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Rocket Science

May 2021

Ramadan / Shawal 1442



In the name of Allah,
most Gracious, most Merciful

Eid Mubarak!



Insha Allah, Eid ul-Fitr will fall around 14 May (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 benefits of dates

We are in the middle of Ramadan and, as everyone knows, dates play a significant role during this month. This article describes the benefits of dates. It quotes from the Quran and hadith, as well as various non-Muslim medical sources.

Origin

Date palms have been cultivated for a very long time. Fossil records show date palms from 50 million years ago. It is therefore difficult to pinpoint the origin of dates. They have been grown in the Middle East and the Indus Valley (India-Pakistan) for thousands of years. Archaeological evidence indicates that dates were cultivated in the Neolithic site of Mehrgarh (modern Pakistan) around 7000 BCE, and eastern Arabia in the mid-6th century BCE. They are nowadays cultivated in Northern Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.

The most commonly available dates are the Medjool and Deglet Noor varieties. The Ajwa variety of dates is particularly popular among Muslims, as they come from Madinah. It is said that the Ajwa variety has its origin in a palm tree planted by Prophet Muhammad himself (saw).

The English word *date* (in this sense) comes ultimately from the Greek *daktylos*, originally meaning "finger, toe." The same Greek root is used in the word *pterodactyl* "wing, finger". It may date back further to the Arabic *daqal* "date palm". It is said that the Greek word was used because of a

supposed resemblance between dates and human fingers, or possibly between the plant's leaves and the palm of the hand.

Dates in the Quran and hadith

There are many ayats in the Quran that mention dates.

They were presented as a sign of Allah (swt) for the disbelievers of Makkah. "There is a sign for them in the dead earth: We give it life, producing grain from it for them to eat. And We have placed in it gardens of palm trees and grapevines, and caused springs to gush forth in it, so that they may eat from its fruit, which they had no hand in making. Will they not then give thanks?" (36:33-35).

The fact that dates are a valuable crop in the Middle East is referred to in the following ayats (2:265-6): "The example of those who spend their wealth single-mindedly to please Allah is that of a garden on a high ground. If a heavy rain smites it, it brings forth its fruits twofold, and if there is no heavy rain, even a light shower suffices it. Allah sees all that you do. Would any of you desire that he should have a garden of palms and vines with rivers flowing beneath it – a garden in which he has every manner of fruit – and that it should then be struck by a fiery whirlwind and be utterly burnt down at a time when old age has overtaken him, and his offspring are still too small to look after their affairs? Thus does Allah make His teachings clear to you, that you may reflect."



Pterodactyl skelton

When Mariam (ra) was giving birth to Prophet Jesus (Isa, as), she was experiencing discomfort and pain during the final stages of her pregnancy. This happened under a palm tree, and she was advised to make use of the dates. "Shake the trunk of the palm towards you and fresh, ripe dates will drop down onto you" (19:25).

Similarly, there are many hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (saw) showing the high regard in which dates were held.

"There is a tree among the trees which is similar to a Muslim (in goodness), and that is the date palm tree" (Bukhari).

"Whoever takes seven Ajwa dates in the morning will not be affected by magic or poison on that day" (Bukhari).

"Ajwa dates are from Paradise" (Al-Tirmidhi).

"People in a house without dates are in a state of hunger" (Muslim).

Several hadiths refer to the importance of dates during Ramadan.

"Break your fast by eating dates, as it is purifying" (Ahmad).

"When one of you is fasting, he should break his fast with dates; but if he cannot get any, then (he should break his fast) with water, for water is purifying" (Abu Daud).

Anas bin Malik narrated, "Allah's Apostle never proceeded (for the prayer) on the Day of Eid ul-Fitr unless he had eaten some dates." Anas also narrated, "The Prophet used to eat an odd number of dates" (Bukhari).

Health benefits

So, dates are strongly recommended by Prophet Muhammad (saw) not only during Ramadan, but also for their general health benefits. This section explains the many benefits. Some of these benefits are immediate, while others are longer-term. Some are well established by medical research, while the relationship of dates to others are less well established.

The information below comes from non-Muslim sources^{1, 2, 3, 4}.

Nutritious

Dates contain important vitamins, minerals and fibre:



	100-gram serving ¹	One average Deglet Noor date ²
Calories	277	20
Carbohydrates	75 grams	5.33 grams
Fibre	7 grams	0.6 grams
Protein	2 grams	0.17 grams
Potassium	20% of the RDI	47 milligrams
Magnesium	14% of the RDI	3 milligrams
Copper	18% of the RDI	
Manganese	15% of the RDI	
Iron	5% of the RDI	0.07 milligrams
Vitamin B6	12% of the RDI	0.012 milligrams
Fat		0.03 grams
Sugar		4.5 grams

RDI: Recommended daily/dietary intake

Fibre

Dietary fibre is important to your digestion for preventing constipation.

Fibre is also important for blood sugar control. Fibre slows digestion, and may help blood sugar levels from becoming too high after eating. As a result, dates have a low glycaemic index (GI), which measures this process.

Antioxidants

Antioxidants protect your cells from free radicals, protecting you from harmful reactions and disease. There are three main types of antioxidants in dates:

1. Flavonoids reduce inflammation and reduce the risk of diabetes.
2. Carotenoids promote heart health and may reduce the risk of eye-related disorders.
3. Phenolic acid also reduces inflammation, and may lower the risk of cancer and heart disease.

Dates have higher antioxidant content than similar types of fruit, including figs and dried plums.

Brain function

Dates lower inflammatory markers such as interleukin (IL-6) in the brain. They thus lower the risk of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's.

Natural sweetener

Dates are a natural source of fructose, a type of sugar found in fruit. This is the reason dates are sweet, with a slight caramel taste. As a result, they are a healthy natural substitute for white sugar in cooking.

It should be noted, however, that while dates are high in fibre and nutrients, they are also high in calories. Their calorie content is higher than most fresh fruit because dates are usually dried. They are therefore best consumed in moderation.

It is easy to tell whether dates are dried or not. If they have a wrinkled skin, they are dried. In contrast, fresh dates have a smooth skin.

Cholesterol

Dates have no cholesterol, and very little fat. They are therefore ideal for people who need to watch their cholesterol levels.

Bone health

As the table shows, dates contain several minerals, including phosphorus, potassium, calcium and magnesium. These have all been associated with the

prevention of bone-related conditions including osteoporosis.

Microbial infections

Studies have shown that dates can produce resistance against bacteria and microbes such as E-coli and pneumonia.

Kidney health

Ochratoxin is a toxic substance produced in the kidneys. The damage it can cause the kidneys is called nephrotoxicity, often in the form of lesions. It has been found that dates can reduce these lesions by forming a protective layer.

Male fertility

The various vitamins and minerals found in dates can help male fertility by improving the sperm count and increasing sexual libido.

Nerve health

Dates are high in nutrients such as potassium, as well as being low in sodium. Both these facts make dates successful in preserving the health of your nerves. Potassium makes communication between nerves easier, while low sodium reduces the likelihood of hypertension (increased blood pressure).



Skin care

There are high concentrations of vitamins C and D in dates. These nourish the skin and improve its elasticity, reducing the effects of ageing.

Hair care

Similarly, dates are rich in iron, which is beneficial for the hair. It promotes blood flow, which is necessary in the scalp to prevent hair loss.

Night blindness

Night blindness (nyctalopia) is a condition which means your eyes are unable to adapt to low-light conditions, and you therefore find it difficult to function at night. It is caused by deprivation of vitamin A. Dates are rich in vitamin A, and therefore help prevent night blindness.

Conclusion

As is often the case, statements in the Quran and hadith have been shown by modern science to be correct. The correlations described above between dates and health benefits are facts that could not

have been known by Prophet Muhammad (saw) and his companions (ra) in the 6th and 7th centuries CE.

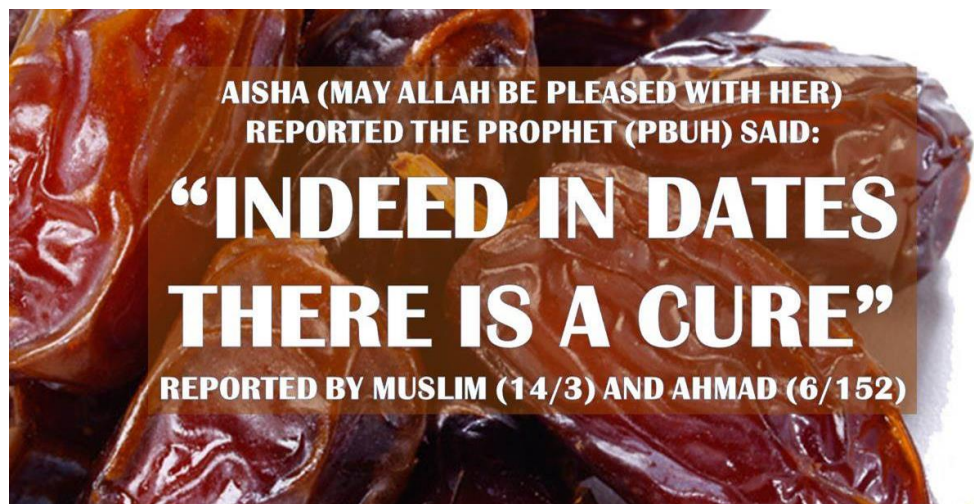
Dates are recommended during Ramadan, when we are fasting. There is, of course, nothing preventing us from eating dates throughout the year, as they have clear, long-lasting health benefits.

1 Brianna Elliott (2018). *8 proven health benefits of dates*. Healthline. www.healthline.com/nutrition/benefits-of-dates

2 Natalie Olsen (2021). *Are dates healthful?* Medical News Today. www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/322548

3 Piyush Kumar (2019). *20 health benefits of dates: recipes and types*. MedLife. www.medlife.com/blog/20-health-benefits-dates-recipes-types

4 Priyadarshini Nandy (2020). *10 benefits of dates: From improving bone health to promoting beautiful skin*. NDTV Food. <https://food.ndtv.com/food-drinks/10-dates-benefits-from-improving-bone-health-to-promoting-beautiful-skin-1258714>



The importance of intention

Alhamdulillah, by the grace of Allah (swt), we have reached the middle of Ramadan, and many (if not all) of us have been filling our days and nights with fasting, worship, thikr, salah, recitation of the Quran, etc. This article is not about the various rituals that we are encouraged to do during Ramadan, but rather to ask the question, "Why do we do what we do?", "Why, during Ramadan, do we fast, pray, read the Quran, etc?"

Autopilot

Autopilot is a system that controls the path of an aeroplane. The human pilot is still present, but simply monitors the instruments rather than controlling them. Autopilot is also used in ships and spacecraft – and increasingly in cars such as Tesla electric vehicles.

Autopilot systems are sometimes referred to colloquially by the human pilots as "George", as in "We'll let George fly for a while."¹ The origin of this nickname is not clear.

When we fast, pray, read the Quran, etc, do we go onto ritualistic autopilot, a Muslim George? That is, do we do these things without mindfulness of the

who, what, or how of what we are doing? Where is Allah (swt) in our actions?

The rationale of fasting

The simple answer as to why we fast in Ramadan is found in the Quran (2:183): "O you who believe, fasting is made compulsory upon you [by the revelation of this verse], as it was made compulsory upon those before you, so that you may have taqwa." The Arabic word *taqwa* is translated into English in many ways: God-consciousness, piety, fear of God. It comes from the verb *waqa*, meaning "to preserve, protect, safeguard, shield."

A famous hadith reported by Muslim describes how Gabriel (Jibril, as) came to Prophet Muhammad (saw) and asked him three questions. One of the questions was, "Inform me about ihsan." Prophet Muhammad (saw) answered, "It is that you should serve Allah as though you can see Him, for although you cannot see Him, nevertheless (know that) He sees you."

So, the purpose of fasting in Ramadan is to try to attain taqwa. The purpose is not hunger.



Intention

In another famous hadith, reported by Bukhari and Muslim, Prophet Muhammad (saw) explained that your intention (niyyah) before doing an action determines what rewards you will get from it.

"Actions are [rewarded] according to intentions, and everyone will get what was intended. Whoever migrates with an intention for Allah and His messenger, the migration will be for the sake of Allah and his Messenger. And whoever migrates for worldly gain or to marry a woman, then his migration will be for the sake of whatever he migrated for."

Our intentions are thus the basis of our deeds; according to the intention, our deeds will be either good or ugly, sound or unsound.

There is a story of a Muslim man who went to the mosque to quickly perform his prayers. He found that there was nobody else in the mosque, so he started to pray them at breakneck speed. However, while he was praying, he heard the door of the mosque open and close. Realising that there was now someone else seeing him pray, he slowed down, and performed all the actions perfectly, with the extra optional elements. When he had finished praying, he looked around to see who was

there, and saw that it was a cat that had entered the mosque.

We should all strive to perform our prayers perfectly, but remembering that the reason we are doing so is to please Allah (swt) with taqwa and sincerity.

Ibn Ataullah, the 7-8th century imam, wrote, ""Actions are lifeless forms, but the presence of an inner reality of sincerity within them is what endows them with life-giving spirit."

Don't judge a book by its cover

We probably all know the English proverb "Don't judge a book by its cover", meaning one should not judge the worth or value of something by its outward appearance, because appearances can be deceptive. Instead, we should decide on the value of actions according to the sincerity with which they were performed. As Muslims, we should always be performing actions for the sake of Allah (swt). As Allah says in the Quran (6:162), "Say, 'Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds.'"

The following, lengthy hadith reported by Muslim emphasises that the rewards for actions – those rewards including entry to Jannah – depend on the intention with which they were performed.



“Verily, the first people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who was martyred. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them.

Allah will say, ‘What did you do about them?’

The man will say, ‘I fought in your cause until I was martyred.’

Allah will say, ‘You have lied, for you fought only that it would be said you were brave, and thus it was said.’

Then Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.

Another man studied religious knowledge, taught others, and recited the Quran. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them.

Allah will say, ‘What did you do about them?’

The man will say, ‘I learned religious knowledge, taught others, and I recited the Quran for your sake.’

Allah will say, ‘You have lied, for you studied only that it would be said you are a scholar and you recited the Quran only that it would be said you are a reciter, and thus it was said.’

Then Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.

Another man was given an abundance of blessings from Allah and every kind of wealth. He will

be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them.

Allah will say, ‘What did you do about them?’

The man will say, ‘I did not leave any good cause beloved to you but that I spent on it for your sake.’

Allah will say, ‘You have lied, for you spent only that it would be said you are generous, and thus it was said.’

Then Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.”

It can be seen from this that the rewards for deeds relate to the intention behind the deeds, rather than the deeds themselves, or the size of the deed. Prophet Muhammad (saw) said that all deeds of charity, even as small as giving away half a date, will be rewarded.

Therefore, we need to improve the soundness and sincerity of our intention, and examine and reflect well before embarking on our actions.

Imam Muhasibi, the 8-9th century imam, wrote, “The sign of a sincere person is that, when they are praised, they do more. However, the sign of a hypocrite is that, when praised, they do less.”

This Ramadan, let us strive to do more, to avoid being hypocritical, to be mindful of what we are doing and why and for whom, and resist going onto Muslim George autopilot.

The three men trapped in a cave

This article describes the lessons to be learnt from a lesser-known hadith recorded by Bukhari (2333) and Muslim (2743a).

Into the cave

Abdullah bin Umar (ra), a son of Umar ibn Al-Khattab (ra), narrated that Prophet Muhammad (saw) said:

While three men were walking, it started raining and they took shelter (refuge) in a cave in a mountain. A big rock rolled down from the mountain and closed the mouth of the cave.

They said to each other, "Think of good deeds which you did for Allah's sake only, and invoke Allah by giving reference to those deeds so that He may remove this rock from you."

Thus, Allah (swt) tested these three men and showed them the way towards easing their difficulty.

Allah (swt) says in the Holy Quran, when talking about previous people's history: "There was certainly in their stories a lesson for those of understanding" (12:111). So let's learn some lessons from this story.

The first man's story

The hadith continues:

One of them said, "O Allah! I had old parents and small children and I used to graze the sheep for them. On my return to them in the evening, I used to milk (the sheep) and start providing for my parents first of all before my children.

One day I was delayed and came late at night and found my parents sleeping. I milked (the sheep) as usual and stood by their heads. I hated to wake them up and disliked giving milk to my children before them, although my children were weeping (because of hunger) at my feet till the day dawned.

O Allah! If I did this for Your sake only, kindly remove the rock so that we could see the sky through it.' So, Allah removed the rock a little and they saw the sky.

The lesson behind this first story is about being dutiful to our parents. Whilst this man had every opportunity to serve his children who were crying out of hunger, he decided to be dutiful to his parents and would only serve his children after his parents had had their share. This shows the amount of respect this man had towards his parents.

On the subject of filial piety, that is, taking care of one's parents, Allah (swt) says in the Quran:

"And We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his parents" (46:15).

"Behave with them in the world kindly" (31:15).

"And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour" (17:23).

We can clearly see that being dutiful to our parents comes next to worshipping Allah (swt).

“
The best of the deeds
or deed is the
(observance of)
prayer
at its proper time and
kindness to the
parents.”
(Sahih Muslim)

The second man's story

The hadith continues:

The second man said, "O Allah! I was in love with a cousin of mine like the deepest love a man may have for a woman. I wanted to outrage her chastity but she refused unless I gave her one hundred dinars. So, I struggled to collect that amount.

And when I sat between her legs, she said, 'O Allah's slave! Be afraid of Allah and do not deflower me except rightfully (by marriage).' So, I got up.

O Allah! If I did it for Your sake only, please remove the rock." The rock shifted a little more.

This is again a reminder for us to guard our chastity. Time and again, in several places in the Quran, we see the emphasis that Allah (swt) makes on guarding our chastity and keeping away from adultery (zina). The obvious example is from the story of Yusuf (as), where he was seduced by wife of his master, but he refused and said that he would rather be in prison than commit adultery.

Here are some reminders from the Quran:

"And they who guard their private parts" (23:5).

"Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do" (24:30).

"Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so – for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward" (33:35).



The third man's story

The hadith continues:

Then the third man said, "O Allah! I employed a labourer for a faraq (three containers' worth) of rice, and when he finished his job and demanded his right, I presented it to him, but he refused to take it. So, I sowed the rice many times until I gathered cows and their shepherd (from the yield).

(Then after some time) He came and said to me, 'Fear Allah (and give me my right).' I said, 'Go and take those cows and the shepherd.' He said, 'Be afraid of Allah! Don't mock me.' I said, 'I am not mocking you. Take (all that).' So, he took all that. O Allah! If I did that for Your sake only, please remove the rest of the rock." So, Allah removed the rock.

Being sincere and honest especially in business dealings is always difficult for us. We can see a beautiful story narrated above of the third man who was not only truthful but also gave back the labourer his due plus much more. This third man could have easily said that he had nothing to give, or that the labourer said he didn't want to take his wages then, so now he has no claim, or that he need give back only the amount owed to the labourer without the profits, or that he should pay back the labourer in full and the profits from using this wages.

Subhan Allah! How many of us actually reach this higher stage? Many of us would do one of the first three things above. But to pay back with the profits requires a lot of faith and honesty.

Allah (swt) says in the Quran:

"Oh ye who believe! Eat not up each other's property by unfair and dishonest means" (4:29).

"Woe to those that deal in fraud – those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due. Do they not think that they will be called to account on a mighty day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds?" (133: 1-6).

A hadith recorded by Muslim states, "He who cheats is not of us. Deceitfulness and fraud are things that lead one to Hell."

Conclusion

We can see from the above story that being righteous helps us not only in this world but also the Hereafter. Allah (swt) moved the rock for these three men because of what they had done in the past. This is a good example of a benefit received in this world.

However, the Quran explains that these good deeds will also help us in the Hereafter. Being truthful will save us from the fire of Hell. Being dutiful to parents is a way to enter Jannah. And refraining from sin such as adultery will save us from the punishment in the Hereafter.

Therefore, we need to ask ourselves, "What have we prepared for a rainy day? What good deeds could we use, if we were one of the three men facing a similar situation in this world? How will we get in the good books of Allah (swt)?"



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Islamophobia in Australia

In response to the 15 March 2019 Christchurch attacks by the Australia-born shooter, a group of academics from Charles Sturt, Sydney and Tasmania Universities carried out a pilot research project into Islamophobic acts in Australia. The report appeared in the *Australasian Muslim Times* (AMUST)¹, but originally appeared in *The Conversation*². The academics surveyed 75 mosques around Australia of their experiences between 2014 and 2019. The main findings and factors are summarized below.

Types of violence: These included arson, physical assault, graffiti, vandalism, verbal abuse, and online abuse and hate mail, including death threats.

Location: Although Sydney is home to the greatest number of mosques, violence was perpetrated against only 41% of the 51 respondent mosques, compared with 70% of 17 Melbourne mosques, and 89% of nine Brisbane mosques.

Level of violence: More than half (58.2%) of participating mosques (or worshippers at them) had experienced targeted violence.

Level of violence against mosques: The record for 2019 alone (the year of the Christchurch shootings) is alarming. 30% of respondent mosques had experienced a graffiti attack, with 17% reporting two or more instances. 12% had experienced one or more arson attacks, with one mosque reporting six such incidents. 34% of participating mosques experienced at least one incident of vandalism, and three mosques experienced four to five incidents. Hate mail was received by 17% of the mosques.

Public attention: 100% of mosques that had appeared in the news experienced violence, and 83% of mosques that had experienced online opposition to the development of the mosque.

Level of violence against worshippers: Nearly 40% of the mosques reported verbal abuse of their attendees in 2019. In addition, 17% had received threats of violence (with one actual physical assault), while 20% experienced objects thrown at them or the mosque.

1
www.amust.com.au/2021/03/graffiti-arson-death-threats-new-research-finds-widespread-violence-against-australian-mosques/

2
theconversation.com/graffiti-arson-death-threats-new-research-finds-widespread-violence-against-australian-mosques-156843



Sunshine Mosque, Melbourne

“Islamic extremism” no more

It has become a commonplace habit that, when an act of terrorism is perpetrated by someone claiming to be Muslim, they are described in the media as an “Islamic terrorist”, but when the act is perpetrated by someone from a different religion, they are a “lone wolf”.

The name of the religion, Islam, means peace by surrendering to the will of Allah (swt) and obeying His directives. Terrorism and extremism is, in no way, a directive of the Quran, hadith, or any other Islamic literature. Muslims therefore reject the very idea of Islamic terrorism or extremism. They are the very opposite of Islam, and the same is true of other religions.

it is therefore gratifying that the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) is reported¹ to have dropped the use of the term *Islamic extremism* (along with *left-wing* and *right-wing extremism*). Instead, the terms “religiously motivated violent extremism” and

“ideologically motivated violent extremism” will be used.

ASIO Head, Mike Burgess, said the old terms did not “adequately describe the phenomena we’re seeing”. He pointed out that it is violence that the organisation investigates, rather than the motivation behind the violence. “ASIO does not investigate people solely because of their political views. ... In the same way, we don’t investigate people because of their religious views. Again, it’s violence that is relevant to our powers, but that’s not always clear when we use the term ‘Islamic extremism’.”

He said some Muslim groups understandably saw the term *Islamic extremism* as “damaging and misrepresentative of Islam”, and stigmatising them “by encouraging stereotyping and stoking division”.

1 www.amust.com.au/2021/03/asio-to-avoid-left-right-and-islamic-in-an-overhaul-of-its-descriptions-of-extremism

“Religion is very easy and whoever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way. So you should not be extremists, but try to be near to perfection and receive the good tidings that you will be rewarded.”

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
[Bukhari]

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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)