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# Rocket Science

December 2017

Rabi al-Awal / Rabi al-Akhir 1439



In the name of Allah,  
most Gracious, most Merciful

## The quest for knowledge

It is often said by scholars that when Allah (swt) wishes to do good to someone, He bestows knowledge on that person. In fact, this is from a hadith of the Prophet (saw), the knowledge referred to being the knowledge of the religion (deen). Why does Islam place so much emphasis on knowledge, even urging Muslims to seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave?

This is how we are created, and this is what we instinctively do, because we are born with *fitrah*. Even before we were born, our souls took an oath submitting to Allah (swt) and in the end we will be brought back to face Him and be held accountable for what choices we made in this world.

The Arabic word *fitrah* has no equivalent in English, but can be thought of as our natural instinctiveness or disposition to follow God. The Prophet (saw) confirmed this when he said, "Each child is born in a state of *fitrah*, but his parents make him a Jew or a Christian. It is like the way an animal gives birth to a normal offspring. Have you noticed any (young animal) born mutilated before you mutilate them?"

Even before a child is born, the soul of every person takes an oath,

imprinted in their souls, about the Godhood of Allah. The Quran refers to it by describing it thus: "When your Lord drew forth from the loins of the children of Adam their descendants and made them testify concerning themselves, (saying), 'Am I not your Lord?', they said, 'Yes, we testify to it.' (This) in case you say should say on the Day of Judgement, 'We were unaware of this.' Or in case you should say, 'It was our ancestors who made partners (with Allah) and we are only their descendants. Will you then destroy us for what those liars did?'" (Quran 7:172- 173).

As the child grows, however, it is subjected to its environment, to culture and customs and the upbringing by parents and caregivers. Hence Allah (swt) does not hold the child accountable for what it follows at this stage of its life. As the child matures and reaches puberty, however, it is in a much better position to reason and search for the truth, and make the choice between following its baser instincts (*nafs*) or its natural instinct (*fitrah*). This is by no means easy, as *Shaitan* will always try to persuade it to go astray, by encouraging it to follow their *nafs* instead.

Hence, knowledge is vital in Islam as it is knowledge that will help us understand our purpose in this world and help us understand how to worship Allah, thereby helping us fulfil the purpose for which we are created. When the Quran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (saw), the very first word of it was a command for the Prophet to "read".

Whilst alone and meditating in the cave of Hira, the angel Jibril appeared and the first verses of the Holy Quran were revealed: "Read [O Muhammad!] in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot. Read, and your Lord is the Most Honourable who taught with the pen, taught man what he did not know" (96: 1-5).

The references to both reading and writing, which we now know and widely accept as one of the main ways to gain and transmit knowledge, set the scene for the Prophet (saw), who was himself someone who could not read or write, to go on a quest for the truth, the truth that Allah revealed to him as what we now know as Islam.

Many are the ayats and hadiths that speak of the importance of seeking knowledge and the rewards for doing so. One of these is where Prophet (saw) said, "He who takes the path hoping for knowledge, Allah makes easy for him the path to Paradise. Verily, the angels lower their wings for the seeker of knowledge out of pleasure for what he is doing. Verily all in the heavens and earth seek forgiveness for the knowledgeable, even the fish in the water. The excellence of the knowledgeable over the servant is like the excellence of the moon on

the night of the full moon over all the planets. Verily, the learned are the heirs of the prophets; the prophets do not leave dinar or dirham [ie nothing with monetary value], but they are inherited in knowledge, and he who takes it takes a great bounty" (Abu Dawood, Ibn Maajah, and Ibn Habbaan).

Nowadays with the advances in technology and the access to forums such as social media, YouTube and Google, knowledge has become a lot more accessible than ever before. However, the challenge remains to be critical of that knowledge so we ensure that it is true and reliable, to retain that knowledge, and to act upon it. Therefore it is vital that together with the quest for knowledge we also implement the Islamic methodology that was taught to the Prophet (saw) and then taught by him to his companions.

The scholar Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah (ra) summed this up nicely when he wrote, "There are six stages to knowledge:

Firstly, asking questions in a good manner.

Secondly, remaining quiet and listening attentively.

Thirdly, understanding well.

Fourthly, memorising.

Fifthly, teaching.

Sixthly (and it is its fruit), acting upon the knowledge and keeping to its limits."

May Allah (swt) grant us knowledge that benefits, together with the ability to act upon this. "My Lord! Increase me in knowledge" (Quran, 20:114).

The likeness of those who were entrusted with the (obligation of the) Taurat (Torah) (i.e. to obey its commandments and to practise its legal laws), but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is as the likeness of a donkey who carries huge burdens of books (but understands nothing from them). (Quran, 62:5)

## Australians vote on homosexual “marriage”

On 15 November, a vote by Australians on legalising homosexual “marriage” ended in a majority “yes” vote. Legislation is expected to be put in place before the end of the year. This follows a similar vote by New Zealand MPs in 2013, with legislation.

### The Islamic perspective

In an article entitled “Well-being is accepting one’s fitrah state” in the Australasian Muslim Times<sup>1</sup>, Dr Daud Bachelor examined the implications from the Islamic point of view. Much of what follows comes from that article.

Fitrah means ‘sound human nature’ as God created it. ‘Fatara’ in Arabic means ‘to create.’ Prophet Muhammad (saw) clarified this:

“There is none born but is created to his true nature (Islam). It is his parents who make him a Jew, Christian or Magian, quite as beasts produce their young with their limbs perfect. Do you see anything deficient in them?” Then he quoted the Quran, “The nature (fitrah) made by Allah in which He has created men; there is no altering Allah’s creation; that is the right religion.” (30:30) (Muslim)

In the Quran, Allah (swt) emphasises that He “bestows (children) male or female according to His Will.” (42:49). The gender assigned by God at birth is part of our fitrah, not to be changed.

### The mental perspective

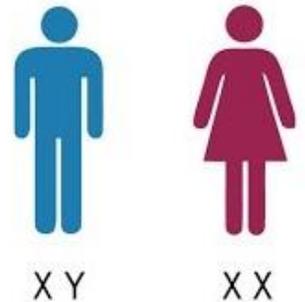
A 2015 review for Queensland’s AIDS Council<sup>2</sup> highlighted “Studies in Australia consistently show LGBTI individuals ... to be at a greater risk for not only depression and anxiety, but an array of mental health issues, including suicide.”

A wider study covering seven countries revealed that “the risk of depression and anxiety disorders among gay and bisexual individuals was at least 1.5 times that of heterosexuals. Furthermore, the lifetime relative risk for suicide attempt in gay and bisexual men was over four times that of heterosexuals. ... Rates of suicide attempt among trans individuals are particularly elevated.”

These findings surely indicate to any thinking person that, regardless of religious considerations, it is wholly unwise to even contemplate LGBT practices if one is concerned about well-being.

### Men are men, and women are women

Given the high risks indicated, it is highly irresponsible to have promoted programmes in Australian schools where children were encouraged to believe gender is fluid and to experiment with changing their gender.



Yusuf Qaradawi writes that it is not unsurprising that "The Prophet (saw) declared a woman should not wear a man's clothing, or a man a woman's. He cursed men who imitate women and women who imitate men. Such imitation includes the manner of speaking, walking, dressing and moving. The evil of such conduct, which affects both the life of the individual and of society, is that it constitutes rebellion against the natural ordering of things. There are men and there are women, and each of the two sexes has its own distinctive characteristics."

When a non-Muslim seeks treatment and surgery to become a transgender person of opposite sex, the individual's sex chromosomes still proclaim their fitrah gender (male XY or female XX chromosomes).

### Rhetoric

The language used by same-sex proponents and in the media is far from unbiased.

A common phrase used was that "People have chosen love over hate." However, opponents of the bill do not hate proponents; rather they use logical arguments to persuade them that same-sex relationships are not a viable lifestyle for mankind.

Another common phrase used in both the New Zealand and Australian context was "The sun will still rise tomorrow." Insha Allah, the sun will rise tomorrow, regardless of any votes by humans.

In 2013, New Zealand MP Maurice Williamson said in parliament that there was a "big gay rainbow" over his constituency. What amazing logic! The weather that day was sunny and rainy, and therefore

homosexuality is morally acceptable. It even won New Zealand's Quote of the Year award<sup>3</sup>.

A CNN report<sup>4</sup> on the Australian vote stated, "Celebrations broke out across Australia after a two-month national postal survey came out 'overwhelmingly' in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage." The quotation marks are in the original report, although it is not clear who is being quoted. Let us examine the statistics.

The result of the Australian population vote was 61.6% in favour, and 38.4% against. Is this "overwhelming"? The percentage of Australians voting against the bill was higher than the percentage of New Zealanders voting for a Labour government in the recent election (36.9%). Indeed, the percentage voting for a Labour government was almost the same as the percentage voting against homosexual "marriage" in the New Zealand MP vote (36.4%).

1 Daud Bachelor "Well-being is accepting one's fitrah state" Australasian Muslim Times, 25 October 2017.

www.amust.com.au/2017/10/well-being-is-accepting-ones-fitrah-state/  
2 Delaney Michael Skerrett. "Mental Health and Suicidal Behaviours in LGBTI Populations and Access to Care in Australia: A Literature Review" www.healthyc.com.au/MedicareLocal/media/Site-Pages-Content/GP%20Resources/LGBTI/Mental-Health-Suicidal-Behaviours-LGBTI-Literature-Review.pdf

3 Aimee Gulliver. "Big gay rainbow' wins votes" Stuff, 20 December 2013. www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/9537673/Big-gay-rainbow-wins-votes

4 Ben Westcott and Lucie Morris-Marr "Australia votes 'yes' to same-sex marriage". CNN, 15 November 2017. edition.cnn.com/2017/11/14/asia/australia-same-sex-marriage-



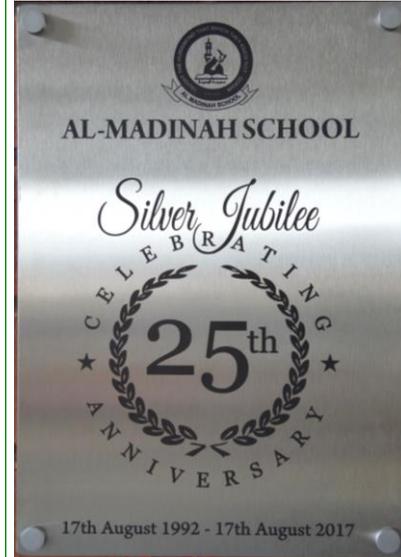
## Al-Madinah School celebrates 25 years

This year marked the silver jubilee of the founding of Al-Madinah School in Auckland. To this day, the school is still the only Year 1 to Year 13 Islamic school in New Zealand.

The principal, Asin Ali, marked the occasion with a ribbon-cutting for the new buildings completed earlier in the year. The ribbon-cutting was led by former MP Ashraf Choudhary, assisted by FIANZ president, Hazim Arafah. Prayers were led by the chairman of the FIANZ Ulema Religious Advisory Board, Sheikh Mohammed Amir.

The whole event took place in the presence of local Mangere Maori elders, who also said prayers for the school, and a host of distinguished guests from the community.

Starting in 1992 with nine students and two staff, the school was integrated into the state education system in 1996 and now has 60 staff and 550 local students. It has two international students and is keen to attract more.



Scissors at the ready



Ashraf Choudhary leads ribbon-cutting



Sheikh Mohammed Amir leads prayers



Local Maori leader offers blessing



Performing the haka



Distinguished guests

## University of Hamburg religious code of conduct

An RT report<sup>1</sup> describes a religious code of conduct imposed in October by the University of Hamburg in Germany. The code supposedly applies to all religions, but the terms of the code overwhelmingly affect Muslims.

The code follows complaints about Muslim students praying loudly in the library and crowding the bathrooms to wash their feet. The University President Dieter Lenzen says, "To date, there have been no complaints about Buddhist students, just a few about Christian students, but a great many about Muslim students," He noted that the code bans "loud and demonstrative expressions of faith," but he notes that "quiet prayer may be acceptable in the library." Further, "ritual activities" must be "non-disruptive or carried out in rooms assigned

for that purpose." There is a "Room of Contemplation", but students are not allowed to segregate that area by gender, as required for Muslim prayers. The code also bans foot baths in sanitary facilities, such that washing the feet, as a compulsory part of every wudu, is not possible.

When it comes to religious apparel, the code stresses that students are permitted to wear items including the Muslim face veil. However, that is only if they are not deemed to "impede communication required for academic exchange, instruction, or exams..."

1 Religious code of conduct adopted at German university after complaints about Muslim students. RT, 7 November 2017.  
[www.rt.com/news/409063-university-hamburg-code-muslims](http://www.rt.com/news/409063-university-hamburg-code-muslims)



University of Hamburg



## 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).  
VOI television is broadcast on:

- APNA TV (Freeview channel 36)(10.30 am Sun)
- Face TV (SKYTV channel 83) in New Zealand (11.30 am Sat & 9.00 am Sun)
- Southern Television (Freeview Channel 39) in Dunedin and Southland (see TV guide for times)
- Mai TV (Fiji Broadcasting Corporation) in Fiji (9.00 am Sun)
- Metro TV in Ghana, West Africa (see TV guide for times)

### 2 & 3 December

Quran: 4: 156-157

Animation: How to be a good husband

Lecture: Deen a way of life for the Muslim by Yusuf Estes.

Inspiration series 8: Piety is here.

Documentary: The measure of beauty created by God – the golden ratio 2.

Tid bits: Quran by Yusuf Estes.

### 9 & 10 December

Quran: 4: 156-157

Animation: How to be a good wife.

Lecture: Gratitude to the merciful by Yasmin Mogahed.

Inspiration series 9: Suspicious activity.

Documentary: The measure of beauty created by God – the golden ratio 3.

Tid bits: Jihad (struggle) by Yusuf Estes.

### 16 & 17 December

Quran: 4: 156-157

Animation: How to be confident.

Lecture: Why do bad things happen: by Nouman Ali Khan.

Inspiration series 10: Flock.

Documentary: The measure of beauty created by God – the golden ratio 4.

Feature: The wrong motives of life by Mufti Menk.

Tid bits: Muslim by Yusuf Estes.

### 23 & 24 December

Quran: 4: 156-157

Animation: How to be patient.

Lecture: Jesus in Islam by Yasir Qadhi

Inspiration series 11: Saturday night live.

Clip: Jesus loved in Islam

Documentary: Maryam mother of Jesus part 1.

### 30 & 31 December

Quran: 4: 156-157

Animation: How to control yourself

Lecture: Reflecting on the signs of God by Abdul Nasir Jagda.

Inspiration series 12: The world he wished to see.

Feature: Prophet Muhammad by Suhaib Webb.



Abdul Nasir Jagda

Watch VOI online, or order a free copy of the Quran: [www.voitv.org](http://www.voitv.org)

## Auckland prayer timetable for December 2017

(from [www.islamicfinder.org](http://www.islamicfinder.org). For other cities in New Zealand, see [www.fianz.co.nz](http://www.fianz.co.nz)).

Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr 1	Asr 2	Maghrib	Isha
1	04:07	05:55	01:11	05:02	06:14	08:25	10:07
2	04:07	05:55	01:11	05:02	06:15	08:26	10:08
3	04:06	05:55	01:11	05:03	06:16	08:27	10:09
4	04:06	05:55	01:12	05:03	06:16	08:28	10:10
5	04:05	05:54	01:12	05:04	06:17	08:29	10:11
6	04:05	05:54	01:13	05:04	06:18	08:30	10:13
7	04:05	05:54	01:13	05:04	06:18	08:31	10:14
8	04:05	05:54	01:13	05:05	06:19	08:32	10:15
9	04:04	05:54	01:14	05:05	06:20	08:32	10:16
10	04:04	05:55	01:14	05:06	06:20	08:33	10:17
11	04:04	05:55	01:15	05:06	06:21	08:34	10:18
12	04:04	05:55	01:15	05:07	06:21	08:35	10:19
13	04:04	05:55	01:16	05:07	06:22	08:36	10:19
14	04:04	05:55	01:16	05:08	06:22	08:36	10:20
15	04:04	05:55	01:17	05:08	06:23	08:37	10:21
16	04:05	05:56	01:17	05:09	06:24	08:38	10:22
17	04:05	05:56	01:18	05:09	06:24	08:38	10:23
18	04:05	05:56	01:18	05:10	06:25	08:39	10:23
19	04:06	05:57	01:19	05:10	06:25	08:39	10:24
20	04:06	05:57	01:19	05:11	06:26	08:40	10:24
21	04:06	05:58	01:20	05:11	06:26	08:40	10:25
22	04:07	05:58	01:20	05:12	06:27	08:41	10:25
23	04:08	05:59	01:21	05:12	06:27	08:41	10:26
24	04:08	05:59	01:21	05:13	06:28	08:42	10:26
25	04:09	06:00	01:22	05:13	06:28	08:42	10:27
26	04:10	06:00	01:22	05:14	06:29	08:43	10:27
27	04:10	06:01	01:23	05:14	06:29	08:43	10:27
28	04:11	06:02	01:23	05:15	06:29	08:43	10:27
29	04:12	06:02	01:24	05:15	06:30	08:44	10:28
30	04:13	06:03	01:24	05:16	06:30	08:44	10:28
31	04:14	06:04	01:24	05:16	06:31	08:44	10:28

"Whoever manages to do a raka of Subh [Fajr] before the sun has risen has done Subh in time, and whoever manages to do a raka of Asr before the sun has set has done Asr in time."  
(Hadith)

Asr 1: Maliki, Shafii and Hanbali schools (single shadow length)

Asr 2: Hanafi school (double shadow length)

## Credits

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

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## Why attend Rocket Park jumuah?

Prayers are held at the **Senior Citizens' Association building, Rocket Park, New North Road, Mount Albert.**

- ✓ Central location
- ✓ Plenty of free parking
- ✓ Facilities for ladies
- ✓ Heating and air-conditioning
- ✓ Bayan (religious talk) before jumuah prayers
- ✓ All bayans and khutbahs in English

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

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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](http://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)