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# Rocket Science

July 2016

Ramadan / Shawal 1437



In the name of Allah,  
most Gracious, most Merciful

## Eid Mubarak!

Insha Allah, Ramadan 1437 is likely to end on Tuesday 5 July (subject to confirmation). All of us at *Rocket Science* and the Mount Albert Islamic Trust wish all our readers "Eid Mubarak!" May Allah (swt) grant you the rewards for your fasting and your extra devotional activities during this special month, and may He help us to continue in the heightened sense of iman once Ramadan is over.



And don't forget the rewards for fasting any six days in Shawwal (except Eid ul-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 *dahr* (the whole year or possibly forever)." (Narrated by Muslim, Abu Dawood, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisaa'i and Ibn Maajah)

**123456** The virtue of fasting  
six days of Shawwaal

## The gift of Ramadan



Ramadan is a truly blessed month, a month whose nights and days are full of blessings and reward for those that seek it; a month where the reward for every single deed is multiplied 70 times; a month that is gifted to us in order for us to attain taqwa, as stated by Allah (swt) in the Holy Quran: "O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed upon those before you in order that you may attain taqwa" (Surah al-Baqarah 2:183).

Just as the Prophet Muhammad (saw) used to tell his companions, let these words be an inspiration for us all too: "The month of Ramadan is coming, the blessed month wherein Allah has made fasting binding on you. In it, the gates of Paradise are opened, and in it, the gates of Hell are locked, and the devils are chained. In it is the beneficent night of a thousand months (ie Laylat ul-Qadr). Whoever denies goodness in it has indeed been deprived."

### The purpose of Ramadan

As stated above, the purpose of Ramadan, as explained in the Quran, is to gain taqwa. So what exactly then is taqwa? *Taqwa* is used (sometimes as a verb and sometimes as a noun) 251 times in the Holy Quran. In Islam, it is generally regarded as the concept of having self-restraint.

To understand the concept fully, one must have some understanding of the purpose of our lives here on Earth. Allah (swt) Himself tells us, "And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." (Surah al-Zariyat

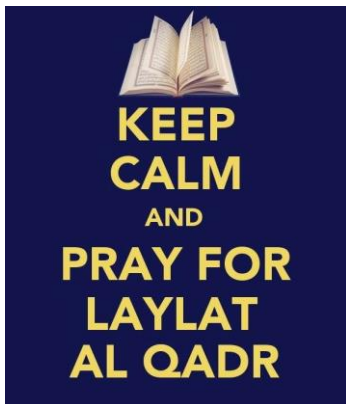
51:56). So everything we do in this life should revolve around the worship of Allah (swt). This is one of the reasons we say "Bismillah" before we begin anything, because firstly it purifies our intentions and acts as a filter for our pending actions, and secondly, as the Quran states, "truly in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest" (Surah al-Rad 13:28).

*Taqwa* then means to abstain from those things that cause us to deviate from the worship of Allah (swt) and therefore to stray from the purpose for which we were created. It allows us to choose to live a moral life. In this regard taqwa can be of two types, the first of which is to avoid any situation that may cause us to deviate and commit sin. The second type is to remain persistent in the face of challenges. This is the preferred quality of those who are pious (strong in their faith).

So the purpose of Ramadan is to gain taqwa and in doing so, to gain self-restraint and patience.

### The importance of self-restraint

Why, one must ask, do we need to learn self-restraint and patience? The answer again lies in the Quran. In Surah al-Asr (103), Allah (swt) says, "By (the token of) time. Verily, man is [deep] in loss, except for those who believe and do good deeds, urge one another to the truth and urge one another to patience." Here, Allah (swt) reminds us that time is passing by, and that there are four qualities that will give us success: to believe in Allah, to do good and to deal with others justly and patiently.



Self-restraint and patience are key qualities of a Muslim. In this month of Ramadan, we are asked to not only give up food and drink from dawn to sunset, but also to abstain from ignorant and indecent speech, immoral acts, falsehood and all wrongdoing. "Whoever does not desist from speaking falsehood and acting upon it, Allah has no need for him to desist from his food and drink" (Bukhari).

This beautiful month of mercy also serves to unite the Muslim ummah. No matter our race or the colour of our skin, no matter our backgrounds or our circumstances, in Ramadan we realise we are part of a community, with hearts and actions united in pursuing Allah's pleasure. We rejoice in the fact that we are all united by the bonds of faith and we give respect to the words of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) when he said, "The believers, in their love, mutual kindness, and close ties, are like one body; when any part complains, the whole body responds to it with weakness and fever" (Muslim). Let us take the opportunity Ramadan presents to seek forgiveness, to renew our relationships and strengthen ties with one another. Let us remember, pray for, and help those less fortunate than us and let us be grateful for the countless blessings that Allah (swt) has given us, things that we often take for granted.

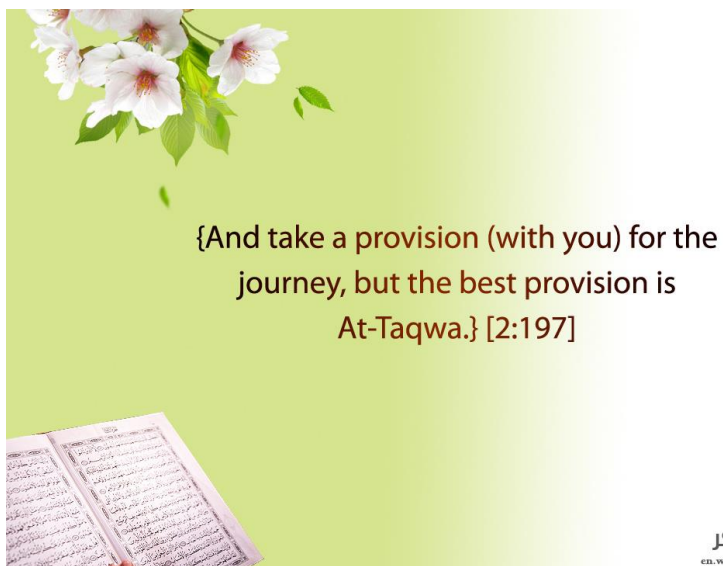
To make the most of the blessed gift that Ramadan is, we need to make a sincere effort to change ourselves for the better.

Ramadan is the light in the souls of the righteous and the truthful, and in the hearts of the devout and sincere it gives happiness; for it is the month of obedience, and in it

there are beautiful reflections for us all. It grants victory to the soul over the body and flesh, and gives us a wonderful opportunity to straighten ourselves up with our Lord.

Ma'la Ibn al-Fadhl said about the Salaf (the pious predecessors), "They used to call upon Allah for six months until Ramadan reached them, then they would call on Him the other six months that Allah may accept it from them." And Yahya Ibn Abee Katheer said, "Their supplication used to be, 'O Allah, keep me safe until Ramadan, and make Ramadan faultless for me, and secure it for me as an accepted (month of virtue).'"

May Allah (swt) enable us to make the most of this blessed month and may it be a source of mercy and protection for us all. May He make our fasts a shield for us and a means of attaining His love and pleasure.



## The Dunedin Study

What determines our personality, wealth, health and happiness? Is it nature (the genes we are born with, that we inherit from our parents) or nurture (our surroundings and the way we are brought up)?

In 1972, the Medical School of the University of Otago in Dunedin embarked on a large-scale longitudinal study, following every baby that was born in Dunedin in that year (a total of 1,037 babies) for their entire lives. They have measured their medical history, personality, genes, criminal convictions, relationships, successes, failures, etc. The story of this research is being shown on TV One in a series entitled "Why am I?"<sup>1</sup> The project's director, Prof Richie Poulton, and his "Dunedin Study" team have studied the everyday experiences of this group, in order to answer questions such as "Why do some people become successful entrepreneurs, while others end up as drug addicts?", and "Can aspects of adult life, especially undesirable behaviour, be predicted from observing a person's early life as a child?"

Among the immediate findings were that, in the 1970s, there were undetected medical problems in a large number of children. One quarter had glue ear, 10% eye defects, and 25% language problems.

Even at kindergarten age, children display traits that can predict adult behaviour. Pre-school children could be categorised into five personality types, which continued into adulthood: "well-adjusted", "reserved", "inhibited", "under

control", and "confident". "Well-adjusted" people are flexible, resourceful and fit in well, and fortunately make up 40% of the population. "Confident", "reserved" and "well-adjusted" personality types are generally productive members of society, who do well in life. "Inhibited" types cut themselves off from society in unhealthy ways; this includes children who watch too much television and play too many online games. However, "under control" people are likely to suffer from depression, hostility and anger management, and health problems.

Over the years, over 1,500 scientific journal articles have been produced from the project. At first it was thought that the results from the thousand people in Dunedin applied only in that context. However, the study was replicated elsewhere, including Pittsburgh USA, and the same results were found. The findings showed underlying factors about human behaviour (including crime) regardless of nationality or ethnic background. The team's findings have now been accepted as being accurate, not only for people in Dunedin and New Zealand, but also for any westernised society. The Study has produced such unique, longitudinal data that it is being funded by UK and US sources, among others.

Most of the participants no longer live in Dunedin. However, the study flies people back to Dunedin in order to take part in phases of the testing. Vice versa, for those in hospital, in prison or unable to travel, the study goes to them.



University of Otago



Prof Richie Poulton



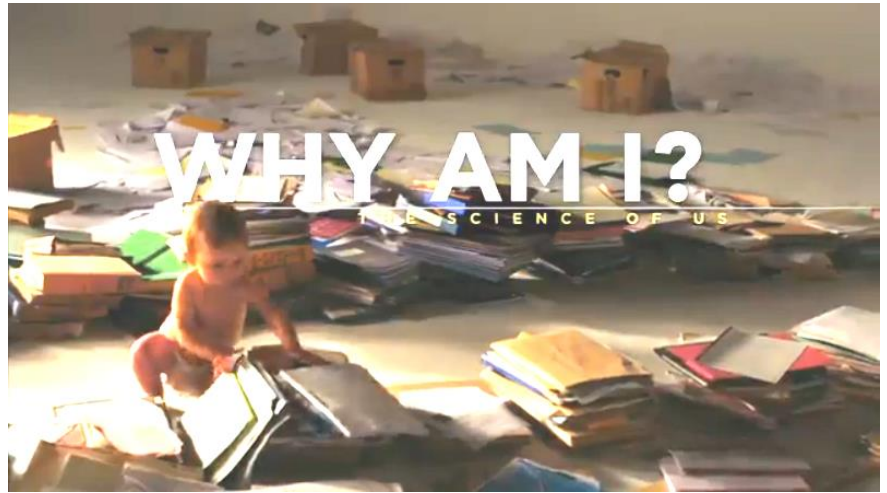
### An important factor

There is one non-personality factor that can be changed in order to improve people's health, wealth and happiness.

A recent finding was related to the question, "Is there anything in childhood that predicts who will be successful in life, in terms of health, wealth, etc, and who will not?" Does it matter if your parents are rich or poor? How much does your IQ matter? Or is it how hard you try? If we can find out what leads to success later in life, we have a powerful tool to tackle social issues.

While intelligence was at first expected to relate to success in adult life, it was in fact found that one factor in four-year-old children could accurately predict the income and job status in adulthood. It was "self-control". Are you in command of yourself, or is your self in command of you? (*Nafs* would be an accurate Arabic translation for "self" here.) Many people have anger management issues, while others can have the same feelings of anger but can control their behaviour, so as not to be violent. The amount of self-control at age four could predict whether in adulthood you are married in a stable relationship, whether you have a good job history, and whether you have good health.

One measure of self-control that can be used with children is the marshmallow test. Four-year-olds are given a marshmallow on a plate in front of them, and a choice: either eat the marshmallow now, or wait for 15 minutes and get another one. The first choice (eating it now) shows low self-control, and the second (waiting 15



minutes and getting a reward) high self-control. Techniques used by self-controlling children to avoid being tempted to eat it now, are to look away, to distract themselves, etc. They are using techniques to divert their attention from the temptation.

In almost every measure of success, self-control, as measured in childhood and lasting into adulthood, made a huge difference. For instance, financially speaking, those with high self-control owned their own homes, had become entrepreneurs, had solid jobs, had started saving for retirement, and were considered good money managers. In contrast, those with low self-control:

- financially speaking, were in debt, had had possessions repossessed, had bankruptcy problems, were poor money managers
- physically speaking, suffered from obesity, had high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart disease, gum disease and sexually transmitted infection





- in terms of addiction, were more likely to be addicted to tobacco, alcohol and drugs

These are clearly problems for society. So, how can we improve self-control in children? Two easy methods were mentioned in the TV programme. Firstly, sensitive responsive parenting, with firm and consistent discipline. Secondly, having self-controlling peers (playmates, siblings, etc) who enforce norms of behaviour, by pointing out to children that they will not be their friends any more if they continue to show anti-social behaviour. And all children benefit from self-control skills, not just those with poor self-control. So, those with low self-control learn moderate self-control, and those with moderate self-control learn high self-control.

In short, a good childhood, with caring responsible parents and peers is a good start for everyone.

### **The Islamic connection**

What has this got to do with Islam? The religion of Islam, as conveyed in the Quran and hadith, contains several directives that are aimed at promoting self-control.

### **Ramadan**

In the Quran (2: 183), Allah (swt) says, "O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may be among those who have taqwa." The meaning of the Arabic word *taqwa* is deep and multi-faceted, and could be the subject of a whole article. Suffice it to say that Abdullah Yusuf Ali, in his famous English translation of the Quran, uses "that ye may (learn) self-restraint."

Ramadan involves abstaining from food, drink and marital relations during daylight hours. In other words, Muslims have to develop the self-control to stay away from things that are permissible (*halal*) at other times of the year. If Muslims can avoid permissible things for a month, then surely they should find it easier to stay away from prohibited (*haram*) activities at any time.

Ramadan is often described as being like many things. It is like a boot camp, in that it is an intensive period of physical discipline. It is like a WOF, in that it renews your spiritual roadworthiness once a year. However you think of it, Ramadan promotes intense self-control once a year, in order to carry you over the rest of the year. Similarly, the Dunedin Study has found that the intense inculcation and promotion of self-control in childhood leads to success later in life.

### **Patience**

The marshmallow test shows that children who can control their urge to immediately eat the marshmallow in front of them, by having good self-control, are more likely to be successful in later life.

In many places in the Quran, Allah (swt) urges readers to display patience (*sabr*), as that is the way to be successful (success in Islamic terms meaning attaining Paradise). "But those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, to them shall We give a Home in Heaven, lofty mansions beneath which flow rivers, to dwell therein for aye; an excellent reward for those who do (good), those who persevere in patience, and put their trust in their Lord and Cherisher" (29:58-9).



### **Avoiding temptation**

The self-controlling children in the marshmallow test managed to avoid the temptation by looking away and diverting their attention.

A similar technique is given in the Quran, in particular in relation to controlling attraction between the sexes. "Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted with all that they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty" (24: 30-1).

### **Parenting**

The Dunedin Study concludes that good parenting, including sensitive disciplining, by the mother and father in a family setting, will improve all children's chances of being successful in adulthood.

Good parenting, and a disciplined upbringing with religious guidance, are elements mentioned in many places in the Quran and hadith.

When Zakariya (as) called upon Allah (swt) for a child, he said, "My Lord, grant me from Yourself a good offspring. Indeed, You are the Hearer of supplication." (Quran: 3:38).

Ibn Abbas reported that the Prophet (saw) used to seek refuge in Allah for Hasan and Husain (ra), saying, "I seek refuge for both of you in the perfect words of Allah from every devil and every poisonous thing and from the evil eye which influences." He would then say, "Your father sought refuge in Allah by them for Ismail and Ishaq (as)" (hadith sunan Abi Dawud).

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "Whoever has three daughters and he cares for them, he is merciful to them, and he clothes them, then Paradise is certainly required for him." It was said, "O Messenger of Allah, what if he has only two?" The Prophet said, "Even two." Some people thought that if they had said to him one, the Prophet would have said even one. (Scholars are agreed that this applies to both fathers and mothers.)

"He who does not show compassion to our young, nor honours our elders, is not from us" (Abu Dawood, At-Tirmidhi).

### **Conclusion**

The Dunedin Study, the subject of the "Why am I?" TV series is well respected in academic circles around the world for the long-term nature (over 40 years) of its investigation, and the robustness of its findings, which have been replicated elsewhere.

However, as has been found in other areas of scientific investigation, the results only show that an Islamic way of life, as described in the Quran and hadith, is a recipe for success. Self-control, patience, avoiding temptation, and good parenting, are all Islamic virtues, which the Study has shown lead to success in this dunia, and which Allah (swt) promises will lead to success in the Hereafter.

1 Currently available on TV One on Demand, [www.tvnz.co.nz/ondemand](http://www.tvnz.co.nz/ondemand)



## Charity: The cornerstone of faith

The concept of charity is deeply rooted in the Islamic identity. The Quran reminds us of this in several places, whether it is by reminding us to feed the poor and provide for the needy, supporting orphans, relatives and travelers, or spending in the way of Allah. All of these references emphasise the importance of charity in a Muslim's life.

Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, "The believer's shade on the Day of Resurrection will be his charity" and also that "You will not believe until you love for your brother what you love for yourself." This hadith reminds us that in Islam the concept of charity is much bigger than just giving money or paying zakat. It encompasses the selfless nature of a person, and calls on their compassion and humility, and also serves to strengthen bonds between people.

By giving that which we love, we humble ourselves to Allah (swt), and He promises to increase our provision even more: "Say: Truly, my Lord enlarges the provision for whom He wills of His slaves, and (also) restricts (it) for him, and whatsoever you spend of anything (in Allah's cause), He will replace it

with something even better. And He is the Best of providers" (Surah Saba 34:39).

It is important to understand why Islam holds charity in such high regard. But first it is also important to know that charity can come in different forms. In Islam, there are two types of charity: the obligatory (zakat) and the voluntary (sadaqah).

Zakat (which literally means "purification") is the third pillar of Islam. It is compulsory upon every adult Muslim of sound mind and means. The individual must own a specific amount of wealth or savings, after living expenses have been deducted. This excess wealth or savings is referred to as nisab, and the amount of zakat to be paid is 2.5% of this. Zakat as an obligation teaches us that everything we have is from Allah (swt), and so we should spend freely to help other people. The Quran (Surah At-Tawbah 9:60) mentions eight groups of people on who zakat should be spent:

1. Fuqara' (the poor)
2. Maskin (the needy)
3. Aamileen (zakat collector)
4. Muallafatul Quloob (poor and needy who recently converted to Islam)
5. Rikaab (slaves; zakat can be used to purchase their freedom)
6. Ibnus-Sabeel (A stranded traveller in need of financial assistance)
7. Ghaarimeen (A debtor)
8. Fi Sabeelillah (Those who are away from home in the path of Allah)





Sadaqah, on the other hand, is a voluntary act of charity which is not restricted to just giving out money from your wealth. Sadaqah can be any act of kindness from which another person or animal benefits. It can be as simple as a smile, or saying salam, or even removing something harmful from another's path. All of these are considered charity. The Prophet (saw) said, "Your smile for your brother is a charity. Your removal of stones, thorns or bones from the paths of people is a charity. Your guidance of a person who is lost is a charity" (Bukhari).

So why is charity so important in Islam that both the Quran and Sunnah repeatedly ask us and remind us to perform this act? Why did the majority of the companions of Rasullallah (saw) hold it in such high regard that sometimes, for days on end, they would not have anything left to eat themselves, due to their charity?

Charity is purely for the sake of Allah and no worldly gain should be intended while making charity. It should only be made to seek Allah's forgiveness and His blessings.

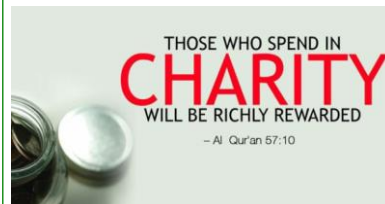
It is narrated in a hadith that, when we give, we should give in secret such that the left hand of a person is not aware of what the right hand has given. This manner of giving is preferred as it purifies our intention, so that what we give is solely for Allah and not to show off your good deeds and wealth to the world, and secondly not to hurt the respect and honor of the person being given charity. In the Quran, Allah reminds us not to be boastful of our charity in the following verse: "You who believe,

do not cancel out your charitable deeds with reminders and hurtful words" (Surah al-Baqarah 2:264).

Charity also serves as a way to bring justice, balance and kindness to every society and community. It humbles us before Allah (swt) and reminds us that we are one ummah, one nation and one body. So if one of us is suffering then the entire ummah is suffering, and also it then becomes a collective responsibility to help alleviate that suffering. As Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, "The believers are like one body in their mutual love and affection: if one limb is injured, the rest responds with sleeplessness and fever."

With this in mind, Muslims should always remember that they are part of a brotherhood and be mindful of not only their own actions which could bring hurt and harm to others, but also that we all have a responsibility to act in righting the wrongs that we see around us (even if it is just by distancing ourselves from the wrong). Many of our Muslim brothers and sisters are suffering in countless countries around the world. As Muslims, it is equally our responsibility to be charitable towards them. One of the greatest gifts that we can give them is our dua.

It is our hope that the Muslim community fulfills their charitable duty correctly and does their part in helping to eliminate poverty and hardship in communities everywhere. May Allah (swt) guide us and protect us all. Please remember to include us all in your duas, especially in this blessed month of Ramadan.



When you give someone charity  
be thankful to them. You may be  
fixing their Dunya, but they are  
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Sahl bin Sa'd (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) said, "I will be like this in Jannah with the person who takes care of an orphan." The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) raised his forefinger and middle finger by way of illustration.

[Sahih Al-Bukhari]



#### WAYS TO DONATE:

1. **Name of Account:** International Centre for Children (ICC) Charitable Trust.  
**Account Number:** 38-9007-0549566-00  
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2. **Credit / Debit card:** Paypal  
<http://iccct.org/donate-now/>
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## Being a trustworthy Muslim

Some of us have faith and trust in Allah (swt). But how about ourselves? Have we checked our barometer to see whether we are indeed a trustworthy person? Trusting in Allah (swt) and being a trustworthy Muslim are one and the same – they go hand in hand with each other. We cannot simply put our trust in Allah (swt) and misbehave as we please.

So what does it mean to be a trustworthy person? A trustworthy person is one who keeps his promises, one who is reliable, honest, sincere, and truthful. And it applies to all transactions, not just in business, but also in social relationships, in sport and recreation, and in our workplace.

Prophet Muhammed (saw) earned the title of “Al-Ameen” (the Trustworthy) long before he became a prophet. He earned this title by being honest, reliable and showing integrity at all times. If we claim to follow his example, then we must also earn the trust of others amongst us.

The opposite of being trustworthy is being a hypocrite (*munafiq*). In a well-known hadith in Sahih Muslim and Sahih Bukhari, Abu Huraira (ra) reported that the Prophet (saw) said, “The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he lies; whenever he is entrusted with something, he betrays that trust; whenever he promises something, he breaks his promise.”

So, being trustworthy is no small matter. Telling lies, behaving

dishonestly and breaking promises are the complete opposite of the requirement of a Muslim. In Surah Al-Baqarah (2:10-15), Allah (swt) says regarding hypocrites, “Those in whose hearts there is a disease; and Allah has increased their disease ... Allah will give them rope in their trespass; deaf, dumb and blind, they will wander to and fro.”

Let’s look at a few practical examples.

When we sell our car, do we mention the faulty transmission and worn brake pads? When we sell our house, do we mention the recladding that’s required? When we sell fruit, do we put the rotten tomatoes under the good ones? When we sit exams, do we copy from each other? When we write assignments, do we submit another’s work as our own? Do we forge our certificates and get our qualifications from dodgy institutions?

Halal isn’t limited to the food that we eat. Halal applies to the way we do business and the way we earn our livelihood.

As truthful Muslims, we should tell the potential buyer about the faults in the car – maybe reduce the price a bit. We should tell the new home buyer about the leaky problems with our house. We should study hard, put in the hard yards and submit our own work. Allah (swt) will love us for it. And we will gain the respect of fellow human beings.

Let’s look at one example from history. Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah

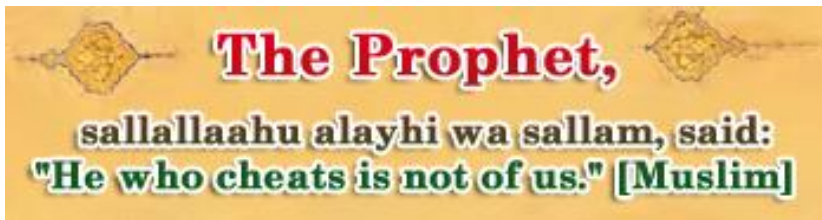


(583 – 639) was the commander of Muslims armies in Syria. When the King of Byzantium sought to attack the town of Hims, Abu Ubaida decided to evacuate this city because he had only a limited number of soldiers, whereas the King had a very large army. He gathered the people of Hims and said to them, "We collected the protection tax (jizyah) from you because we planned to defend you. Now we are too weak. In this case, we return the tax we collected." So the taxes collected were all returned to non-Muslims. Such was the honesty and integrity of the early Muslims. They knew that Allah (swt) was always watching them, and knew their obligations

towards Him and towards the people around them.

What's the point of being dishonest? When we cheat, lie, steal or deceive others, we only fool ourselves. Remember, you will have to pay for the short gains in this world in the hereafter. Allah (swt) will reduce the good deeds in your account for each act of dishonesty you do against another person. And if you do not have any good deeds left, then Allah (swt) will assign some of their bad deeds against your account! Is this a good bargain? Certainly not!

So let's follow the steps of our beloved Prophet (saw). Even his enemies knew that he would never steal. He would never betray the trust of another person. Nor would he ever break his promise. May Allah (swt) guide us to the straight path and make us of those who not only trust in Him but also become trustworthy amongst fellow human beings. Ameen!



## New Zealand's first Islamic video sharing channel

New Zealand's first Islamic op shop, Jannah Road ([www.jannahroad.co.nz](http://www.jannahroad.co.nz)), is located at 164/E Stoddard Road Mt Roskill. Profits from the op shop are gifted to Muslim charities, including Working Together Group, and Mount Albert Islamic Trust. They are always looking for (i) quality saleable secondhand goods, (ii) volunteers to man the shop, and (iii) customers.

Jannah Road have started New Zealand's first Islamic video sharing channel ([www.youtube.com/channel/UCvM-vIo0z4xJihaNyGvQjhg](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvM-vIo0z4xJihaNyGvQjhg)).

The main objective of the channel is to be of benefit to the Muslim and wider community in the areas of Islamic religion and culture. They would like to build the channel from submissions from the general public. If you would like to submit any videos such as your own Islamic lectures, Holy Quran recitations, inspirational stories of what brought you to Islam in New Zealand, or anything else related to Islam, send your submissions via [www.filemail.com](http://www.filemail.com) using the email address [jannahroadchannel@gmail.com](mailto:jannahroadchannel@gmail.com).





## Caring for our dead

The volunteers of Working Together Group (WTG), the Auckland-based Islamic charity, carried out one of their community janaza ghusl (body washing) demonstrations for the brothers and sisters at a recent Rocket Park jumuah organised by Mount Albert Islamic Trust.

To bury our dead in the appropriate way is one of the acts of fard kifayah (a communal obligation) in Islam, so the more people who learn how it should be performed, the better. WTG has been privileged to give many such demonstrations to various groups over the years.

At Rocket Park, several dozen brothers observed closely as br. Mazin (top) showed how the body (mayt) is washed, dried and perfumed. The awrah (the area from the navel to the knees for a man) remains discretely concealed throughout the entire process, and the body is treated very respectfully and tenderly.

Next br. Abdur-Rub (centre) showed how the body is shrouded and secured with five knots on the left hand side.

Br. Ismail (bottom left) explains that this rubber lowering-mat is what WTG uses when it is called

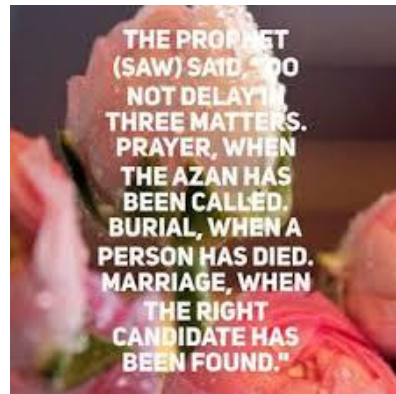
upon to service a funeral. WTG takes care of about one janaza a month on average. The group's services are free and available to anyone.

In an adjoining room, about 20 sisters had remained after Friday prayers to watch the equivalent demonstration given by WTG sisters Selma, Mazlinah and Lynn of how a female Muslim is prepared for burial.

In the last photo, br. Ismail is encouraging people to sign up for WTG's Janaza Waqf fund, launched in 2012. It is still New Zealand's only national scheme of its kind. Family memberships cost only about one dollar a day.

For many families the cost of the burial plot at the time of a loved one's death is a major expense – it may exceed \$6,000. Muslims are naturally reluctant to take out funeral insurance or borrow money, but until now there was little alternative for families without savings.

For details of the Waqf or to arrange a janaza ghusl demonstration for your group, please email br. Ismail Waja (iwaja@xtra.co.nz) or br. Mazin Al-Salim (mazin.alsalim@gmail.com).





## Good marks from ERO for Al-Madinah School

The Education Review Office has just released a very favourable report on Al-Madinah School. The purpose of ERO reviews is to give parents and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education that schools provide and their children receive.

"Al-Madinah School provides students with a curriculum that supports learning and promotes Islamic values as part of its special character," the report says. "Students engage well in learning and overall levels of achievement are high. The school is well placed to continue development of teaching practices that enhance students' learning and achievement."

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years. This length of time between reviews is a good indicator that ERO is satisfied with the school.

Al-Madinah School, which is located in Mangere in South Auckland, is a state-integrated school catering for

students from Years 1 to 13. It remains the country's only school catering to the needs of all Muslim children. Students travel to the school from across Auckland.

The school's curriculum is based on the New Zealand curriculum and promotes Islamic values as part of the school's special character. Students take part in Islamic studies and lessons from the Quran. Older students have opportunities to learn Arabic and Urdu.

Students are taught in mixed gender classes from Years 1 to 6. From Year 7, students are segregated by gender for most school activities.

New buildings are catering for growth in the school roll. The second floor added to one block has increased the number of classrooms and created a new administration area. Some of the new classrooms can be opened up and used as a school assembly space.





Students in Years 1 to 8 have continued to improve over the past three years in reading, writing and mathematics.

Students entering the school are often achieving below expectations, says the report, but make accelerated progress and achieve well before they leave the primary section.

National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) achievement also remains high in comparison with national averages and is improving. More than 90% of students achieve Level 2 NCEA and the percentage gaining university entrance remains high.

Student engagement in learning is generally good, and they enjoy opportunities to work independently as well as in groups. Senior students select subjects relevant to their chosen career paths.

The school's curriculum is effective in promoting and supporting student learning. Students have

many opportunities to achieve in all learning areas of the New Zealand curriculum, which is strongly focused on promoting literacy skills.

The school is committed to supporting students to be successful citizens in what the reports calls bicultural New Zealand; all students have opportunities to learn about aspects of Māori culture.

Providing a broad range of subjects with girls and boys in segregated classes has staffing challenges, but the school is developing ways to successfully use information and communication technology (ICT) and e-learning strategies to use the available staff optimally and ensure that the best teachers are available. Access to ICT has been improved recently.

The Al-Madinah curriculum is broad and extends beyond the classroom. Students take part in sports competitions with local schools and cultural events.





The primary school makes use of the neighbouring community garden to extend the curriculum and learn about environmental sustainability. Many leadership opportunities are available for students.

Around 95% of students speak a language other than English at home. A high percentage of students are funded by the Ministry of Education to get extra help in learning English to the level they need for their education. The school is committed to supporting these students within the classroom programme. Teachers have been introduced to specific English language teaching strategies so that they can better support students to succeed in their learning areas.

Other learning support programmes are well coordinated. Senior leaders make good use of external agencies to help students at risk of not achieving, and positive learning gains are evident for these students.

School leaders and trustees have made good use of Ministry of Education governance support and the school is increasingly well placed to continue improving its performance.

The board plans strategically, using the findings of school-wide self-review to set targets for improvement. Continued school expansion and associated building projects have been well managed.



Mutually beneficial relationships with local schools and Muslim schools internationally are being fostered.

Al-Madinah School is in a position to accept international students, whom it would welcome, and complies with all aspects of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students, to which it is a signatory.

The principal, Asin Ali, and senior leaders are focused on improvement, says ERO. Leaders make good use of professional learning and development initiatives to support improved teaching. The introduction of a new performance management system is likely to help teachers to monitor their own professional growth effectively. It should also allow teachers to share good practice and explore innovations in a way that is likely to make a positive contribution to the professional culture of the school.



Fadel Soliman

## 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)
- SKYTV channel 83 (Face TV) in New Zealand (11.30 am Sat & 9.00 am Sun)
- CTV in Christchurch (see TV guide for times)
- Channel 9 in Dunedin (see TV guide for times)
- Fiji Broadcasting Corporation in Fiji (9.00 am Sun)
- METRO TV in Ghana, West Africa (see TV guide for times)

### 2 & 3 July

Quran 51: 56-60 The purpose of life.

Islamophobia Ep 09: Has Islam been spread by the sword? by Fadel Soliman.  
Benefits of charity.

Quran Weekly: Juz 14 by Nouman Ali Khan.

Allah does not only exist in Ramadan.

Tid Bits: Ramadan by Sheikh Yusuf Estes.

DOCUMENTARY: Seeing the clear proofs of God's existence part 2.

### 9 & 10 July

Quran 51: 56-60 The purpose of life.

Islamophobia Ep 10: Are women discriminated against in Islam? Part 1 by Fadel Soliman.

Quran Weekly: Juz 15 by Nouman Ali Khan.

My path to Islam by sister Yvonne Ridley.

DOCUMENTARY: Seeing the clear proofs of God's existence part 3.

Feature: Hijab.

### 16 & 17 July

Quran 51: 56-60 The purpose of life.

Islamophobia Ep 11: Are women discriminated against in Islam? Part 2 by Fadel Soliman.

Quran Weekly: Juz 16 by Nouman Ali Khan.

My path to Islam by sister Aisha.

DOCUMENTARY: Seeing the clear proofs of God's existence part 4.

### 23 & 24 July

Quran 24: 30-31 Modesty.

Islamophobia Ep 12: Megalomania by Fadel Soliman.

Quran Weekly: Juz 17 by Nouman Ali Khan.

Tid Bits: Prophet Muhammad by Sheikh Yusuf Estes.

DOCUMENTARY: Prophet Muhammad part 1.

My path to Islam by Mohammad Grant.

### 30 & 31 July

Quran 24: 30-31 Modesty.

Tid Bits: Islam by Sheikh Yusuf Estes.

Islamophobia Ep 13: Friendship with non-Muslims by Fadel Soliman.

Halal & Haram by Bilal Philips

DOCUMENTARY: Prophet Muhammad part 2.

Quran Weekly: Juz 18 by Nouman Ali Khan.

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

## Auckland prayer timetable for July 2016

(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	6:02	7:34	12:25	2:58	3:37	5:16	6:43
2	6:02	7:34	12:25	2:58	3:37	5:16	6:44
3	6:02	7:34	12:26	2:59	3:38	5:16	6:44
4	6:02	7:34	12:26	2:59	3:38	5:17	6:44
5	6:02	7:34	12:26	2:59	3:39	5:18	6:45
6	6:02	7:33	12:26	3:00	3:39	5:18	6:45
7	6:02	7:33	12:26	3:00	3:40	5:19	6:46
8	6:01	7:33	12:26	3:01	3:40	5:19	6:46
9	6:01	7:33	12:27	3:01	3:41	5:20	6:47
10	6:01	7:32	12:27	3:02	3:42	5:20	6:47
11	6:01	7:32	12:27	3:03	3:42	5:21	6:48
12	6:01	7:32	12:27	3:03	3:43	5:22	6:48
13	6:00	7:31	12:27	3:04	3:43	5:22	6:49
14	6:00	7:31	12:27	3:04	3:44	5:23	6:49
15	6:00	7:30	12:27	3:05	3:45	5:24	6:50
16	5:59	7:30	12:27	3:05	3:45	5:24	6:51
17	5:59	7:30	12:27	3:05	3:45	5:24	6:51
18	5:58	7:29	12:28	3:07	3:47	5:26	6:52
19	5:58	7:28	12:28	3:07	3:47	5:26	6:52
20	5:57	7:28	12:28	3:08	3:48	5:27	6:53
21	5:57	7:27	12:28	3:08	3:49	5:28	6:54
22	5:56	7:26	12:28	3:09	3:50	5:28	6:54
23	5:56	7:26	12:28	3:10	3:50	5:29	6:55
24	5:55	7:25	12:28	3:10	3:51	5:30	6:55
25	5:55	7:24	12:28	3:11	3:52	5:31	6:56
26	5:54	7:24	12:28	3:12	3:53	5:31	6:57
27	5:53	7:23	12:28	3:12	3:53	5:32	6:57
28	5:53	7:22	12:28	3:13	3:54	5:33	6:58
29	5:52	7:21	12:28	3:14	3:55	5:34	6:59
30	5:51	7:20	12:28	3:14	3:56	5:35	6:59
31	5:51	7:20	12:28	3:15	3:56	5:35	7:00

"Prayer is the  
essence of worship"  
(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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If you have received this newsletter and want to unsubscribe (ie do not want to receive future issues), please send an email to masjidnews@gmail.com with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line. Vice versa, if you have received this newsletter indirectly, and would like to have future issues sent to your email address each month, please send an email to masjidnews@gmail.com with "Subscribe" in the subject line.

## Back issues of *Rocket Science*

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)