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Rocket Science

March 2019

Jumad al-Akhir / Rajab 1440



In the name of Allah,
most Gracious, most Merciful

The blessing of gratitude

To express gratitude is to show your iman.

We are all inherently ungrateful. We refuse to accept this fact, and we have the attitude that we are entitled to what we have. The sentiment of wanting to thank someone is at the heart of Islam. In fact, the first surah, Al-Fatiha, starts with "Alhamdulillahirrabil alamin" ("All praises and thanks be to Allah"). This is the first surah we are taught in childhood or as we come into Islam, yet we seldom know the value of what it means to say "Alhamdulillah". How many of us actually internalise what blessings we have when we say it? Or have the words "Alhamdulillah" become just a formulaic filler in our conversations?

Allah (swt) made us "servants" and he calls us the "abd" of Allah. A slave cannot earn anything. Everything we are given – even our body – is a gift from Allah. We didn't pay anything for them and we didn't deserve any of them because of some act we did. It was Allah (swt) who decided we should be given it, and hence we came into this world the way we are. Allah reminds us of many things in the Quran. Look around you: the air, the sky, the mountains, the sun. There are numerous surahs that speak of the many blessings from our Lord. We have to be grateful for everything around us.

Allah (swt) promises us that if we are grateful, he will grant us more of his favours. "And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you (in favour); but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe'" (Quran, 14:7). Allah (swt) loves gratitude so much that he guarantees the reward for gratitude immediately and reminds us that, if we are even a little grateful, he will increase us in his favours.

In Surah ar-Rahman, we learn that Allah (swt) is the only one Who is ever so Merciful. The surah makes reference to Allah's love, His gifts and mercy.

Every single person, whether a mother, a spouse, a teacher, etc, expects something in return for themselves each time they have an exchange. All of us have some expectation of a result from our action of giving, even if it is little. A mother may expect to be thanked by her children for the food she makes. A spouse may expect to be loved back. Only Allah (swt) gives, and gives, and gives, without needing anything back for Himself. In fact, if we thank Him, we only benefit ourselves as He will give us more of His favours and He is not in need of our thanks as He is the most Merciful.



In this day and age, we find that young people and adults alike have become really obsessed with themselves. They start comparing what brands they have with others. They are constantly thinking about what they don't have. It becomes hard to look at what you do have. An ungrateful person is someone who is always complaining, negative, and looking at what they don't have. Allah (swt) reminds us, "And very few of My slaves are grateful" (Quran 34:13). For those of us who are only slightly grateful, if we counted all our blessings, we would never be able to count them or thank Allah for all that we have.

One of the most repeated reminders of Allah's favours is in Surah ar-Rahman (#55). This surah has one focus – the gratitude of people. Allah is asking us, "How much more ungrateful could you be? Why don't you thank Me?" In fact, he repeats the ayah 31 times in the surah saying, "So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny?"

The Quran is supposed to be a gift. It is wonderful and you are supposed to appreciate it. The creation of the human being is incredible, and the process has amazing qualities. Allah (swt) reminds us in Surah ar-Rahman about the palm trees, sky, oceans, etc, all of which represent signs to ponder and thank Allah for.

People who complain think they deserve more than other people. Allah says, "Who do you think you are?" The point of this ayah is to make us humble.

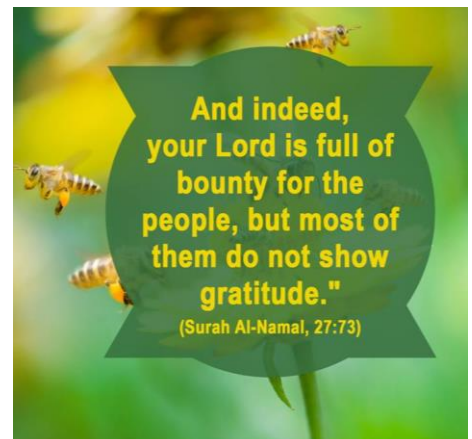
Having gratitude is having humility. Ingratitude is arrogance. When you are ungrateful, you are defying Allah.

We live in a world where things are made very easy for us. Everything around us is very quick. Things can be purchased instantly online. The value of things is minimised.

As soon as you give something to someone, after the seconds of happiness caused by the gift, seldom do they remember and cherish the gift nor mention it to the one that gifted it. We are deluded in our own wants and desires.

"Whoever does you a favour, respond in kind, and if you cannot find the means of doing so, then keep praying for him until you think that you have responded in kind" (Abu Dawud).

Our beloved Prophet (saw) encouraged us to give gifts to one another. Exchanging gifts promotes mutual love and affection with a lot of blessings attached from Allah. He said, "Exchange gifts, as that will lead to increasing your love to one another" (Al-Bukhari).



Narrated by Al-Mugira: The Prophet ﷺ used to offer night Salat (prayers) till his feet became swollen. Somebody said, to him, "Allah has forgiven you your sins of the past and the future." On that, he ﷺ said, "Shouldn't I be a thankful slave (of Allah)?"

Bukhari, Hadith #4836

Abu Hurairah (ra) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "Whoever is not grateful to the people, he is not grateful to Allah" (Jami at-Tirmidhi). Allah's messenger (saw) reminded us to thank those who do us a favour.

Saying "Alhamdulillah" and understanding the meaning of praising Allah can save the world from a lot of greed and in turn foster contentment in our lives.

The nature of humanity is that we have so many things, yet we want more. We have a nice car that works fine, yet we crave another better model car. We have a house that is sufficient for us, but we want a bigger house. Often the next objective is something perceived to be better at that instant, and is a continually shifting paradigm. We always think we deserve more, and nothing is ever good enough for us.

The greed which goes unchecked at a young age only manifests itself later and turns into a desire for bigger, more material things. Being obsessed only with yourself, and doing what you want, makes you greedy.

Abu Dharr (ra) reported Allah's Apostle (saw) as saying, "In the morning, charity is due from every

bone in the body of every one of you. Every utterance of Allah's glorification is an act of charity; every utterance of praise of Him is an act of charity; every utterance of profession of His Oneness is an act of charity; every utterance of profession of His Greatness is an act of charity; enjoining good is an act of charity, forbidding evil is an act of charity, and two rakahs (of dhuhr prayer) which one prays in the forenoon will suffice for all" (Sahih Muslim).

Allah (swt) will never let us down if we put all our faith and trust in him. Being grateful to Allah increases our love for him in our hearts and this reflects on everyone around us.

Let us make an oath to improve ourselves and take the time to thank those around us for even the smallest of favours. If we look around us, we'll find so many instances to be grateful for, as the Prophet (saw) taught us: "The one who does not give thanks for a small blessing, will not give thanks for a great blessing, and the one who does not give thanks to people, will not give thanks to Allah" (Abud Dunya).

"BEING GRATEFUL IS NOT JUST AN ACT OF SAYING ALHAMDULILLAH. BEING GRATEFUL IS AN ATTITUDE. IT'S A LIFESTYLE. IT'S A WAY OF THINKING. YOU'RE CONSTANTLY GRATEFUL."

— NOUMAN ALI KHAN

Reliance on Allah (swt)

There are many times in our lives when we feel unsure of the future, things may not be going according to our plans, or we simply don't understand why certain things are happening the way they are. At these times, things often are not what they seem like, in the bigger picture that Allah (swt) has planned for us. Having complete reliance (tawakkul) in Allah means understanding and believing that Allah will take care of us. He is the best of all planners and regardless of how bad a situation may be, we should trust that Allah will help us through the situation. "So whatever you have been given is but a passing enjoyment for this worldly life, but that which is with Allah (that is, Paradise) is better and more lasting for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah, Islamic monotheism) and put their trust in their Lord (concerning all of their affairs)" (Quran 42:36).

It is one of the pillars of Islam to trust in Allah's decree. Allah (swt) describes believers as those whose hearts increase in faith when they rely on Him. "The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful, and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith; and upon their Lord they rely" (Quran 8:2).

Everything in the universe happens by the permission of Allah. Remember that Allah (swt) tests everyone and loves us more than even our own mothers do, and there is a blessing in every experience He sends us. Tawakkul means to believe that there is good in every affair Almighty Allah puts you through. Our beloved Prophet (saw) said, "Verily, if Allah loves a people, He makes them go through trials. Whoever is satisfied, for him is contentment. And whoever is angry, upon him is wrath" (At-Tirmidhi).

In the Quran, Allah (swt) says, "And put your trust in Allah, and Sufficient is Allah as a Wakil (Trustee, or Disposer of affairs)" (Quran 33:3). On many occasions in the Quran, Allah (swt) calls Himself Al-Wakeel (the Trustee, the Disposer of Affairs, the Guardian). He is the disposer of affairs, the one to be relied on for all matters.

In Surah Al-Mulk, Allah says, "Blessed is He in whose hand is dominion, and He is over all things competent. [He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving" (Quran 67:2).

To truly understand the power of Allah (swt), we must rely on Allah, as He provides for everything. Nothing in this life happens without the decree of Allah. Umar (ra) said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (saw) say, 'If you were to rely on Allah as He should be relied on, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds. They go out in the morning hungry and return in the evening full'" (At-Tirmidhi).



Three practical ways to apply tawakkul

1 Departing the house daily

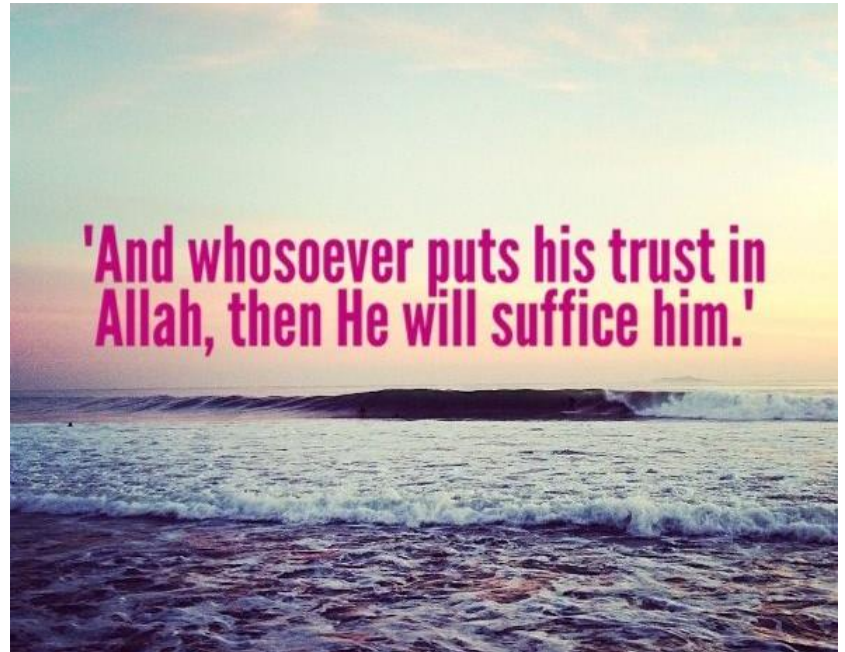
The Prophet (saw) said, "Whoever says (when he leaves his house), 'Bismillah, tawakkaltu ala Allah, wa la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah' (meaning "In the name of Allah, I put my trust in Allah and there is no power and no strength except with Allah"), it will be said to him, 'You are taken care of and you are protected and guided', and the devils will move away from him, and one devil says, 'What can you do with a man who has been guided, taken care of and protected?'" (Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasai and others).

2 Facing difficulty in life

Our lives are full of times of ups and downs. There are times when we fall sick, our study and work pressures increase, or we lose loved ones. Allah (swt) wants us to rely on him even more during these times. The key is to remember that we will only be stricken by what Allah (swt) has decreed for us, and only with His permission will any matter strike us.

It is reported that Allah's Messenger (saw) said, "Allah will grant whoever recites this seven times in the morning or evening whatever he desires from this world or the next: 'Hasbiyallahu la ilaha illa huwa alaihi tawakkaltu wa huwa rabbul arshil adheem' (meaning "Allah is sufficient for me; there is none worthy of worship except Him. I have placed my trust in Him and He is Lord of the majestic throne"" (Ibn as-Sunni, Abu Dawud).

Allah will take care of whatever worries you of the matter of this



world and the hereafter.

Abdur Rahman ibn Abu Bakrah said that he told his father, "O my father! I hear you supplicating every morning, 'O Allah! Grant me health in my body. O Allah! Grant me good hearing. O Allah! Grant me good eyesight. There is no god but You.' You repeat them three times in the morning and three times in the evening."

His father said, "I heard the Apostle of Allah (saw) using these words as a supplication and I like to follow his practice."

The transmitter, Abbas, said in this version, "And you say, 'O Allah! I seek refuge in You from infidelity and poverty. O Allah! I seek refuge in You from punishment in the grave. There is no god but You.' You repeat them three times in the morning and three times in the evening, and use them as a supplication. I like to follow his practice."



*Always Trust In
ALLAH's Timing*

He said, "The Apostle of Allah (saw) said, 'The supplications to be used by one who is distressed are: "O Allah! Your mercy is what I hope for. Do not abandon me to myself for an instant, but put all my affairs in good order for me. There is no god but You"" (Abu Dawud). Some transmitters added more than others.

3 Practising patience and eliminating sadness

When Yaqub (as) sent his sons to find Yusuf (as) and his brother, he turned to Allah (swt) in patience, knowing that Allah (swt) is with those who are patient. He said, "I only complain of my suffering and my grief to Allah, and I know from Allah that which you do not know" (Quran 12:86).

Allah (swt) reminds us on many occasions in the Quran to be patient.

"Bear with patience whatever befalls you" (Quran 31:17).

"Be not sad, surely Allah is with us" (Quran 9:40).

Remind yourself each time of the promise of Allah (swt) for those who bear with patience: "Indeed, I have rewarded them this day for their patient endurance – that they are the attainers (of success)" (Quran 23:111).

Having tawakkal in Allah does require some effort from us. Our beloved Prophet (saw) taught us that we must always make our own efforts and not merely state that we trust Allah and hope for things to come by. It requires us to be proactive, and at the same time trusting that Allah will grant us the best.

The Prophet (saw) asked, "Why don't you tie down your camel?"

The Bedouin answered, "I put my trust in Allah."

The Prophet (saw) then said, "Tie your camel first, then put your trust in Allah" (At-Tirmidhi).

Let us learn to put our trust in Allah and be guided by Him.



Curiosity killed Islamophobia

Conversion to Islam is becoming a trend among European Islamophobes.

Arnoud van Doorn and son

In previous issues of *Rocket Science*¹, it was reported that Arnoud van Doorn, a member of the Dutch parliament and vice-chairman of the Party for Freedom (in Dutch, Partij voor de Vrijheid, or PVV) group on The Hague city council, had converted to Islam. This was remarkable, because van Doorn had been a member of the PVV production group, led by Geert Wilders, of a film entitled *Fitna*, often translated into English as "trial". The film aimed at discrediting Islam and Muslims by trying to show that Islam and the Quran encourages its followers to hate non-Muslims.

However, van Doorn then decided that he should perhaps find out more about the religion he was denigrating. He explained, "I have heard so many negative stories about Islam, but I am not a person who follows the opinions of others without doing my own research. Therefore, I have actually started to deepen my knowledge of Islam out of curiosity. ... The more I was reading [the Quran], the more I was convinced that Islam is actually a beautiful and wise religion."

After over a year of reading, he converted. "It is easier to convert from a Christian to Islam than from a 'non believer' because I knew about the prophets, the angels and the discipline that is necessary within any religion."

In 2013, he performed umrah, and in 2014 hajj. In April 2014, he attended Dubai International Peace Convention. Along with 36 others, his son converted to Islam at the convention.

Arthur Wagner

The Alternative for Germany (in German, *Alternative für Deutschland*, AfD) party is a far-right political party in Germany. The party claims to stand for religious freedom. However, its policies include a nationalism stance largely of anti-immigration, largely anti-Muslim, the AfD leader Alexander Gauland being quoted² as saying, "orthodox Islam is incompatible with the principles of the modern, secular, free and democratic law-bound state."

Last year, Arthur Wagner quit his AfD leadership role in the eastern Brandenburg state and converted to Islam³. Mr Wagner has not commented on his conversion, saying only that it is a private matter⁴.



Arnoud van Doorn (r) and son (l)



1 mtabertislamiccentre.org/sites/default/files/Rocket%20Science%20Dec%202013_0.pdf
mtabertislamiccentre.org/sites/default/files/Rocket%20Science%20May%202014_0.pdf

2 Judith Vonberg. Leading member of German far-right party resigns after converting to Islam. CNN, 24 January 2018.

edition.cnn.com/2018/01/24/europe/germany-afd-islam-arthur-wagner-intl/index.html

3 German politician quits far-right AfD party role after converting to Islam. The Independent.

www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/afd-islam-politician-arthur-wagner-conversion-germany-far-right-a8175896.html

mtabertislamiccentre.org/sites/default/files/Rocket_Science_Feb_2018_0.pdf

4 Dutch former anti-Muslim politician converts to Islam. Politico, 4 February.

www.politico.eu/article/former-dutch-anti-muslim-politician-converts-to-islam-joram-van-klaveren

5 Dutch far-right leader Geert Wilders' ex-ally converts to Islam. Al Jazeera, 6 February.

www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/dutch-leader-geert-wilders-ally-converts-islam-190205175958375.html

Joram van Klaveren

Now comes the news that another former member of Geert Wilders' PVV party, Joram van Klaveren, has also converted to Islam, in October 2018. For years, he fought a campaign in the Lower House against Islam in the Netherlands as a legislator for Wilders' party: "We don't want any Islam, or at least as little as possible in the Netherlands." He is quoted as saying, "Islam is a lie" and "The Quran is poison."⁴ However, he quit the party after Wilders asked supporters during a rally in 2014 if they wanted more or fewer Moroccans in the Netherlands, to which the crowd chanted "Fewer! Fewer! Fewer!"

Van Klaveren explained that he had changed his mind halfway through writing an anti-Islam book. While intending to write a book explaining what is wrong with Islam, the more he researched it, the more he realised that his understanding of Islam was wrong. Instead, the book "became a refutation of objections non-Muslims have. If everything I wrote

up to that point is true, and I believe that, then I am a de facto Muslim."⁵

Arnoud van Doorn congratulated Van Klaveren and tweeted, "[I] never thought that the PVV would become a breeding ground for converts."

Islam in the Netherlands

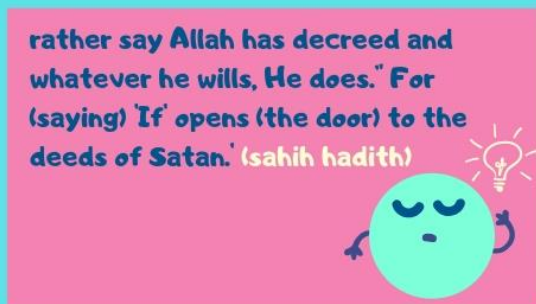
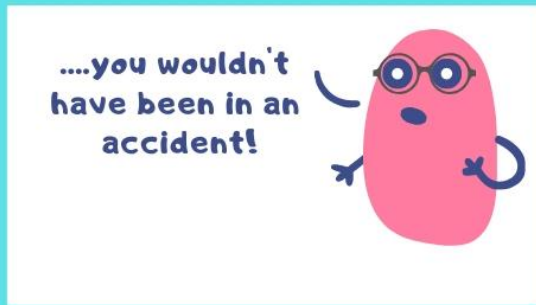
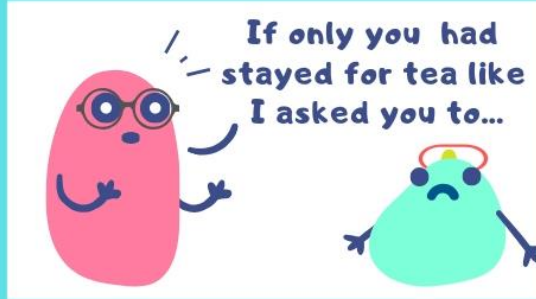
The Netherlands has a long history of seafaring, trade, and colonisation. As a result, it has come into contact with many countries, some of them Muslim. There has been Muslim migration to the Netherlands, but this was small until about 1960. Between 1960 and 1973, the Dutch government recruited migrant labour, including from Turkey and Morocco. More recently, Muslim migrants have come from Indonesia and Suriname, both formerly under Dutch rule.

The Netherlands has a population of 17 million, of which about 850,000, or 5%, are Muslim.



van Klameren (l) with Geert Wilders (r)

If only





Follow these links to find February's VOI programmes on YouTube:

youtu.be/krOYofHCH3k?list=PLvGCABgHsMBguMCGfTUD84b-cJSKEz9Ja

youtu.be/PoDYtgc3jeA?list=PLvGCABgHsMBguMCGfTUD84b-cJSKEz9Ja
February

youtu.be/JNRab0vGOeY?list=PLvGCABgHsMBguMCGfTUD84b-cJSKEz9Ja

youtu.be/PJvXPSQJOJU?list=PLvGCABgHsMBguMCGfTUD84b-cJSKEz9Ja

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). In order to save costs, it now only broadcasts on APNA TV. However, Voice of Islam programmes are available on YouTube; see the URLs below.

3 March

Quran: 33: 40-43.
 Animation 45: How to increase taqwa.
 Raising children and parenting 01
 The beginning & the end 18: you don't understand their worship.
 Documentary: The news of the unseen in the Quran part 1.
 Amazed by the Quran: 25 secret in the sky.
 1 word series 08 food for the poor.
youtu.be/8zNMeeQgLMI?list=PLvGCABgHsMBif5XuYIR8916JillMUz5G7

10 March

Quran: 33: 40-43.
 Animation 46: The beauty of Surah al-Falaq.
 Raising children and parenting 02
 The beginning & the end 19: Moon & stars.
 Documentary: The news of the unseen in the Quran part 2.
 Amazed by the Quran: 26: Skies & earth exalt Allah.
youtu.be/wYUjQwCN8aY?list=PLvGCABgHsMBif5XuYIR8916JillMUz5G7

17 March

Quran: 33: 40-43.
 Animation 47: To who do you owe ihsan?
 Raising children and parenting 03
 The beginning & the end 20: Rivers of heaven on earth.
 Documentary: The news of the unseen in the Quran part 3.
 Amazed by the Quran: 27: Speaking of blessings.
 1 word series 01: Orphans.
youtu.be/shtyweLMz64?list=PLvGCABgHsMBif5XuYIR8916JillMUz5G7

24 March

Quran: 33: 40-43.
 Animation 48: What is the Quran?
 Raising children and parenting 04
 The beginning & the end 21: The angels.
 Documentary: The news of the unseen in the Quran part 4.
 Amazed by the Quran: 28: Special council of prophet Isa.
youtu.be/AoWiGUBqZlw?list=PLvGCABgHsMBif5XuYIR8916JillMUz5G7

31 March

Quran: 33: 40-43.
 Animation 49: What is the effect of bad intentions?
 Raising children and parenting 05
 The beginning & the end 22: Names and ranks of the angels
 Documentary: The news of the unseen in the Quran part 5.
 Amazed by the Quran: 29: The arrogant listener.
 1 word series 02:
youtu.be/GXy63C1-yqw?list=PLvGCABgHsMBif5XuYIR8916JillMUz5G7

Watch VOI online, or order a free copy of the Quran: www.voitv.org

Auckland prayer timetable for March 2019

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

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

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

Asr 2: Hanafi school (double shadow length)

When any one of you leads the people in prayer, he should be brief for among them are the young and the aged, the weak and the sick. But when one of you prays by himself, he may (prolong) as he likes.
(Hadith Muslim)

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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

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)