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In the name of Allah,
most Gracious, most Merciful

The rights of children

We often we see articles or listen to khutbahs talking exclusively about the rights of parents. These are normally written by a much older adult, probably being parents themselves. And they are the first to point out how a child should behave, from the perspective of a parent.

And it is not wrong to do so – Islam has said that you should give your parents their due rights. In one verse of the holy Quran (17:23), Allah (swt) says, “For your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And honour your parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say to them even ‘ugh,’ nor yell at them. Rather, address them respectfully.”

And there are many verses and hadiths that talk about the parents’ rights, etiquette and their dues. But how about the children? What does Islam say about their rights?



How did the Prophet (saw) bring up his children? What did he have to say about their upbringing?

It was narrated that Ibn Umar (ra) said, “Allah has called them abraar (righteous) because they honoured (barru) their fathers and children. Just as your father has rights over you, so too your child has rights over you” (Al-Adab al-Mufrad, 94).

This article outlines some rights that children should receive from their parents.

At birth

It is the right of the child to have a good name. It was narrated by Naafi that Ibn Umar (ra) said, “The Messenger of Allah said, ‘The most beloved of your names to Allah are Abdullah and Abdul Rahman’” (Muslim).

Samurah ibn Jundub (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, “Every child is in pledge for (a sacrificial animal) which should be slaughtered for him on the seventh day, his head should be shaved and he should be named” (Abu Daud).

Abu Hurairah (ra) said, “The Messenger of Allah said, ‘The fitrah (natural state) is five things, or five things are part of the fitrah: circumcision, shaving the pubic hairs, plucking the armpit hairs,

There are many other sunnah practices that should be followed at birth. While not mandatory, they are highly recommended. As they say, planting the right seed at birth will set them right for the rest of their lives.

Upbringing

As the child grows older, their needs and wants change. So too their rights. This includes the all-important guidance towards the truth (Islam).

More than that, the father is the shepherd of his flock – in this case, his flock is his family. He needs to ensure that his flock follows the religion of Islam, as he will be questioned on this on the Day of Judgement. What he does in this world will ultimately affect the Hereafter for his family. Abd-Allah (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "Each of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. The ruler who is in charge of people is a shepherd and is responsible for them. The man is the shepherd of his household and

is responsible for them. The woman is the shepherd of her husband's house and child, and is responsible for them. The slave is the shepherd of his master's wealth and is responsible for it. Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock" (Bukhari, Muslim).

Allah (swt) says in the holy Quran (31:13), "And (remember) when Luqman said to his son when he was advising him, 'O my son! Join not in worship others with Allah. Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a great wrong indeed.'"

It is recommended for a child to start praying at the age of seven and it becomes obligatory at ten, as prayer is a fundamental pillar of Islam. It was narrated from Abd-Malik ibn al-Rabi ibn Sabrah from his father that his grandfather said, "The Messenger of Allah said, 'Teach the child to pray when he is seven years old, and smack him (lightly) if he does not pray when he is ten.'" (at-Tirmidhi, Abu Daud).

Good manners

The father, being the leader of the family, has the responsibility for disciplining the child. He needs to ensure that the child is brought up with good manners, has a good environment including good friends and social settings, and teaches the child of what he knows about Islam.

Islam has much guidance on the matter of good manners, and it is our responsibility as parents to ensure that we follow it and teach it to our children. For example, we need to ensure we don't use foul language in front of our children (or any other time for that matter), no matter how bad the situation is.



“The Prophet (saw) never used bad language neither a fahish (obscene, lewd or indecent expression) nor a mutafahish (someone with immoral or obscene behaviour). He used to say, ‘The best amongst you are those who have the best manners and character’ (Bukhari).

Abu Hurairah (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, “Let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day speak good, or keep silent; and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his neighbour; and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his guest” (Bukhari, Muslim).

In the absence of the father, this obligation becomes the responsibility of the mother.

Allah (swt) says in the holy Quran (66:6): “O you who believe! Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who disobey not, (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded.”

Spending

Abd-Allah ibn Amr (ra) said that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, “It is sufficient sin for a man if he neglects those on whom he is obliged to spend” (Abu Daud). This means that the parents have to take care of their children’s needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, education, and healthcare.

Rights of girls

Aishah (ra), the wife of the Prophet (saw) said, “A woman came to me with two daughters and asked me

for food, and I could not find anything except one date which I gave to her. She shared it between her two daughters, then she got up and went out. The Prophet came in and I told him what had happened. He said, ‘Whoever is in charge of any of these girls and treats them well, they will be a shield for him against the Fire’” (Bukhari, Muslim).

There are other similar narrations that state that parents who bring up righteous girls, even only one female child, will attain Paradise. Other hadiths mention more female children.

“Whoever Allah has given two daughters and is kind towards them, will have them as a reason for him to be admitted into Paradise.”

“Whoever Allah has given three daughters and he perseveres through raising them, will have them as a shield for him from Hellfire on the Day of Resurrection.”





Fair treatment

As parents, we cannot favour one child over another, or a boy over a girl. We need to ensure that each child is given their equal rights. Islam states in certain circumstances that one gender has a preference over the other (eg in terms of inheritance, where the boy would receive twice that of the girl, because a male has greater responsibilities than a female). However, in all other circumstances we need to ensure that each child is treated fairly.

“Fear Allah and treat your children fairly” (Bukhari, Muslim).

This means if you got one child a gift, it is only fair to give other children gifts of similar value. It also means we cannot have a favourite child or discriminate against one child, whatever the reason. We as parents have a duty to show them equal love and attention, and provide them with an equal upbringing. This means educating them, counselling them, talking to them so that they can work through their worries, emotions and concerns, and guide them towards the straight path.

Most of today’s problems would be solved if we were to follow Islamic guidelines. Islam is very comprehensive and is a way of life.

A final word

A Tirmidhi hadith outlines the story of a Bedouin man who was leaving his camel without tying it up. The Prophet (saw) asked him, “Why don’t you tie down your camel?” The Bedouin answered, “I put my trust in Allah.” The Prophet then replied, “Tie your camel first, and then put your trust in Allah.”

With respect to children, we need to remember that Allah (swt) has ultimate control. We need to tie our camel (ie bring our children up righteously), and then put trust in Allah. If you feel that you’ve done all you can with your child by giving the best of Islamic guidance and their rights, and still feel that they are not following the straight path, you have to leave the rest to Allah.

The story of Nuh (Noah, as) and his son is narrated in the Quran (11:42-43): “And it was sailing with them amidst the waves like mountains. And Nuh called out to his son, who was at an isolated place, ‘O my child, come on board with us, and do not be in the company of the disbelievers.’ He (the son) said, ‘I shall take shelter on a mountain which will save me from the water.’ He (Nuh) said, ‘There is no saviour today from the command of Allah, except the one to whom He shows mercy.’ And the waves rose high between the two, and he (the son) was among those who were drowned.”

We can see from this example that even the son of a beloved prophet wasn’t guided by his efforts. Therefore, we should not feel disheartened if our child does not become righteous after our efforts. Don’t get this wrong: we need to ensure that we give the right guidance in the first place, but the ultimate outcome is with Allah.

And we conclude with a dua made by Nuh (as): “My Lord! Forgive me, my parents, and whoever enters my house in faith, and all believing men and women” (Quran 71:28).

The narcissism of Satan

The topic of this article is narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), commonly just called narcissism. Medical sources¹ describe it as a personality disorder, and one that often accompanies other psychiatric disorders. It is included in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th edition, known as DSM-5)². It dates back at least to the famous Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud a century ago, and various experts have proposed variations and subdivisions in the intervening years.

The word *narcissism*

The origin of the word is in Greek mythology. There are varying versions of the myth. The more common ones describe Narcissus as a hunter who was known for his beauty. He rejected all romantic advances, but instead fell in love with his own reflection in water,

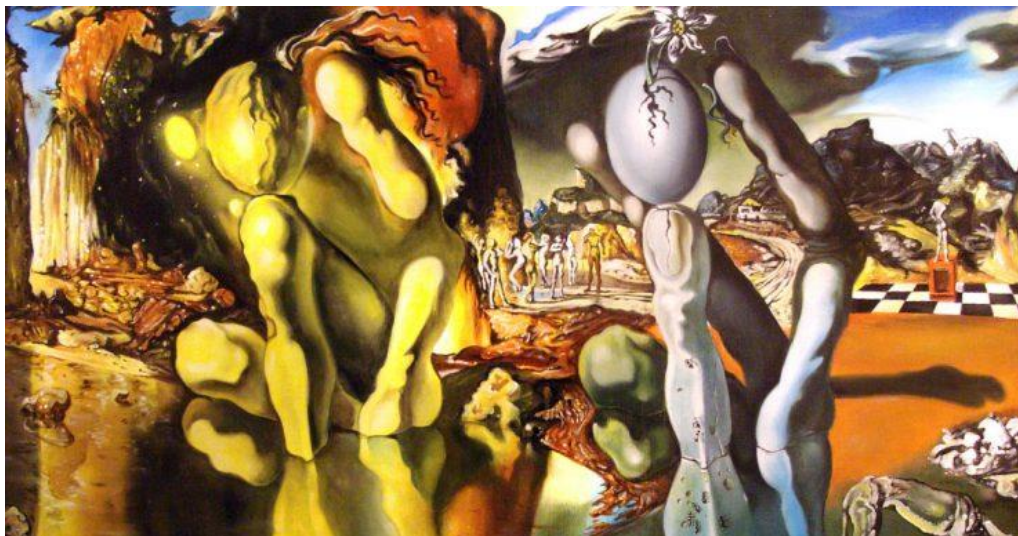
staring at it. When he died, a flower sprouted in his place.

This is the origin of the modern flower named *narcissus*. It is a group of flowering plants, including the daffodil and jonquil.

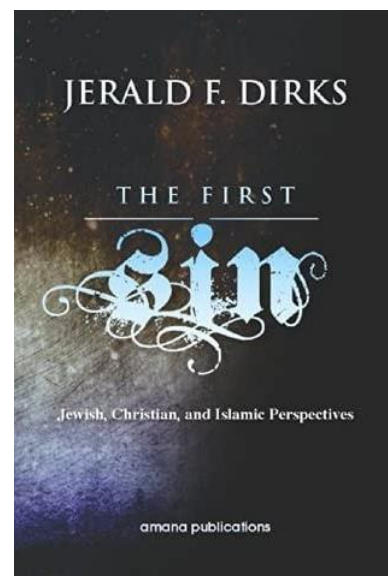
The story of Narcissus has often been depicted in art, perhaps the most famous one being by the Spanish surrealist artist Salvador Dali.

The definition of NPD

Jerald Dirks³ relates NPD to the character of Satan (Shaitan). Dirks quotes a number of signs and symptoms of NPD. While various sources give lists of nine or ten such signs and symptoms, Dirks' list seems to borrow heavily from that given in Wikipedia⁴. The list below is fuller and comes from EMedicineHealth⁵. So, people who may have NPD, may have the following characteristics.



Metamorphosis of Narcissus by Dali



1. **Grandiosity**

- Exaggerated sense of self-importance
- Feeling superior to others and that one deserves special treatment
- Feelings are often accompanied by fantasies of unlimited success, brilliance, power, beauty, or love

2. **Excessive need for admiration**

- Must be the centre of attention
- Often monopolise conversations
- Patients feel slighted, mistreated, depleted, and enraged when ignored

3. **Superficial and exploitative relationships**

- Relationships are based on surface attributes and not the unique qualities of others
- People are only valued to the extent they are viewed as beneficial

4. **Lack of empathy**

- Severely limited, or totally lacking, ability to care about the emotional needs or experiences of others, even loved ones

5. **Identity disturbance**

- Sense of self is highly superficial, extremely rigid, and often fragile
- Self-stability depends on maintaining the view that one is exceptional

- Grandiose sense of self is easily threatened
- Patients retreat from or deny realities that challenge grandiosity

6. **Difficulty with attachment and dependency**

- Rely on feedback from the environment
- Relationships only exist to shore up positive self-image
- Interactions are superficial
- Intimacy is avoided

7. **Chronic feelings of emptiness and boredom**

- When attention and praise are not available, patients feel empty, bored, depressed, or restless

8. **Vulnerability to life transitions**

- Difficulty maintaining reality-based personal and professional goals over time
- Compromises required by school, jobs, and relationships may feel unbearable
- Young adults may have a "failure to launch". This is "an inability to leave home and support oneself, regardless of the underlying cause. Young adults struggling with failure to launch (or failure to thrive) may appear to be 'stuck' or not maturing in an age-appropriate way"⁶. It was the topic of the 2006 rom-com *Failure to Launch*.



EMedicineHealth also point out that NPD is also a significant risk factor for suicide and suicidal attempts.

Someone is considered to have NPD if they demonstrate at least half of the above criteria.

NPD and Satan

Dirks discusses whether it can be said that Satan suffered from NPD, backing up his assertions with numerous quotations from the Quran and hadith, as well as Jewish and Christian texts.

Dirks' book is about the first sin, namely the refusal of Satan (Iblis) to bow down to Adam (as), leading to Satan's fall from grace. The details differ in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic versions. Here we quote from the Islamic literature.

There is little doubt that Satan did this because of an inflated ego and feelings of grandiosity. "I'm better than him [Adam, as]," (Iblis) answered. "You made me from fire, while You made him from clay" (Quran 38:76).

In the Quran (7:16-17), Allah (swt) shows that Satan harboured fantasies of great success. "I [Iblis] shall lie in wait for them on your 'straight path'. I'll attack them from their front and their back, and from their right and their left, and in the end You'll see that most of them are thankless (towards You, Allah)."

The belief that one is special is shown in that Satan believed he

was superior to Adam (as), was above Allah's command to bow down to Adam, and could defy Allah's command and get away with it.

People suffering from NPD may deny their own faults and failings, instead resorting to face-saving excuses and reasons, and trying to shift the blame onto someone else. "Then Iblis said, 'And since it was You [Allah] Who made me slip up, I'll lie in wait for them on your 'straight path'" (Quran 7:16).

NPD sufferers may display an arrogant attitude, and in many places in the Quran, Allah (swt) states that arrogance and pride lead to ruin.

"Don't strut through the earth acting like you're so great, for (you're not strong enough) to rip the earth apart, nor can you grow as tall as mountains" (Quran 17:37).

"When (a dying soul) reaches the collarbone at last ... (it will be too late for repentance then) for he never donated, nor did he pray. Rather, he denied and turned away and then strutted arrogantly back to his family. You're ruined" (Quran 75:26-35).

"And (remember) when We said to the angels, 'Prostrate yourselves before Adam.' And they prostrated except Iblis (Satan). He refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (disobedient to Allah)" (Quran 2:34).

The opposite side of the coin to pride is humility. Dirks emphasises that "it should be noted that Islam does not just condemn arrogance. It also lauds humility and modesty."

Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, "Each faith had a virtue of its own, and the virtue of Islam is modesty" (Malik).

"The (true) servants of the compassionate are those who walk humbly through the earth" (Quran 25:63).

"The true believers are those who, when they hear Our verses being read out to them, fall down in adoration and praise of their Lord. They are never too proud (to bow down before their Lord)" (Quran 32:15).

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is not to describe the faults of Satan. As Muslims, we are probably all well aware of them. Instead, it is to remind readers to guard against narcissism. The characteristics of narcissism have been itemised in some detail above. While *narcissism* may not be a commonly

used term nowadays, there are many other terms that convey much the same qualities: arrogance, conceit, delusions of grandeur, egotism, hubris, immodesty, pride, self-aggrandisement, self-importance, smugness, vanity.

Let us all read the list above, and be honest with ourselves as to whether we display any of these negative characteristics. Acknowledging that we may be failing in some is the first step towards rectifying them.

- 1 www.healthline.com/health/narcissistic-personality-disorder
- 2 American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th edition).
- 3 Dirks, J. (2014). *The first sin*. Amana publications.
- 4 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narcissistic_personality_disorder
- 5 www.emedicinehealth.com/what_are_the_nine_traits_of_a_narcissist/article_em.htm
- 6 www.optimumperformanceinstitute.com/failure-to-launch-syndrome



Muslim convert musicians

When people talk about musicians who have converted to Islam, the name that first comes to many people's minds is Yusuf Islam, the former Cat Stevens.

This article simply lists many musicians, of different musical styles, who have embraced Islam.

A long-term tradition

Musicians have been converting to Islam for many decades.

Joe Tex¹ (1935 – 1982) (the stage name of Joseph Arrington Jr) was an American singer who mixed the styles of funk, country, gospel, and rhythm and blues. He converted in 1966, and changed his name to Yusuf Hazziez.

Danny Thompson² (born 1939) is an English musician, playing the double bass and other instruments in folk-jazz, most famously with the group Pentangle. He converted in 1990.

Richard Thompson³ (born 1949) (no relation to Danny Thompson) is an English singer, songwriter, and guitarist, most famously with Fairport Convention. He converted in 1974.

Jermaine Jackson⁴ (born 1954) is most famous as an older brother of Michael Jackson, and a member of the Jackson Five. He has also had a solo career. He converted in 1989.

Janet Jackson⁵ (born 1966) is the tenth and youngest child of the Jackson family, and thus a younger sister of Michael Jackson. She has had a solo career as a singer, songwriter, actress, and dancer. She converted in 2012.

There are unconfirmed reports that Michael Jackson himself was attracted to Islam, and may have converted privately.



Richard Thompson



Jermaine Jackson

Indian converts

Given the animosity between Hindus and Muslims in India, it is surprising that some high-profile musicians have converted.



A R Rahman



Yuvan Shankar Raja

Kabir Suman⁶ (born Suman Chattopadhyay, 1949) is a music director, songwriter, singer, composer, politician, and former journalist. He converted from Hinduism in the 1990s in protest at the murder of an Australian Christian missionary by a Hindu fundamentalist group.

A R Rahman⁷ (an abbreviation of Allah Rakha Rahman, the name adopted on conversion by A S Dileep Kumar) (born 1967) is an Indian film composer, record producer, singer and songwriter, predominantly in Tamil and Hindi films. He converted in his 20s. In 2009, he appeared in the *Time* list of the world's 100 most influential people. In 2014, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Berklee College of Music, Boston.

Yuvan Shankar Raja (born 1979) is an Indian singer-songwriter and film score and soundtrack composer, mainly for Tamil films. He converted in 2014 and adopted the name Abdul Haliq.

Jazz

Two particular genres of music are well represented in Muslim converts. The first is jazz. A number of – especially American – jazz musicians converted in the middle of the last century.

Art (Arthur) Blakey⁸ (1919 – 1990) was an American jazz drummer and bandleader. He worked with famous jazz musicians including Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, and Dizzy Gillespie. He converted to Islam in the 1940s, and adopted the name Abdullah Ibn Buhaina; however, he stopped being a practising Muslim in the 1950s.

Yusef Abdul Lateef⁹ (born William Emanuel Huddleston, 1920 – 2013) was an American jazz multi-instrumentalist (saxophone, flute, oboe, bassoon, and other, Eastern instruments), and composer. He converted in the 1950s, and is credited as having played “world music” before the term existed.

Sahib Shihab¹⁰ (born Edmund Gregory, 1925 – 1989) was an American jazz saxophonist and flautist, who worked with Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, John Coltrane and Quincy Jones. He also converted in the 1960s. He was one of the first jazz musicians to convert to Islam, in 1947.

Vernel Fournier¹¹ (1928 – 2000) was an American jazz drummer best known for his work with Ahmad Jamal from 1956 to 1962. He converted to Islam in 1975, and took the name Amir Rushdan.

Ahmad Jamal¹² (born Frederick Russell Jones, 1930) is an American jazz pianist, composer, bandleader and educator. He discovered Islam in his early 20s and converted in 1950.

Abdullah Ibrahim¹³ (born 1934) is a South African pianist and composer. He was born Adolph Johannes Brand and before conversion went by the stage name Dollar Brand. During the apartheid era, he moved to Europe in 1962, and settled in New York City in 1965. He briefly returned to Cape Town in 1968, where he converted to Islam that year. He played with famous names, including the Duke Ellington Orchestra, and John Coltrane.

Idris Muhammad¹⁴ (born Leo Morris, 1939 – 2014) was an American jazz drummer with an extensive and varied career performing across jazz, funk, R'n'B and soul genres. He converted in the 1960s.

Rap and hip-hop

Similarly, a large number of modern rap and hip-hop artists have converted to Islam.

Akhenaton¹⁵ (born Philippe Fragione, 1968) is a French rapper and hip-hop producer of Italian origin.

Divine Styler¹⁶ (born Mark Richardson, 1968) is an American hip-hop artist. On conversion, he took the name Mikal Safiyullah.



Yusef Abdul Lateef



Idris Muhammad



Akhenaton



Ice Cube

Rakim¹⁷ (born William Michael Griffin Jr., 1968) is an American rapper and record producer. He converted in the 1980s.

MC Ren¹⁸ (born Lorenzo Jerald Patterson 1969) is an American rapper, songwriter and record producer. He converted in 1995.

Everlast¹⁹ (born Erik Francis Schrody, 1969) is an American musician, singer, rapper, and songwriter. He converted in 1996.

Ice Cube²⁰ (born O'Shea Jackson Sr., 1969) is an American rapper, actor, and filmmaker. He converted in the 1990s.

Scarface²¹ (born Brad Terrence Jordan, 1970) is an American rapper and record producer. He converted in 2006.

Q-Tip²² (born Jonathan William Davis, 1970) is an American rapper, record producer, singer, actor and DJ. He converted in the mid-1990s and took the name Kamaal Ibn John Fareed.

Raekwon²³ (born Corey Woods, 1970) is an American rapper and a member of Wu-Tang Clan. He converted in 2009.

Busta Rhymes²⁴ (born Trevor George Smith Jr., 1972) is an American rapper. He converted in 2009.

Sean Price²⁵ (stage name Ruckus, 1972 – 2015) was an American rapper. He converted in 2009.

Mos Def²⁶ (born Dante Terrell Smith, 1973) is an American rapper, singer, songwriter, and actor. He converted to Islam in his teens and adopted the name Yasiin Bey.

Loon²⁷ (born Chauncey Lamont Hawkins, 1975) is a former American rapper. He converted in 2008 and changed his name to Amir Junaid Muhadith.

Abd al Malik²⁸ (born Régis Fayette-Mikano 1975) is a French rapper and spoken word artist of Congolese origin. He converted in 2002.

B.G. Knocc Out²⁹ (born Arlandis Hinton, 1975) is an American West Coast rapper and songwriter. On conversion, he took the name Al Hasan Naqiyy.

One Be Lo³⁰ (born Ralond Scruggs, 1976) is an American alternative hip hop artist. On conversion, he took the name Nahshid Sulaiman.



Scarface



Mos Def

Vinnie Paz³¹ (born Vincenzo Luvineri, 1977) is a Sicilian American rapper.

The Jacka³² (born Dominick Newton, 1977 – 2015) was an American rapper. He converted at a young age and changed his name to Shaheed Akbar.

Others

Sinéad O'Connor³³ is an Irish-born singer, best known for her 1990 hit "Nothing Compares 2 U". Her conversion story was featured in the December 2018 issue of *Rocket Science*³⁴.

Jennifer Grout³⁵ (born 1990) is an American singer of Arabic and Amazigh music. She converted in 2013.

Perhaps what is less well-known is that New Zealand has its own famous musician convert: Jon Toogood³⁶ of the band Shihad, who converted in 2014.

- 1 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Tex
- 2 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danny_Thompson
- 3 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Thompson_(musician)
- 4 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jermaine_Jackson
- 5 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Janet_Jackson
- 6 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kabir_Suman
- 7 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._R._Rahman
- 8 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art_Blakey
- 9 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yusef_Lateef
- 10 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sahib_Shihab
- 11 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vernel_Fournier
- 12 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmad_Jamal
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- 14 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Idris_Muhammad
- 15 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akhenaton_(rapper)
- 16 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_Styler
- 17 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rakim
- 18 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MC_Ren
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- 23 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raekwon
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- 25 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sean_Price
- 26 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mos_Def
- 27 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loon_(rapper)
- 28 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abd_al_Malik_(rapper)
- 29 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B.G._Knocc_Out
- 30 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/One_Be_Lo
- 31 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinnie_Paz
- 32 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Jacka
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- 34 mtabertislamiccentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Rocket_Science_Dec_2018.pdf
- 35 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jennifer_Grout
- 36 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jon_Toogood



Jon Toogood

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- ✓ Plenty of free parking
- ✓ Facilities for ladies
- ✓ Heating and air-conditioning
- ✓ Bayan (religious talk) before jumuah 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)