

Inside this issue

Meeting enemies in Jannah ...	2
Makkan & Madinan surahs	5
Australian Islamophobia	9
The Taliban	11

Rocket Science

August 2021

Thul-Hijjah 1442 / Muharram 1443



In the name of Allah,
most Gracious, most Merciful

Islamic New Year 1443

Islamic New Year 1443 will, insha Allah, fall in August. Muslims do not celebrate the beginning of a new year, in the sense that people celebrate a Western new year on 31 December / 1 January.

However, Islamic New Year can be taken as a time to acknowledge the passing of time, to take time to reflect on our own mortality, and to remember those who have passed away during the previous year.

Being a lunar calendar, the Islamic year consists of 12 months of 29 or 30 days. In the Quran, Allah (swt) states, "The number of months in the sight of Allah is twelve (in a year) – so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth" (Quran 9:36) and "It is He Who made the sun to be a shining glory, and the moon to be a light of beauty, and measured out stages for it, that you might know the number of years and the count of time" (Quran 10:5). The whole lunar (moon-based) year is thus about 11 days shorter than the common solar (sun-based) Gregorian year. The Islamic calendar is the official calendar in many Muslim countries, especially Saudi Arabia.



When I meet my enemies in Jannah

We have all heard the story (sahih Muslim) of the man who killed 100 people, but Allah (swt) forgave him and allowed him to enter Jannah.

Abu Said al-Khudri reported Allah's Messenger (saw) as saying, "There was a person before you who had killed 99 persons and then made an inquiry about the learned persons of the world (who could show him the way to salvation). He was directed to a monk.

He came to him and told him that he had killed 99 persons and asked him whether there was any scope for his repentance to be accepted. He said, 'No.' He killed him too and thus completed 100.

He then asked about the learned persons of the earth and he was directed to a scholar, and he told him that he had killed 100 persons and asked him whether there was any scope for his repentance to be accepted.

He said, 'Yes. What stands between you and the repentance? You'd better go to such-and-such land. There are people devoted to prayer and worship, and you also worship along with them, and do not come to the land of yours since it was an evil land (for you).'

So he went away and he had hardly covered half the distance when death came to him and there was a dispute between the angels of mercy and the angels of punishment. The angels of mercy said, 'This man has come as a penitent and remorseful to Allah', and the angels of punishment said, 'He has done no good at all.'

Then there came another angel in the form of a human being in order

to decide between them. He said, 'You measure the land to which he has drawn near.' They measured it and found him nearer to the land where he intended to go (the land of piety), and so the angels of mercy took possession of it. Qatada said that Hasan told him that it was said to them that as death approached him, he crawled upon his chest (and managed) to slip into the land of mercy. "

Facing our murderer in Jannah

Imagine being one of the 100 people who were killed by this man, walking in the gardens of Paradise, and you look up and you see the person who killed you.

Imagine being Hamzah (ra), the leader of the martyrs, and the last thing he saw was Wahshi, the slave of Hind, throwing a spear in his direction at the Battle of Uhud. And after his death, Wahshi would cut him up under the order of Hind, and serve his liver to her, so that she could chew on it.

Imagine being one of the martyrs, and seeing your murderer or persecutor in Jannah. For instance, seeing Khalid ibn Walid or Amr bin Aas, who lived to become great Companions, and seeing them roaming in Jannah and saying, "Subhan Allah." They made it?

Because as far as you are concerned you don't know about the sword of Allah, or the story of Ikramah. You haven't read the story of Amr bin Aas and Islam spreading throughout the world in places like Egypt. Because the last thing you saw in this world was them killing you.

Allah laughs at these people

In another beautiful Hadith (sahih Muslim), it was narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira (ra) that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "God laughs at the two men, both of whom will enter Paradise (though) one of them kills the other. They said, 'Messenger of Allah, how is it?' He said, 'One of them fights in the way of Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, and dies a martyr. Then God turns in mercy to the murderer who embraces Islam, fights in the way of Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, and dies a martyr.'"

Imagine meeting your murderer in Jannah. Of course, when you enter Jannah, you enter without any grudges. It's not "let's continue the battle here". Allah (swt) admits us to Jannah in a purified state. The only thing that we have are memories of joy. Jannah is a place of increased happiness and contentment. There is no sadness there, no ill feelings, or grudges, or bad memories.

Five lessons can be gained from this beautiful hadith.

1. Allah (swt) forgives even major sins, so long as we repent sincerely. Shaitan will always say to you, "Do you think Allah is going to forgive you, after having committed such a major sin? Don't even think about repenting. If you think about the case of these people you killed. You murdered people closer to the Prophet (saw). You persecuted the people of iman and Islam."

We must remember, just like the scholar who told the person who killed 100 people, "Who is between you and Allah (swt)?" We need to ask ourselves, "What is the barrier that is preventing us from seeking the forgiveness of Allah (swt)?" We have a path back to Allah (swt) so long as you and I are still breathing in this world. The door of repentance is open to you and me, no matter what major sin we have committed.

2. The mercy of Allah (swt) cannot be limited by one person or another. We are ultimately at His mercy. He chooses whom to forgive and whom to punish. So long as we are sincere in our repentance and steadfast in our deen, Allah (swt) will forgive us and shower His mercy so that we can enter Jannah.
3. The gardens of Paradise are vast and not restricted. It's not as if one person has to go, for another person to be admitted to Jannah. In this world, a lot of us have this notion of checking in with the host to see who is invited to a party or gathering. We do not want to go if a certain person is there, or if it is too big that we don't feel special. We like exclusivity.

However, Jannah is different. It is Allah's Paradise and garden, and there is no limit or exclusivity – except that it is for people who are righteous and follow the deen.

4. Every hardship in this life is an opportunity to elevate our place in Jannah. Allah (swt) says in the Holy Quran (2:216), "Perhaps you dislike something which is good for you, and like something which is bad for you."

We do not seek to harm ourselves. But every circumstance that is bad for us is an opportunity for us to attain a higher place in Jannah, provided that we respond in the correct way.

Allah has a path for each one of us to enter Paradise. Subhan Allah, it could be that the person who had made it difficult for us in this world may be the reason that we enter Paradise. Perhaps because of this difficulty, we became closer to Allah (swt) and that paved the way to entering Jannah.

5. Your success does not depend on the failure of others. Many of us mistakenly believe that

for us to succeed, someone else must fail. Therefore, we go about hurting others or making it difficult for others to get ahead, whether in worldly affairs or affairs of the Hereafter. We should never try to bring someone else down, to bring ourselves up. Allah's mercy in this life and the next is vast enough to encompass all, and there is no scarcity.

Conclusion

We will see the people who have wronged us in Jannah. And the reason is quite simple – they have asked for forgiveness from Allah (swt), and He has granted it. And when we meet them in Paradise, we won't have that grudge against them. We will only be having happy memories from this world as we enter Jannah.

May Allah (swt) give us the best of this world, and the best of the Hereafter, and help us attain the highest level in Jannah. Ameen.



Makkan and Madinan revelations

This article is based partly on the writings of the German convert scholar Ahmad Von Denffer.

We begin this article with Surah al-Alaq, also called Iqra.

Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem

1. Iqra bismi rab bikal lazee khalaq
2. Khalaqal insaana min alaq
3. Iqra wa rab bukal akram
4. Al lazee allama bil qalam
5. Al lamal insaana ma lam yalam
6. **Kallaa** innal insaana layatghaa
7. Ar-ra aahus taghnaa
8. Innna ilaa rabbikar rujaa
9. Ara-aital lazee yanhaa
10. Abdan iza sallaa
11. Ara-aita in kana alal hudaa
12. Au amara bit taqwaa
13. Ara-aita in kaz zaba wa ta walla
14. Alam yalam bi-an nal lahaa yaraa
15. **Kalla** la illam yantahi la nasfaam bin nasiyah
16. Nasiyatin kazi batin khaatiah
17. Fal yadu naadiyah
18. Sanad uz zabaaniyah
19. **Kalla**; la tutihu **wasjud** waqtarib

Its English translation:

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

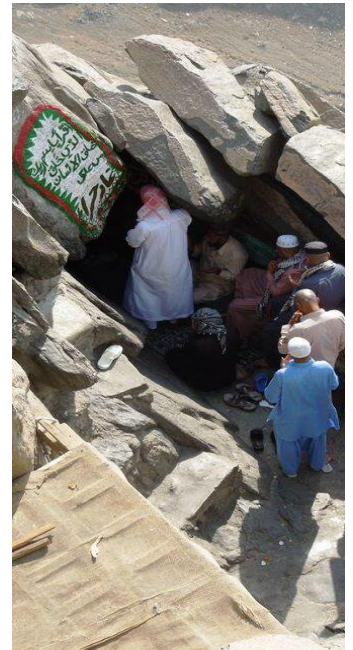
1. Proclaim! (or read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created
2. Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood:
3. Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful,
4. He Who taught (the use of) the pen,
5. Taught man that which he knew not.
6. Nay, but man doth transgress all bounds,

7. In that he looketh upon himself as self-sufficient.
8. Verily, to thy Lord is the return (of all).
9. Seest thou one who forbids
10. A votary when he (turns) to pray?
11. Seest thou if he is on (the road of) Guidance?
12. Or enjoins Righteousness?
13. Seest thou if he denies (Truth) and turns away?
14. Knoweth he not that Allah doth see?
15. Let him beware! If he desist not, We will drag him by the forelock,
16. A lying, sinful forelock!
17. Then, let him call (for help) to his council (of comrades):
18. We will call on the angels of punishment (to deal with him)!
19. Nay, heed him not: But bow down in adoration, and bring thyself the closer (to Allah)!

And now a simple question: was this surah revealed in Makkah or Madinah?

This question has a simple answer: it was revealed in Makkah, because all Muslims know the story of the revelation of the first five ayats, which were the first part of the Quran revealed. The revelation was transmitted by Gabriel (Jibril, as) in the year 610 when Muhammad (saw) was in Hira cave on Jabal an-Nur on the outskirts of Makkah.

اقرا



Hira cave

Two phases of revelation

The growth and development of the Muslim ummah is marked by two phases:

- The period in Makkah, before the Hijrah migration in 622
- The period in Madinah, after the Hijrah.

Naturally the revelation from Allah (swt) to guide the Muslims also responded, to some extent, to these particular situations.

The Makkan phase

The Makkan phase of the revelation lasted about 13 years, from the first revelation up to the Hijrah. This phase is determined by the prime task of the Prophet (saw) to call people to Islam. The main themes of this call, based on the Quranic revelation, are:

- Allah and His unity (tawhid)
- The coming resurrection and judgment
- Righteous conduct

The role of the Prophet in this phase is in particular that of an announcer and warner.

The Madinan phase

The Madinan phase lasted about 10 years, from the Hijrah to the death of the Prophet (saw). While the basic themes of the Makkan phase remain, the Muslims' growing together into a community and the formation of the ummah now makes its presence clearly felt.

In Madinah, there are four groups of people to be addressed:

- The immigrants (Muhajirun), who had migrated from Makkah to Madinah
- The helpers (Ansar), who originated from Madinah and helped the Muhajirun
- The hypocrites (Munafiqun), who were from Madinah and pretended to support the Muslims
- The People of the Book (Ahl Al-Kitab), that is, Jews and Christians, with their respective scriptures

In addition to these, the Quran also continued to address mankind (an-nas), that is, all people, and also referred to the disbelievers and ignorant ones.

Makkan and Madinan surahs

Surahs of the Quran have also been classified, according to their origin, into Makkan and Madinan surahs. A surah is said to be of Makkan origin when its beginning was revealed in the Makkan phase, even if it contains verses from Madinah. A surah is said to be of Madinan origin when its beginning was revealed in the Madinan phase, even if it has verses from the Makkan period in its text.

There is some difference of opinion over whether certain surahs are Makkan or Madinan.

The following 85 surahs are of Makkan origin and in order of revelation, according to Az-Zarkashi, the 14th-century Islamic scholar: 96, 68, 73, 74, 111, 81, 87, 92, 89, 93, 94, 103, 100, 108, 102, 107, 109, 105, 113, 114, 112, 53, 80, 97, 91, 85, 95, 106, 101, 75, 104, 77, 50, 90, 86, 54, 38, 7, 72, 36, 25, 35, 19, 20, 56, 26, 27, 28, 17, 10, 11, 12, 15, 6, 37, 31, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 51, 88, 18, 16, 71, 14, 21, 23, 32, 52, 67, 69, 70, 78, 79, 82, 84.

The following 29 Surahs are, according to Az-Zarkashi, of Madinan origin: 2, 8, 3, 33, 60, 4, 99, 57, 47, 13, 55, 76, 65, 98, 59, 110, 24, 22, 63, 58, 49, 66, 61, 62, 64, 48, 9, 5.

The Makkan surahs constitute about 11, and the Madinan about 19, parts (juz) of the text. It is obvious that the Madinan surahs are the longer ones and comprise a much larger part of the Quran – nearly two-thirds.

Importance of knowing the chronology

Knowing the origin and order of some of the revelation is important for understanding its meaning, which can often be more easily grasped if one knows the time and circumstances that relate to it. For instance, many verses from the Makkan period may be especially meaningful to Muslims living in a strongly un-Islamic environment, while some of the Madinan period would appeal much to Muslims who are in the process of formation of the ummah.

In some cases, unless one knows which of two or more related

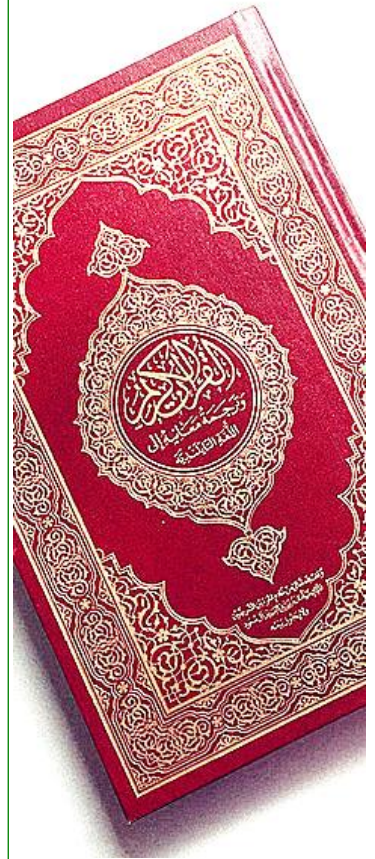
verses was revealed first, one cannot decide which legal ruling is now binding upon the Muslims. It is also important to know the chronology of verses in order to understand the gradual development of many Muslim practices, attitudes, and laws, such as those toward the prohibition of alcohol and toward fighting, and to see how these matters developed historically, that is, during the lifetime of the Prophet (saw), in order to understand their full implications.

Knowledge about the Makkan and Madinan surahs is derived from the Companions (Sahabah) and Successors (Tabiun), and nothing is said about this by the Prophet (saw) himself. This is because, at his time, everyone was a witness and well aware of the occasions of revelation.

Internal evidence

Often there is internal evidence as to which part of the revelation is Makkan or Madinan. There are a number of guiding criteria that help to distinguish between them:

- **The theme:** Does the theme belong to the Makkan or Madinan period? Among the Makkan themes are tawhid, shirk, the Day of Resurrection, moral corruption, and stories of the prophets (as). These topics are also found in Madinan surahs, but are usually only touched upon briefly. Madinan themes that are not found in Makkan revelations are of social and legal implications, concerning marriage, divorce, inheritance, punishment, and so on.



- **Direct reference:** Sometimes there is a direct reference to a historical figure or event, such as to Abu Lahab in Surah Al-Masad 111, or to the Battle of Badr in Surah Ali Imran 3:123.
- **The length:** Although there are examples in both cases, Makkan verses are often short, Madinan ones longer. However, there are counterexamples: for example, Surah Ash-Shuara (26) is Makkan, but it has 227 verses, while Surah Al-Anfal (8) is Madinan, with only 75 verses.

Part (juz) 30 is overwhelmingly Makkan. It has 543 Makkan verses distributed among 37 Surahs. Juz 18, on the other hand, is overwhelmingly Madinan. It has only 117 Madinan verses distributed among three surahs.
- **The form of address.** Often the addresses "O ye who believe" and "O people of the Book" indicate a Madinan origin, while the addresses "O mankind" and "O people" are usually of Makkan origin.
- There are 19 surahs with so-called **al-huruf al-muqattaah** (unjoined letters) such as alif, lam, mim. All these surahs are Makkan, except Surah Al-Baqarah (2) and Ali Imran (3).
- All verses with the word **kalla** are Makkan. Surah al-Alaq, reproduced at the beginning of this article, contains three instances of kalla (highlighted in red), often translated into English as the old-fashioned "Nay!"

- All surahs containing **sajdah** (a verse to prostrate after its recitation, known as sajdah tilawat) are Makkan. Surah al-Alaq contains one such instance, (highlighted in red), in the final ayat (translated as "bow down in adoration").
- Most of the surahs of the group **mufassal**, beginning with Surat Qaf (50) in the latter part of the Quran, are Makkan.
- All references to the **munafigun** (hypocrites) are from Madinah, since the hypocrites were inhabitants of Madinah. An exception is Surat Al-Ankabut (29). Its verse 11 is Makkan.

Summary

The knowledge of Makkan and Madinan revelations is one of the important branches of the sciences of the Quran (ulum al-Quran). It is not merely of historical interest, but particularly important for the understanding and interpretation of the respective verses.

Many surahs of the Quran contain material from both periods of revelation, and in some cases, there exists difference of opinion among scholars concerning the classification of a particular passage. However, on the whole, it is a well-established distinction, fully employed in the science of exegesis (tafsir) and best derived from the internal evidence of the text of the Quran itself.

Report on Australian Islamophobia

An article from AMUST¹ describes a recent report by the Australian Human Rights Commission, entitled "Sharing the stories of Australian Muslims". The project was led by the Race Discrimination Commissioner, Chin Tan, and surveyed over 1,000 Muslims in 2019-2020.

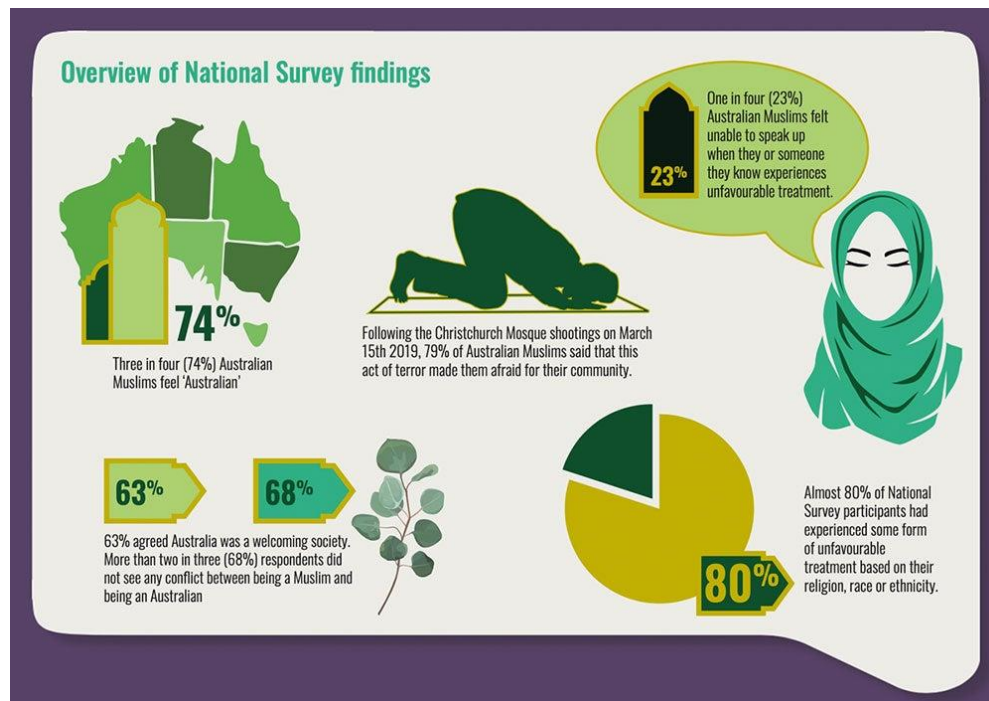
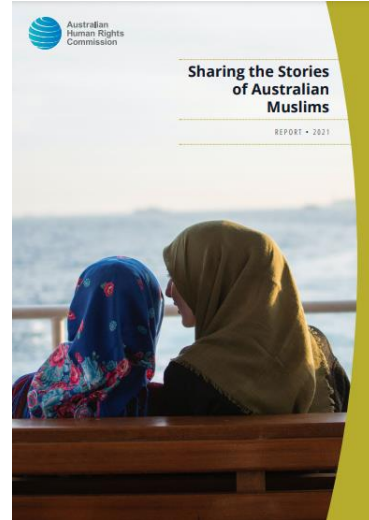
The report highlights religious discrimination, vilification and hatred against Muslims of the kind that led to the Christchurch shootings of 15 March 2019.

Stories, comments and insights shared by Muslim leaders, consultation participants, and National Survey respondents during this project provided a wide-ranging picture of community

members' lived experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred.

"These stories reinforced for me what I have long witnessed, that Australian Muslim communities are active participants in Australian public life, and many are working tirelessly to address misconceptions about Islam in the Australian community," Chin Tan writes in his message for the report.

The report calls for a greater awareness and understanding of Islam, and a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, hatred and Islamophobia.



Community solutions

Effective engagement with the Muslim community

One of the fundamental issues raised by the Muslim community was the lack of implementation of recommendations and initiatives that were the result of various community consultations. There was an urgent push for *effective* engagement. Australian Muslims not only want to be part of the conversation but they want their voices, stories and experiences to drive positive action.

Strengthen media frameworks

There was a strong sense among Australian Muslims that there needed to be stronger guidelines and frameworks in place to ensure that Muslim representation in Australian news and media was fair, balanced and accurately represented Muslim participation in Australian society, not just negative stereotyping and Islamophobic narratives.

Public awareness education

The Australian Muslim community noted that misconceptions about Islam and Muslims were all too common, and there was an urgent need for public awareness education. A better understanding of Islam and Muslims would equate to better intercultural relations.

More diversity and inclusion practices in the workplace

Muslim communities expressed the view that there is not necessarily a lack of diversity measures, but rather a lack of implementation of diversity and inclusion practices across businesses and organisations.

Early inter-faith education

Australian Muslims noted that public awareness and education would be most effective if implemented in the school curriculum, as it would give students an opportunity to meet members of the Muslim community and foster an early understanding of Australia's multicultural community.

Cultural competency in the workplace

Australian Muslims noted the lack of cultural competency and the negative effects that this had on their participation in everyday work life. Prayer spaces and inclusive networking events were mentioned as key initiatives organisations could take to address these problems.

Increased representation of Australian Muslims in the media

There was a consensus that greater positive representation of Australian Muslims within news and media meant more opportunities for the broader community to learn about and engage with Australian Muslims. Greater positive representation was also noted as key to the social inclusion of Australian Muslim youth.

Visible allies

The responsibility to educate and defend Muslims should not lie with the Australian Muslim community alone. Australian Muslims expressed the need for visible allies outside the Muslim community to help support and aid social cohesion and engagement.

Robust legislative protection against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate

The Australian Muslim community highlighted the pressing need for robust laws that prevent and provide protection against unlawful discrimination driven by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate.

The full report can be viewed at <https://www.amust.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/SSAM-2021-FINAL-DIGITAL.pdf>

1 www.amust.com.au/2021/07/report-highlights-australian-experiences-of-islamophobia

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How Islamic are the Taliban?

With the recent withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, the Taliban are reasserting themselves, with the aim of establishing an "Islamic emirate". An AMUST¹ article questions how Islamic the Taliban are.

The Taliban have recently issued three orders:

1. Men must grow beards.
2. Men must stop smoking.
3. The names of their girls over 15 and widows under 45 must be given, so that eligible Taliban men can marry up to four wives.

Beards

In a hadith, Prophet Muhammad (saw) stipulates, "Cut the

moustaches short and leave the beard." This is an ambiguous statement, and not an obligation (wajib). There are, for example, many imams without beards, and with long moustaches. The hadith was merely a recommendation to his companions in a society where everyone – Muslim or non-Muslim – sported a beard.

Smoking

Smoking is harmful to health, as are other drugs such as marijuana, hashish, and poppy seeds. Afghanistan is a significant global producer of methamphetamine, heroin, and crystal meth. The Taliban charge drug traffickers a tax, and make over \$2 billion annually through drug trafficking.



"Since drugs were not known at the advent of Islam, therefore we cannot see any direct evidence in the Sirah [biography of Prophet Muhammad, saw] on this issue throughout history; so the only way is referring to general rules and principles of jurisprudence. In general, it has been indicated, firstly, that since drug consuming inflicts tremendous losses, it is considered as forbidden (Haram), unless medical emergencies and necessities require it. Secondly, buying and selling it, is forbidden except where rational, lawful benefits are received, such as medicine production."²

Smoking originated after the time of Prophet Muhammad (saw), and so he has nothing to say about it. "Cigarettes appear to have had antecedents in Mexico and Central America around the 9th century in the form of reeds and smoking tubes."³ We therefore have to rely on the rulings of religious scholars (fatwas). "All contemporary rulings condemn smoking as potentially harmful or prohibit (haram) smoking outright as a result of the severe health damage that it causes."⁴

Smoking is (rightly) condemned as harmful to health, and thus haram. However, by the same measure, other drugs such as methamphetamine, heroin, and crystal meth are similarly harmful to health and haram. Condemning and prohibiting one while profiting from the other cannot go together.

Marriage

In Islam, nobody can marry a girl without her free consent. Women are not the property of the state or any religious group, and they have a right to education and to decide on their life partner.

A woman once approached the Prophet (saw) to complain that her father had married her to his nephew without first obtaining her consent. She said that her father wanted to enhance his reputation through the marriage. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) annulled the marriage. Later, the woman told the Prophet (saw), "Now that I am free, I willingly consent to this marriage. I only wanted it to be known that men have no say over women in their marriages."

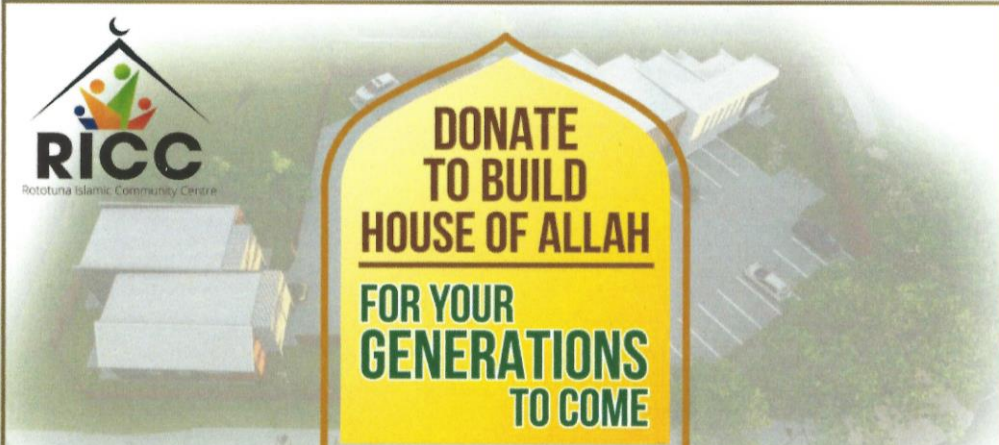
In conclusion, the Taliban's three orders have little validation from the Quran, hadiths and fatwas.

1 www.amust.com.au/2021/07/afghanistan-how-islamic-are-the-taliban

2 salamislam.com/articles/lifestyle/what-does-islam-say-about-drugs

3 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cigarette#History

4 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_views_on_tobacco



RICC
Rototuna Islamic Community Centre

DONATE TO BUILD HOUSE OF ALLAH FOR YOUR GENERATIONS TO COME

Uthman Bin Affan reported: The Messenger of Allah, Peace and Blessings be upon him, Said.
"Whoever builds a mosque for Allah, then Allah will build for him a house like it in Paradise"
Sahih Al-Bukhari 439
Sahih Muslim 533

BUY A MUSALLAH FOR \$1000

BUY PLOT OF LAND 150 SQ.M. FOR \$10,000

MOSQUE IN HAMILTON
ROTOTUNA ISLAMIC COMMUNITY CENTRE
MASJID KHADIJA AND ISLAMIC SCHOOL PROJECT - HAMILTON, NEW ZEALAND

It is with great pleasure to inform you that with the Grace of Almighty Allah we are planning to establish Rototuna Islamic Community Centre (RICC). The Muslim community in the North part of Hamilton has grown considerably, hence the need for a permanent Masjid, Islamic school and Community centre is more than ever. The main purpose of RICC is to promote genuine Islamic values through a variety of educational and social activities.

Donate generously for this noble cause and to build a house for yourself in Jannah

Account Name: Khadija Charitable Trust
Account No.: (ASB) 12-3171-0199644-00
SWIFT code: ASBBN22A
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Online Donations: www.ricc.org.nz/donate

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT

www.ricc.org.nz

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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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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)