spend?" He said, "Denounce what you possess." He said, "All what I possess?" Allah's Messenger (saw) said, "Yes." Ibn 'Awf went out intending to do so. Allah's Messenger (saw) sent for him and said, "Gabriel has come to me and said, 'Order Ibn 'Awf to entertain guests, feed the needy, give one who asks and spend first for those he supports. If he did so, he will be purified.'"

Abdur-Rahman bin 'Awf was a martyr and a truthful one. Allah's Messenger was on Mount Hira with Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali, Az-Zubair, Abdur-Rahman bin 'Awf, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, Sa'id bin Zaid and Talhah bin Ubaidullah (ra). The mount quivered. On that Allah's Messenger said, "Be firm! There is only a Prophet, a truthful one and two martyrs on you." This Hadith shows that 'Abdur-Rahman bin 'Awf has been given glad tidings of Paradise.

Badr

Abdur-Rahman bin 'Awf was one of those who participated in the Battle of Badr. There is another Hadith in which the Prophet (saw) gave the glad tidings of Paradise to whoever had participated in the Battle of Badr.

'Ubaidullah bin Abi Rafi' (ra) narrated that he heard Ali (ra) saying, "Allah's Messenger (saw) sent Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam, Al-Miqdad and me somewhere saying, 'Proceed until you reach Rawdah Khakh, where you will find a lady with a letter. You are to take that letter from her.' So, we set out with our horses running at full speed, until we arrived at Ar-Rawdah, where indeed we found the lady. We asked her to take out the letter and she replied, 'I have no letter with me.' Finally, she conceded after a threat and she took it out of her braid. We brought the letter to Allah's Messenger (saw) and it contained a statement from Hatib bin Abi Balta'ah to some of the Makkani pagans informing them of the intention of Allah's Messenger (saw). Then Allah's Messenger (saw) said, 'O Hatib! What is this?' Hatib replied, 'O Allah's Messenger, don't hasten to give your judgment on me. I was a man closely connected with the Quraish, but I did not belong to this tribe, while the other emigrants with you, had their relatives in Makkah who would protect their dependants and property. So, I wanted to recompense for my blood relation with them by doing some favour so that they might protect my dependants. I did this neither because of disbelief nor apostasy nor out of preferring Kufr (disbelief) over Islam.' Allah's Messenger (saw) said, 'Hatib has told the truth.' Umar (ra) said, 'O Allah's Messenger, allow me to chop off the head of this hypocrite.' Allah's Messenger (saw) said, 'Hatib had participated in the battle of Badr, and who knows, perhaps Allah has already looked at the Badr warriors and said: "Do whatever you like for I have forgiven you.'"' (Bukhari)



The benefits of prostration

34 times a day

Sajdah or sujud is a unique position or stance in our regular prayers. We are expected to perform sajdah twice in every rakaat that we perform; this means we perform at least 34 sajdah every day (17 rakaats [2 fajr + 4 thuhr + 4 asr + 3 maghrib + 4 isha] x 2 sajdah). We must understand the basic purpose of obligatory prayers is not to provide a rigorous course of exercise for people. Yet, it has been increasingly recognised that it has plenty of medical advantages for the human body. This has been very deeply researched by a medical doctor, Dr Muhammad Karim Beebani, which was published in the *Saudi Gazette* on 7 July 2000.

Prophet Muhammad (saw) mentioned in a hadith quoted by Ibn Majah that prayer is a cure for many diseases. He clearly set out that a person who offers his prayers regularly is protected from many diseases which he may not even know.

The position of sajdah in which the forehead touches the earth is exclusively associated with the Muslim form of prayer. It is the climax of a Muslim's prayer. Abu Huraira (ra) reported as mentioned in Bukhari that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: "The nearest a servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating himself, so make supplication (in this state)." Some compare this to the action of a faithful dog who licks his master's toes in an act of gratitude.

prolonging sajdah

Ummul Mu'mineen A'isha Siddiqua (ra) narrates that the Prophet (saw) used to prolong the prostration to such an extent that one could recite fifty verses of the Quran before he would lift his head (Bukhari).

In hadiths, the Prophet (saw) advised Muslims to perform ruku (bowing) and sajdah properly and calmly, and to get up only when the body has come to ease.

nearness to Allah

In supplication for victory, the Prophet (saw) also performed long bowing (ruku) and sajdah in the special prayers at the time of eclipse. Therefore, the first positive effect upon a person who prostrates or does sajdah is that he comes nearest to Allah and hence in that condition he can supplicate. This is a great psychological advantage and it gives relief to the person concerned as life is full of worries and in this position he gets at least a transient refuge from agonising problems.

*muscle
movement*

Dr Beebani writes that when a person goes to the position of prostration (sajdah), his whole body is in active motion. This position can be considered as a mini dive as the musalli (one who offers prayer) goes to rest his forehead on the ground while his hands are placed at his sides. This brings most, if not all, of the body muscles in active motion and serves to give them some exercise.

The hands are then specifically stretched out and the forearm as well as arm muscles are supposed to bear the weight in sajdah position. It gives good exercise to the muscles of the upper limb. The Prophet (saw), in a hadith, advised not to put the forearms flat on the ground but to keep them elevated above ground, and this is better for the forearm and arm muscles.

blood flow

Sajdah is a unique position as this is the only position in which the brain (or head) becomes lower than the heart and, hence, for the first time the blood gushes towards the brain with full force, whereas in all other positions (even when lying) the brain is above the heart, when it has to work against gravity to send blood to the brain.

In the position of sajdah, due to the increased blood supply, the brain receives more nourishment and it has a good effect upon memory, vision, hearing,



concentration, psyche and all other cognitive abilities. People who offer their prayers regularly have more willpower and can cope with the difficulties of life in a much better manner. They have less incidence of headaches, psychological problems and other defects of cognitive function.

neck muscles

In the unique position of sajdah, the neck muscles get good exercise. They have to bear the load when the forehead lies on the ground. Hence, the neck muscles become stronger. One can note the tense pressure at the neck muscles in the position of sajdah, especially the active motion of the neck and the facial muscles when the head is being lifted (eg one inch above the ground) and it will be noticed that they are in a very active motion.

Stronger cervical muscles mean the cervical vertebra will be better protected. Strength of the cervical muscles is important as the head rests upon the cervical vertebra supported by the cervical musculature. In fact, the head performs the rotator movements over the cervical vertebra. In any accident, cervical neck examination is especially important to the physicians because of its extraordinary importance.

A person who offers his prayers regularly is unlikely to get the usual neck myalgias or cervical spondylosis, as the neck muscles particularly become very strong due to the 34 sajdahs offered daily in five prayers.

The position of sajdah is also said to be a good treatment for the retroversion of the uterus, a disease of women.

Most of us do not know that the position of sajdah is an excellent exercise for men (for manpower). While getting up from sajdah, the perineal muscles are muscles which have to pull the trunk back to the sitting position and they contract actively. Similarly, while standing up from sajdah, the perineal muscles are again actively mobilised and this gives much strength to the muscles important for manpower.

back muscles

The unique position of sajdah also has positive effects upon the back muscles as while going into sajdah and getting up from it, the back muscles contract actively and they become stronger. Probably it is for this reason that it is uncommon for a person who is regular in prayer to get backaches.

After performing sajdah either the musalli stands up or he sits to pray attahiyat. In this position, the person sits calmly while his hands rest on his thighs which are folded backwards. This is similar to the relaxation position of yoga and has a soothing effect upon one's health and mental state.

Prophet Muhammad (saw) used to elongate the length of time in the ruku (bending) and sajdah positions and he advised us to do so. In the light of the above facts, it is correct to say this from a medical point of view, and this advice is a golden rule for health.

physical and spiritual exercise

Finally, let us be reminded that prayer is not meant to be an exercise. However, there are a lot of medical advantages associated with it. Still, the best blessing is the peace of mind which a person derives by the accomplishment of his duty to Allah (swt) by fulfilling an obligation which brings him closest to the Creator.

Jumuah, its origin and the legality of its conduct

This is the first of several instalments of an article that analyses the history and concept of jumuah based on the Quran, hadith, conduct of rightly guided sahabas and rulings of erudite jurisprudence of major mathhabs; Maliki, Hanafi, Shafi and Hanbali. It is abridged from a publication by Islamic Publications Ltd, Lahore, Pakistan.

Before Hijra

It is known from the tradition reported by Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud and Hadrat Abu Mas`ud Ansari that the Friday congregational prayer had been enjoined on the Holy Prophet (saw) some time before the Hijrah in Makkah. But at that time he could not act on it, for in Makkah it was not possible to perform any worship collectively. Therefore, he sent a written instruction to the people who had emigrated to Madinah before him that they should establish the Friday congregational prayer there.

12-person jumuah on written instruction from the Prophet

Thus, Hadrat Mus`ab bin `Umair, the leader of the earliest emigrants, offered the first Friday Prayer at Madinah with 12 followers. (Tabarani, Daraqutni).

40-person jumuah before instruction from the Prophet

Hadrat Ka`b bin Malik and Ibn Sirin have reported that even before this, the Muslims of Madinah had decided mutually, on their own initiative, that they would hold a collective service on one day in the week. For this purpose they had selected Friday as against the Sabbath (Saturday) of the Jews and Sunday of the Christians. The first Friday prayer was led by Hadrat Asad bin Zurarah at the place of Bani Bayadah and 40 Muslims participated in it. (Musnad Ahmad Abu Da`ud, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, `Abd bin Humaid, `Abdur Razzaq, Baihaqi).

Friday to precede Jewish Saturday and Christian Sunday

This shows that the Islamic taste and trend at that time was itself demanding that there should be a day on which the maximum number of Muslims should gather together and worship collectively. And it also was a demand of Islam that it should be a day other than Saturday and Sunday, so that the symbol of

12-person jumuah

40-person jumuah



declining sun

two rakahs

the Muslim community should be distinctive from the emblems of the Jewish and Christian communities. This was a wonderful manifestation of the Islamic trends and tastes of the Holy Prophet's companions that it often happened that even before a thing was enjoined, their taste proclaimed that the spirit of Islam demanded its introduction.

After Hijra

The establishment of the Friday congregational prayer was one of the earliest things that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did after his emigration to Madinah. After leaving Makkah he reached Quba on Monday and stayed there for four days. On the fifth day, which was a Friday, he proceeded to Madinah.

First jumuah before building a masjid

On the way at the place of Bani Salim bin `Auf, prayer time came for the Friday prayer and he performed the first Friday congregational prayer at this very place. (Ibn Hisham)

The time of jumuah

The time appointed by the Holy Prophet (saw) for this prayer was after the declining of the sun, the same time which is for the dhuhr prayer. The written instruction that he had sent to Hadrat Mus'ab bin `Umair before the Hijrah was, "Seek nearness to Allah by means of two rakahs of the Prayer when the sun declines after midday on Friday." (Daraqutni). This same instruction he gave orally after Hijrah, as well as leading the Friday prayer at the same time. Traditions on this subject have been related on the authority of Hadrat Anas, Hadrat Salamah bin Akwa', Hadrat Zubair bin al-`Awwam, Hadrat Sahl bin Sa'd, Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, Hadrat `Ammar bin Yasr and Hadrat Bilal in the collection of hadith, saying that the Holy Prophet used to perform the Friday prayer after the declining of the sun (Musnad Ahmad Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi).



Two rakahs because of two sermons

It also is confirmed by his practice that on this day the Holy Prophet led the Friday congregational prayer instead of the dhuhr prayer, and this Prayer consisted of two rakahs and he gave the sermon before it. This was the only difference between the Friday prayer and the dhuhr prayer on other days. Hadrat `Umar says: "According to the command enjoined by the tongue of your Prophet (saw) the traveller's prayer consists of two rakahs, the fajr prayer consists of two rakahs, and the Friday prayer consists of two rakahs. This is the complete, not the shortened prayer, and the Friday prayer has been shortened only because of the sermon."

one athan

two athans

punctuality

Athan for jumuah

The call to prayer that has been mentioned here implies the call that is made just before the sermon, and not the call that is made much before the sermon to announce that the prayer time has begun. There is a tradition in the hadith from Hadrat Sa'ib bin Yazid to the effect that in the time of the Holy Prophet there used to be only one call that was made after the Imam (leader in prayer) had taken his seat on the pulpit. The same practice also continued in the time of Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat `Umar.

Two athans

When the population increased in the time of Hadrat `Uthman, he ordered another call to be made "in the bazaar of Madinah at his house, Az-Zaura" (Bukhari, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Tabarani).

Remembrance means sermon

The Quran (62:9) says, "Believers, when the call for prayer is made on Friday hasten to the remembrance of Allah and give up all trading. That is better for you, if you only knew." In this command, "remembrance" implies the Friday sermon, for the first thing that the Holy Prophet (saw) used to do after the call was to deliver the sermon, and the prayer he led always after delivering the sermon.

Hadrat Abu Hurairah has reported that the Holy Prophet (saw) said: "The angels on Friday go on writing down the names of the people as they arrive. Then, when the imam comes out to deliver the sermon, they stop writing the names and turn their attention to the remembrance (ie the sermon)," (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, and Nasa'i).

This hadith also shows that the remembrance implies the sermon. The exhortation of the Quran itself points to the same thing. First, it says, "Hasten to the remembrance of Allah"; then a little below it says, "Then, when the prayer is over, disperse in the land." This shows that on Friday the order of the service is that first there is the remembrance of Allah and then the prayer. The commentators also agreed that remembrance either implies the sermon, or both the sermon and the prayer.

Remembrance of Satan

Using the word "dhikr-Allah" for the sermon by itself gives the meaning that it should contain themes relevant to the remembrance of Allah; for instance, praising and glorifying Allah, imploring Him to bless His Messenger, exhorting and instructing the audience to obey His commands and follow His shariah, commending His pious and righteous servants, etc. On this very basis, Zamakhshari writes in Al-kashshaf, "Praising the wicked and tyrannical rules in the Friday sermon, or mentioning their names and praying for them, has nothing to do with the remembrance of Allah; this would be the remembrance of Satan."



YMWA corner

Drawing closer to Allah

Please contact us on ymwa.nz@gmail.com for any queries about the monthly study circles.

Sheikh Habib Umar conducted a training programme in New Zealand. The two days of intensive retreat contained lessons with topics ranging from the inner dimensions of salah, identity of a Muslim, dawah, knowledge, piety and righteousness. These lessons were punctuated by the sound of the wonderful qari reciting lengthy chapters of the Quran, congregational prayers with dhikr and beautiful Arabic nasheeds that narrated the life of the Prophet (saw). The atmosphere was such that there were constant blessings directed towards the prophet (saw) and some were crying in the remembrance of Allah (swt).

A main objective of attending this retreat was to seek knowledge. Sheikh Habib Umar constantly reiterated that students receive according to their level of sincerity, intentions and how much they endeavour.

But why should we seek knowledge? An important reason is to become more acquainted with Allah (swt): to learn about our creator and to understand what He wants from us so that we may please Him and ultimately develop a better bond with Allah. A hadith that highlights the importance of seeking knowledge is "When death comes to one who is seeking knowledge to revive thereby Islam, there will be only one degree between him and the prophets in Paradise" (Sunan al-Darimi).

As you gain knowledge, it is important that your actions reflect the knowledge you have gained. In Imam Al-Ghazali's words, "Knowledge without action is madness and action without knowledge is void." He goes on to say, "Know that the knowledge which does not remove you from sins today and does not convert you to obedience, will not remove you tomorrow from hellfire. If you do not act according to your knowledge today, and you do not make amends for days gone by, you will say tomorrow on the Day of Resurrection, 'Send us back and we will act virtuously!' And it will be replied, 'Fool! You have just come from there!'"

The congregational prayers and dhikr as well as constant salutations to the Prophet (saw) at the retreat were truly excellent. These are some of the things that are not done on a regular basis in our lives today. The remembrance of Allah is the basis of good deeds. Abdullah ibn Busr reported that a man said, "O Messenger of Allah, the laws of Islam are too much for me. Tell me something I can cling to." And the Prophet (saw) replied, "Your tongue should remain moist with the remembrance of Allah" (At-Tirmidhi).

The Prophet (saw) also told his companions, "Shall I tell you about the best of deeds, the most pure in the sight of your Lord, about the one that is of the highest order and is far better for you than spending gold and silver, even better for you than meeting your enemies in the battlefield where you strike at their necks and they at yours?" The Companions replied, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet (saw) said, "Remembrance of Allah" (Tirmidhi, Ahmad and Al-Hakim).



knowledge

dhikr

heart and tongue

light

There is an abundance of reward in dhikr. Dhikr starts with the tongue, which in itself is a small benefit. From the tongue, it ascends to the heart, ultimately causing a synchrony between the heart and the tongue – when the tongue says “Alhamdulillah”, the heart accepts. And with the synchrony of both, there comes a point where the tongue follows what is in the heart, reaching sublime degrees, and a believer feels the presence of Allah. Therefore, let us remain in dhikr, and indeed if we persist there will be noor (light).

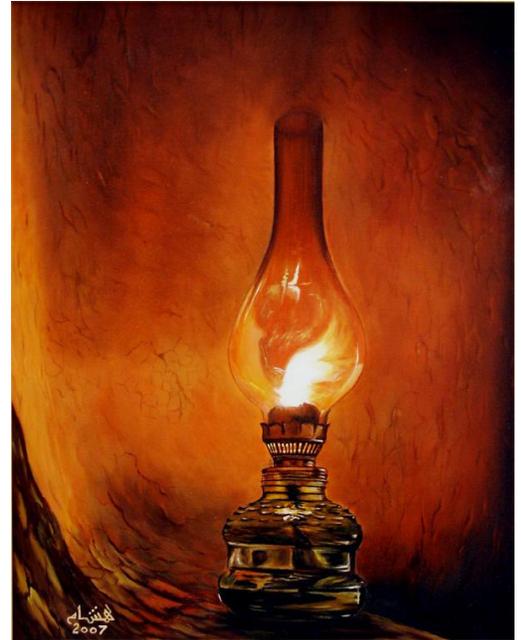
“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is Knowing of all things.” (Surat an-Nur 24:35)

The prophet (saw) advised us that Allah (swt) loved dhikr so much that he wanted us to remember Him in the morning, night, when entering the masjid, putting on clothes, having relations with our spouse, when the wind is blowing, when we get into our vehicle, when we are sad, when we are in difficulty, when we are sick, when we are visiting the sick, and so on. Simply, there is an abundance of opportunity for us to perform dhikr.

In a hadith qudsi, the Prophet (saw) narrated, “Allah says, ‘I am to my servant as he expects of Me, I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in his heart, I remember him to Myself, and if he remembers me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly better than his, and if he draws nearer to Me a hand’s span, I draw nearer to him an arm’s length, and if he draws nearer to Me an arm’s length, I draw nearer to him a fathom’s length, and if he comes to me walking, I rush to him at [great] speed’” (Bukhari and Muslim).

Isn’t this a truly great reward? Compare this to the glories of our dunya (world) where one may be mentioned in a magazine, in parliament or in a gathering of the most powerful of men. Can these even be compared to being mentioned in the company of Allah (swt) in Paradise?

Plentiful dhikr opens the doors to the bounties of Allah (swt). Usually a person is secluded when they do dhikr – but can anyone really be lonely when they are with Allah? Man’s greatest sadness is that he feels all alone. But with dhikr, we will never be alone for in surah al-Baqarah, Allah (swt) says, “So remember Me; I will remember you.”



characteristics of a believer

It is useful to reflect on the identity of a believer in a country where we are recognised as Muslims. Some characteristics of a believer are:

- ✓ Humility ("And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace" Al Furqan 25:63)
- ✓ Truthful speech (a Muslim should be recognised by the truth in him)
- ✓ They are the bearers of truth. People can borrow truth from them.
- ✓ Wisdom (In Surah Isra 17:22 wisdom is described in many verses: doing what is khair in this dhunya and the next, is hikam, wisdom)
- ✓ Avoiding the forbidden. People always see you avoiding forbidden things
- ✓ Being trustworthy
- ✓ Always being beneficial
- ✓ Having a good impact on the surroundings, but the surroundings don't have an impact on him. This speaks of strength of iman.
- ✓ Optimism and a positive outlook. Abu Hurayrah (ra) reported that the Prophet (saw) said, "Whenever Allah wills good for a person, He subjects him to adversity" (Bukhari).
- ✓ Knowing that the source is Allah and the return is to Allah
- ✓ Bringing all to worshipping the Lord – not only Muslims
- ✓ Getting people from the narrow-mindedness of cultures and attitudes to the vastness of the world and the akhirat.
- ✓ Focus revolving around mercy and good dealings.

Our perfect example in all this is our Prophet (saw).

Some practical steps we can take in our lives to be closer to Allah are to spend time with Allah alone (prayer, dhikr, supplication), with family (salah with family), make time for spiritual meals daily (salah), weekly (khutbah), monthly, yearly (Islamic conferences and retreats).

Evidently there are quite a number of things we can do to draw closer to Allah and to provide ourselves with a spiritual meal. When our spiritual needs are fulfilled, our physical and intellectual needs will inevitably be fulfilled.



Voice of Islam



VOI delivers the message of Islam based on the teachings of the Noble Quran and the Sunnah (practices) of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). The show neither delivers nor promotes any political, national, ethnic, social or class perspective – its focus is purely on da'wah and deen-al-Islam (the Islamic faith/way of life).

VOI television is broadcast on:

- Triangle TV in Auckland (8.00 & 11.30am Sat; 8.00am Sun)
- CTV in Christchurch
- Channel 9 Dunedin
- Telstra Digital TV in Wellington & Christchurch CH 50
- SKYTV CH 89 and Freeview CH 21 in New Zealand
- MAITV in Fiji
- METRO TV in Ghana, West Africa

3 & 4 September

Quran 2: 252-254

LECTURE: Muhammad as a leader by Tawfique Chowdhury

DOCUMENTARY: Following the Prophet pbuh in the best manner part 3 by Harun Yahya

FEATURE: How to become a Muslim by Yasir Qadhi & Eddie

HIJAB: Australian Sisters

10 & 11 September

Quran 2: 255-257

LECTURE: How I came to Islam by Abdur Raheem Green

FEATURE: The Quran by Abdur Raheem Green

DOCUMENTARY: The blessings around us by Harun Yahya

17 & 18 September

Quran 2: 255-257

LECTURE: How I came to Islam Q & A by Abdur Raheem Green

FEATURE: The Quran by Abdur Raheem Green

MY PATH TO ISLAM: by Darren Wells

24 & 25 September

Quran 2: 162-165

LECTURE: Engineering Harmony by Sister Fiona

NO STONE UNTURNED: Shahadah by Sheikh Bilal Dannoun

TID BITS: Dawah by Sheikh Yusuf Estes



Tawfique Chowdhury

Watch VOI online, or order a free copy of the Quran: www.voiceofislamtv.com

Auckland prayer timetable for September 2011

(from www.islamicFinder.org. For other cities in New Zealand, see www.fianz.co.nz).

“Indeed, when one of you prays, he speaks privately with his Lord.” (hadith)

Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
1	5:16	6:42	12:22	3:32	6:00	7:22
2	5:15	6:41	12:21	3:33	6:01	7:23
3	5:14	6:40	12:21	3:33	6:02	7:23
4	5:12	6:38	12:21	3:34	6:03	7:24
5	5:11	6:37	12:20	3:34	6:04	7:25
6	5:09	6:35	12:20	3:35	6:04	7:26
7	5:08	6:34	12:20	3:35	6:05	7:27
8	5:06	6:32	12:19	3:35	6:06	7:27
9	5:05	6:31	12:19	3:36	6:07	7:28
10	5:03	6:29	12:19	3:36	6:08	7:29
11	5:02	6:28	12:18	3:37	6:08	7:30
12	5:00	6:26	12:18	3:37	6:09	7:30
13	4:59	6:25	12:18	3:37	6:10	7:31
14	4:57	6:23	12:17	3:38	6:11	7:32
15	4:56	6:22	12:17	3:38	6:12	7:33
16	4:54	6:20	12:17	3:38	6:12	7:34
17	4:53	6:19	12:16	3:39	6:13	7:35
18	4:51	6:17	12:16	3:39	6:14	7:35
19	4:49	6:16	12:15	3:40	6:15	7:36
20	4:48	6:14	12:15	3:40	6:16	7:37
21	4:46	6:13	12:15	3:40	6:16	7:38
22	4:45	6:11	12:14	3:40	6:17	7:39
23	4:43	6:10	12:14	3:41	6:18	7:40
24	4:41	6:08	12:14	3:41	6:19	7:41
Summer time starts: put clocks forward one hour						
25	5:40	7:07	1:13	4:41	7:20	8:42
26	5:38	7:05	1:13	4:42	7:20	8:43
27	5:37	7:04	1:13	4:42	7:21	8:44
28	5:35	7:02	1:12	4:42	7:22	8:44
29	5:33	7:01	1:12	4:43	7:23	8:45
30	5:32	6:59	1:12	4:43	7:24	8:46

Credits

Rocket Science is a monthly newsletter produced by the Mount Albert Islamic Trust.

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Why attend Rocket Park jumuah?

- ✓ Central location
- ✓ Plenty of free parking
- ✓ Bayaan (religious talk) before jumuah prayers
- ✓ All bayaan and khutbah in English

NB We are only open for Friday prayers – not for the five daily prayers.

In December 2010, the **Senior Citizens' Association building, Rocket Park, New North Road, Mount Albert**, was closed for renovation by the Auckland City Council. Following these renovations, we believe we are the only mosque in New Zealand with air-conditioning and heating.

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Missed an issue of *Rocket Science*? All our monthly issues are available online at the Mount Albert Islamic Trust website: www.mtalbertislamiccentre.org

Swt, saw, as, ra

swt : subhanahu wa ta'ala "Glory to Him, the Exalted" (when mentioning Allah)

saw : salallahu alaihi wassalam "May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him" (when mentioning Muhammad)

as: alaihis salam "Peace be on him" (when mentioning other prophets)

ra : radi allahu anhu/ha/hum "May Allah be pleased with him/her/them" (when mentioning members of Muhammad's family, companions, etc)