Muslim Students Gain Favor in Food Choice
by Sabah Chaudhry

The Holy Quran clearly states “You are forbidden carrion (flesh of an animal that dies naturally) and blood, the flesh of swine and of that animal which has been slaughtered in any other name than that of Allah” (Al-Maidah 5:3).

The religious obligation for a Muslim to eat meat which is prepared in a clean way and with the proper method of sacrifice is a positive gain and true blessing from the Almighty Allah (SWT). As true Muslims or servants of Allah, they abide by His decrees and at the same time recognize the moral and mental benefit of this daily practice. Mawlana Syed Maududi states in his translation of Surah Al-Maidah, Verse 3, “It should be clearly understood that the limits prescribed by the law for making eatables lawful or unlawful are not laid down from the point of view of physical health but from the moral and spiritual point of view. The Law is only concerned about what is morally or spiritually harmful or beneficial and also about the right and wrong means for obtaining lawful things. For whatever has been prohibited, has been forbidden because it is harmful from the point of view of cleanliness and morality or belief. On the other hand, whatever has been made lawful, has been made so because it is free from all these evils.” Mawlana Maududi’s explanation of this verse from the Quran shows Allah would not mandate laws unless they are morally and spiritually important for the benefit of the Islamic Ummah. These laws are set forth because it is difficult for human beings to determine by themselves the extent of immorality in certain practices, especially in pertaining to the type of meat one can eat and how to prepare it. This explains the profound benefit of obeying one’s commandment(s), which permits Muslims to intake only that meat which is prepared in the Halal manner.

The moral benefit of Halal foods is evident once one thoroughly comprehends to preparation of Halal meat. Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi explains in his book “The Lawful And The Prohibited In Islam” that the animal being sacrificed should be killed with a sharp clean object. The slaughterer must be a mature pious Muslim who clearly understands the fundamentals of Halal slaughter in Islam. The name of Allah should be mentioned while slaughtering the animal. The correct manner of mentioning the name of Allah at slaughtering is, “Bismillah Allah akbar” (In the name of God, God is the most great). The slaughterer must cut the respiratory tract, jugular vein, and esophagus. Mawlana Maududi states in his translation of the Quran (Al-Maidah 5:3) that when the animal is slaughtered in this manner, the body is connected to the brain for a sufficiently long time and the flesh is cleansed of the blood which in itself is unlawful. The flesh only becomes lawful to eat once it is completely cleansed of blood. Because many Muslims immediately recognize the reason why they must obey Allah’s law, they abstain from Haram meat, or that meat which is prepared in an unclean manner. Even though for Muslims in America, the surrounding society is accustomed to providing meat prepared in the unclean manner, the grace of Islam confines the true Muslims from their temptations. Their powerful faith does not allow them to subject themselves to the negative influences of the Shaitan, and they search for alternatives rather than venture into the realm of Haram. Muslims who obey and strongly enforce these commandments of Allah within their daily lives are rewarded in the present as well as in the Hereafter.

As for the active Muslim students attending Rutgers University, Allah will Insha’allah reward them for upholding their responsibilities as true Muslims and for persevering and struggling to claim their right to being provided Halal meat. Last year, halfway through the Fall semester, Neilson Dining Hall on Cook/Douglass Campus officially began to serve Halal food. These Halal meat dishes have since been served two to three times a week for dinner, precisely between 4pm to 7pm.

According to Mr. Stephen Reicks, Unit Manager of Neilson Dining Hall, he received several e-mail and personal requests from Muslim students to serve Halal meat. Because the requests for Halal meat were greatest among Cook and Douglass College students, Mr. Charles Sams, the Director of Dining Services, decided to begin the serving of Halal meat at Neilson Dining Hall. “It’s a great accomplishment for Muslim students that Dining Services has recognized the Muslim population on campus here at Rutgers University. It goes to show that if you are committed to something and something is important enough, Rutgers and Dining Services is willing to make changes accordingly,” said first-year student Sannia Qazi. The management of Neilson Dining Hall took fair and just action as a result of the requests of committed Muslim students and began to purchase Halal foods in October from a Halal meat vendor. Said Mr. Reicks, “Neilson Dining Hall receives its foods from the Mennella Company. But in order to receive the Halal foods, Mennella...
Table of Contents

Neilson Dining Hall.........................pg 1
Prayer Timings................................pg 2
A Trip to Yemen..............................pg 3
Current Events..............................pg 4
Feature Question.............................pg 5
Importance of Hajj..........................pg 6
A Prodigal Soul..............................pg 7
The Making of a Muslim...................pg 8
Poetry........................................pg 9
Halal Food Calender.......................pg 10
Mercy Killing...............................pg 11
The Game Called Duniya....................pg 12

Nasihah Staff

Editors-in-chief:

Madiha Abbas and Zainab Chaudary

Senior Editor:

Saleem Safdar

Managing Editor:

Asif Ahmed

Marketing Directors:

Asiya Mahmood and Fatima Merchant

Online Editors:

Ayana Afridi
Emran El-Badawi
Tarab Hussein
Mostafa Khalifa

Photography:

Salim Ajmeri

Writers:

Ayana Afridi
Sherine Aboulez
Moustafa Badrelsin
Sabah Chaudhry
Shadee El-Masry
Sameera Iqbal
Aly Khan
Sana Khan
Sarah Khurshid
Saleem Safdar
Kashif Sandhi

All praise and glory be to Allah the Most Gracious without Whom nothing good can happen.

***This publication contains the name of God, please respect it.***

Nasihah welcomes submissions and articles from everybody. Articles may be edited for content and length at the editors’ discretion. Submit all articles to alnasihah@yahoo.com The opinions expressed in Nasihah are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily represent that of ISRU or the staff of Nasihah.

Visit ISRU and Nasihah online at www.eden.rutgers.edu/~muslims

MCMC Announcements

MCMC offers the following educational programs on regular basis:

**Tehfilzul Quran/Quranic recitation:**
Monday-Friday: 4:00-8:00 PM.

**Weekend School:**
Saturday: 9:30 AM-1:00 PM.
Sunday: 9:00 AM-1:00 PM.

**Quranic Memorization & Tajweed for sisters:**
Monday-Thursday: 12:00 1:00 PM.

**Physical Education for brothers:**
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: 6:30 PM-8:30 PM.

**Weekly Lecture:**
Friday after Maghrib.

**Weekly Seminar:**
Sunday Morning: 10 AM-1:00 PM.

**Monthly Program:**
Last Saturday of the month after Maghrib Prayer. Program includes lecture by Islamic Scholars with question and answer session.

Monthly Program: Last Saturday of the month after Asr Prayer. Program includes dinner, lecture by Islamic scholars with question and answer session.

MCMC Masjid An-Noor

Office of the Imam

Weekly Educational Program for the community.

**Family Counseling/Matrimonial Session:**
Monday and Thursday: Between Maghrib and Isha (By appointment only).

**Fundamentals of Islam:**
Monday: After Isha Prayer
(Organized in coordination with ISRU).

**Ta’leem wa Tarbiyah (Youth Program):**
Tuesday: One hour before Isha Prayer.

**Islamic Study Circle:**
Wednesday: 11:30 to Zuhr Prayer
(English: for sisters only).

**Quranic Study Circle:**
Wednesday: After Isha Prayer.

**Lecture series on the Seerah:**
Friday: After Isha Prayer.

“And Glimpse of Islam”
Daily: Immediately after Isha Prayer.

---

Dhual-Qadah/Dhual-Hajj 1421 A.H.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Fajr</th>
<th>Sunrise</th>
<th>Zuhr</th>
<th>Asr</th>
<th>Magh.</th>
<th>Isha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>5:16</td>
<td>6:31</td>
<td>12:13</td>
<td>4:06</td>
<td>5:52</td>
<td>7:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>5:15</td>
<td>6:30</td>
<td>12:13</td>
<td>4:07</td>
<td>5:53</td>
<td>7:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>5:13</td>
<td>6:28</td>
<td>12:13</td>
<td>4:08</td>
<td>5:54</td>
<td>7:07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>5:12</td>
<td>6:27</td>
<td>12:13</td>
<td>4:09</td>
<td>5:55</td>
<td>7:08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>5:10</td>
<td>6:25</td>
<td>12:12</td>
<td>4:10</td>
<td>5:56</td>
<td>7:09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>5:09</td>
<td>6:24</td>
<td>12:12</td>
<td>4:11</td>
<td>5:58</td>
<td>7:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>5:05</td>
<td>6:21</td>
<td>12:12</td>
<td>4:12</td>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>7:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>5:04</td>
<td>6:19</td>
<td>12:12</td>
<td>4:13</td>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>7:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>5:02</td>
<td>6:17</td>
<td>12:11</td>
<td>4:14</td>
<td>6:01</td>
<td>7:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>5:01</td>
<td>6:16</td>
<td>12:11</td>
<td>4:15</td>
<td>6:03</td>
<td>7:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>5:00</td>
<td>6:14</td>
<td>12:11</td>
<td>4:16</td>
<td>6:04</td>
<td>7:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>4:59</td>
<td>6:13</td>
<td>12:10</td>
<td>4:17</td>
<td>6:05</td>
<td>7:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>4:56</td>
<td>6:11</td>
<td>12:10</td>
<td>4:18</td>
<td>6:06</td>
<td>7:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>4:54</td>
<td>6:09</td>
<td>12:10</td>
<td>4:18</td>
<td>6:07</td>
<td>7:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>4:52</td>
<td>6:08</td>
<td>12:09</td>
<td>4:19</td>
<td>6:08</td>
<td>7:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>4:51</td>
<td>6:06</td>
<td>12:09</td>
<td>4:20</td>
<td>6:09</td>
<td>7:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>4:47</td>
<td>6:03</td>
<td>12:09</td>
<td>4:22</td>
<td>6:12</td>
<td>7:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>4:45</td>
<td>6:01</td>
<td>12:08</td>
<td>4:23</td>
<td>6:13</td>
<td>7:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>4:42</td>
<td>5:58</td>
<td>12:08</td>
<td>4:24</td>
<td>6:15</td>
<td>7:28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>4:40</td>
<td>5:56</td>
<td>12:07</td>
<td>4:25</td>
<td>6:16</td>
<td>7:29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>4:38</td>
<td>5:54</td>
<td>12:07</td>
<td>4:26</td>
<td>6:17</td>
<td>7:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>4:37</td>
<td>5:53</td>
<td>12:07</td>
<td>4:26</td>
<td>6:18</td>
<td>7:31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>4:35</td>
<td>5:51</td>
<td>12:06</td>
<td>4:27</td>
<td>6:19</td>
<td>7:32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>4:33</td>
<td>5:50</td>
<td>12:06</td>
<td>4:28</td>
<td>6:20</td>
<td>7:34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>5:46</td>
<td>12:06</td>
<td>4:29</td>
<td>6:22</td>
<td>7:36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>4:28</td>
<td>5:45</td>
<td>12:05</td>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>6:23</td>
<td>7:37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>4:26</td>
<td>5:43</td>
<td>12:02</td>
<td>4:31</td>
<td>6:24</td>
<td>7:38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Salat times are for Piscataway, NJ and vicinity. Please adjust times according to local sources. Zuhr time is calculated as 3 minutes after zuwaal. Asr time is based on Hanafi Fiqh. According to Shafee/Maliki Fiqh, it starts about 30-45 minutes earlier.

“It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira that when the son of Adam recites the ayat of Sajdah (prostration) and then falls down in prostration, the Satan goes into seclusion and weeps and says: Alas, and in the narration of Abu Kuraib the words are: Woe unto me, the son of Adam was commanded to prostrate, and he prostrated and Paradise was entitled to him and I was commanded to prostrate, but I refused and I am doomed to Hell.” (Muslim).
by Shadee El-Masry

For two years, my most dominant thought was traveling to and being with the grand shaykhs and salihleen I had heard so much about. Without a doubt, not one day passed without me thinking about it. Al hamdulillah, in the momentous summer of 2000, it finally happened. As an act of gratitude, I would like to give a first-hand account of that experience, along with some helpful tips, for those hopeful aspirants who have yet to journey themselves.

**For every journey, there are two journeys.**

In March of 2000 I was a junior in college and I realized that my religious condition was spiraling out of control. Something had to be done. I began to discuss seriously with my parents about going to Yemen in the summer break. This is an important note. If one is serious about something, they must plan ahead, many months ahead. The previous year I made no plans and just expected that I would go somewhere. However, when the summer came I found myself flat-footed...not enough time, and the endeavor failed. I learned my lesson, and to show Allah that I really wanted this I was going to attack the asbab, giving myself ample time, armed with diligence and patience.

By mid-May I had made considerable strides. Most importantly, I received what I call "al visa al kubra"—"the grand visa," also known as permission from the parents. So I relaxed thinking that it was just a matter of time. But like I said, I was slipping. Sometimes when your iman goes down, everything comes down with it. Due to my recent idiosyncrasies, I barely got permission.

However, the very next day this rosy picture would take a detour—a vicious detour. I called home asking if they wanted something on my rather long commute home from my early morning summer classes. I had been up late the previous night so my mom said, "Sleep, then come home." I refused. I was too excited thinking about Hadramawt. Then again they tried to persuade me, "rest first so you can drive." Nope. My mind was like a stubborn lock. Five minutes from home I fell asleep at the wheel. At forty miles per hour, I was awakened by the hideous sound of steal crunching steal. It was a red light and I slammed forty miles per hour, I was awakened by the hideous sound of steal crunching steal. It was a red light and I slammed into the phone booth and called Izbet al Mustafa. I called the Haba'ib to spend a day in a visitors house in Sanaa for people traveling through Yemen and a brother picked me up. The school, Dar al Mustafa, is south of Sanaa in Tarim, so one can take a 10-hour bus trip (air-conditioned) or a $120 flight to Seyoun, where you'd call the Dar and a taxi will come for you. If you can get around in NY, LA, St. Louis, or any of these cities, you don't need to worry about Yemen. They say if Adam peace be upon him would return to the Earth, the only place he'd recognize would be Yemen because it hasn't changed.

What happened on the first day I took as a good omen. On the way to Dar al Mustafa, my guide had a delivery for Habeed Mashur, Habeed Omar's older brother. So I waited outside while he took care of that. Then someone signaled me to go in, which I did. The Shaykh offered us breakfast and we ate together. My guide then said to me, "This rarely ever happens. This is a very special moment."

**Dar al Mustafa**

Dar al Mustafa is nice and the scenery is just as I imagined and more. In a place where most houses are made of mud brick, I see a building of orange stones, with some parts roofless. Its two levels are comprised of student rooms, a kitchen, a tiny store, and the prayer hall. There is even a swimming pool across the road and goats and chickens are running around the village. I would quickly learn that getting there is an end that is in reality another beginning. There's the physical effort and the spiritual struggle. But this time it's different. There is a sense of security because you've finally made it and these people can help. At least you don't have to lower your gaze in Tarim.

When a student arrives he's tested rather informally. One of the things I found interesting was that the Shaykh asked if my father approved of the trip. I realized right away how much elders are respected; parents are near sacred. There are many teachers who can give you perhaps 30 minutes per day, and it's pretty relaxed. I just asked a teacher and they gave me a time slot. I had 4 classes per day, then upped it to 9 per day, 5.5 days a week. One of the students helped arrange my day's routine.

At around 4:00 am you are roused from sleep: tahajjud. Then the Ninety-Nine Beatific Names of Allah swt are recited. After fajr, the classes begin and go up to 9am. That's breakfast time and usually sleep follows that until dhuhr adhan. Sometimes a group jog was organized. The dhuhr period is slow due to the heat and lunch is served so you have some free time for study, private classes etc. Asr is followed by Rawaha—readings from the Ihya with Habeed Omar. On Mondays, the residents sing the Burda and on Fridays there is khitaba, practicing Jumua Khutba. Again a short break is given before Maghrib. I utilized this time for walks in the village. There is something deeply human about walking along a route that is absolutely free of anything synthetic. All you hear is the crunching of your feet against the dirt path. Once I hiked up a large hill. Another time, I visited goat farm and fed billy goats. This is another beautiful trait of Tarim, no matter what level of knowledge or certainty you are at, you can fit in. I enjoyed the simplicity and silence. Classes resume until Isha, which is followed by review of what you learned, dinner, and the day officially ends. That is a day at Dar al Mustafa. Visiting students can abate the schedule if too intense.

These journeys are purificatory. When in a good environment, one's diseases and ignorance become starkly apparent and you think, "Boy, I am seriously dysfunctional. This is scary. I better do something." Also, shaytan works extra to distract you with was-wasa. Most newcomers experience some illness.

I personally got very sick in the last week and actually thought I was going to die. Insha Allah the illness is purification and not punishment. One of the good things about getting sick is that all the shuyukh come visit you, especially if you're a visitor from a far away place.

In regards to the shuyukh...I recommend two things: have adab and have audacity. Don't be rude, but don't be shy either. For me, I thought to myself, "I might never come here again," and it was as if an impulse picked me up and took me to Habeed Ali's or Habeed Omar's. I just went to their houses. You must initiate intimate conversation. Think about it; it could be a once in a lifetime chance. By audacity I mean express yourself. There's a hadith saying that if you love someone, tell them. By doing so and by giving them gifts, they'll remember you and in turn love you back. It is more important that the shaykh love the student than that the student love the shaykh. Back to being sick...it's almost inevitable and it's all in the way of Allah. Habeed Omar, when I was sick, told me, "Hadha zayn lak"—"This is good for you." Tahooran insha Allah.

I believe that Dar al Mustafa will be a school of choice for future Western Muslims as it combines the remoteness of Mauritania with the amenability of Damascus. The Westerners have a committee to help new students and visitors and Insha'allah an English program will be arranged for non-Arab speakers to learn Arabic from scratch.

Another great quality is Dar al Zahra, which is a school for sisters being built just across the road. Our communities will grow immensely if every year one or two people travel to a place like this so our iman increases and you give off vibes to be absorbed by those around you. Barak Allah fikum, wassalam alaikum.
CURRENT EVENTS INVOLVING MUSLIMS

continued from page 1

Feb 6th:
Pakistani Interior minister Mueen Haider started his 3 days visit to Afghanistan on Wednesday 7 February. He planned on discussing and signing agreements with the Taliban authorities on trade and extradition of criminals. The talks were expected to cover the future of Usama bin Laden whom Pakistan is under pressure from the US to help arraign.

In Palestine:
Feb 22nd:
Human Rights Watch today accused the IDF of using indiscriminate force in response to Palestinian gunfire, causing excessive civilian casualties.
Feb 22nd:
Defense Minister Ehud Barak signed an administrative detention order against Jihad Shuman, a Hezbollah activist, who was arrested earlier last month, on suspicion of future attacks. Shuman, a Lebanese Shi‘ite who studied computer science at the American University in Beirut, was arrested in Jerusalem six days after entering Jerusalem.
Feb 21st:
Israel’s new attempts to capture a Hamas mujahid have failed. Their raids in Jenin were aimed at capturing Nasser Jerrar were unsuccessful
Feb 16th:
Early Thursday an armed Palestinian policeman was shot dead by Israeli soldiers near the Jewish settlement of Kfar Darom in the southern Gaza Strip, a military spokesman said.
Feb 10th:
An official Israeli report has acknowledged for the first time that the Israeli security service tortured detainees during the Palestinian uprising, the Intifada, between 1988 and 1992. The report, written five years ago but kept secret until now, said the leadership of the security service Shin Bet knew about the torture but did nothing to stop it. Although, the report did not detail the torture methods used, but human rights organizations say some detainees died or were left paralyzed.

In Indonesia:
Feb 22nd:
Jakarta, Feb 21: Police imposed a curfew on Wednesday and sent hundreds of reinforcements into a city in Indonesian Borneo as 1,000 people fled to government compounds after the death toll in days of ethnic clashes reportedly rose to 29. The state Antara news agency reported another eight people were killed in renewed fighting between rival ethnic Madurese and indigenous Dayak tribesmen in the industrial city of Sampit in Central Kalimantan on Wednesday.

In Malaysia:
Feb 26th:
Kuala Lumpur, (Bernama) — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said on Monday that Muslims should go back to the fundamental teachings of Islam so that they will be able to cope with any challenges including globalization. The Prime Minister said most Muslim countries were still yet to be fully aware of globalization because they were busy fighting with each other.

Feb 22nd:
Kuala Lumpur, (Bernama) — A senior leader of the Abu Sayyaf claimed that the ceasefire announced by Manila is a new ploy by the government to confuse the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) from continuing their struggle.

In Chechnya:
The Russian army is facing fresh accusations that its soldiers have committed serious war crimes in Chechnya. Video footage shot by a German journalist shows bodies of men believed to be Chechen fighters in a mass grave.

In Kashmir:
Feb 24th:
The Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, Mulla Abdussalam Zaeef, has rejected reports that the administration in Kabul has agreed to hand Osama Bin Laden to a third country for trial. Speaking in an interview with a Pakistani newspaper.
Feb 18th:
Two camps just several kilometers apart provide stark evidence of how radical Hindus and vested interests have hijacked India’s earthquake relief effort. Immediately after the 25 January quake in Gujarat, large quantities of aid were flown in from around the country and the world, but distribution of the aid showed up the fault lines in Indian

In Iran:
Feb 25th:
Cabinet Office Minister Mo Mowlam is flying to Iran for a four-day visit designed to improve co-operation in tackling the drug problem. Mowlam is the first British Cabinet minister to visit the Islamic Republic since its 1979 revolution.

In Britain:
Feb 19th:
The much-feared and much-criticized Terrorism Act comes into force today Monday 19 February as the government continues its clampdown on Muslim dissidents who use the United Kingdom as a base from which to agitate against oppressive overseas regimes. The Terrorism Act is designed to give the Government powers to crack down on “extremist groups” that allegedly use Britain to plan and support terrorist operations abroad. The Act gives police and the Home Secretary unprecedented powers to proscribe groups that fall foul of its definition of terrorism as “any action employing the use or threat of force to influence a government, or to advance a political, ideological or religious cause, either at home or abroad”.

In Turkey:
Feb 25th:
Mehmet Kutlular, the leader of the Nur community and the Yeni Asya (New Asia) group, is one of the last victims of Article 312 of the Turkish Penal Code (TCK). The Court of Cassation approved his two-year prison sentence in the lawsuit opened for saying that the earthquake of Aug. 17, 1999 was “an eternal warning.” Kutlular is trying to obtain a stay for the sentence, but he will spend the Feast of Sacrifice in prison if he fails. As he waits with luggage ready to go, we talked with him about the religious groups, political parties and their leaders, the impact of the soldiers on politics and the European Union process.

In Albania:
Feb 3rd:
Three Albanian girls have been expelled from a foreign language secondary school in Tirana for wearing Islamic head coverings, the school principal said yesterday. “Students must respect the rules of the school, which is secular and where religious accoutrements are banned,” Prel Vata told AFP.
INTRO:
When thinking of a feature question one must consider a question that many of us think about, but often do not share our answers openly in fear of disagreement or unconformity to our own beliefs. We must also keep in mind that a simple question can be interpreted differently by every person, depending on how strong the person feels about the issue, or whether they even care. So with this in mind we asked the Rutgers/NJIT community the following question:

Does racism exist in the media?

I feel that the media is the tool of the enemies of Islam to promote their racist views and make them predominant in western society. Western media such as the BBC and CNN (not to mention the other many media companies who are much more) work diligently, and successfully to alter the mind of their viewers and give them a false picture of reality. Ask the average American what they think of the Iraq’s. They will automatically call them terrorists (according to the media, a terrorist is a synonym for a practicing Muslim). Ask them what they think of the scores of liberation movements in Kashmir (such as the Hizbul-Mujahideen), Palestine (such as Hamas), Philippines (such as the MILF), and the famous and quite successful Chechen Mujahideen, not to mention every other place in practically every Muslim population in the world. They will answer by accusing them of the very oppression and terrorism they are fighting. Now ask them what they think of America, and the endless bombing they continue to fore upon Iraq, the ruthless sanctions they place on Afghanistan and Pakistan (under the Anti-Osama Bin Laden hysteria promoted by the media) sending the countries into humanitarian disasters, and the air raid operations they conducted in Sudan and Afghanistan the countless amount of aid given to Israel, the world’s biggest and most powerful terrorist, and the list goes on and on. America is upholding peace and justice in the world, they will say, by policing the terrorists who threaten the world. According to the media, every Muslim who stands up against this oppression is an extremist who had links to the World Trade Center Bombing, an accusation given to more Muslims than height of the buildings in inches, and now, nine years after the bombing, the accusations are still increasing at an exponential rate.

Omer Choudry

If I saw people of all different kinds of races portraying themselves as their normal selves in the media, I would probably say that the media is not racist. But I don’t usually see many different kinds of races on the television. If I do see people of races that aren’t usually seen, I notice that they are either only shown for a VERY SHORT while as their true selves, or are shown for a long time as the OPPOSITE of their true selves, which in turn becomes a stereotype for them by the ignorant people who watch the media and believe everything they see.

Yes, I think that there is racism in the media, when there is really no need for it to be there because there is no need to be uneasy with people of a different race. Humans are people of ALL RACES.

Samara Abbasi

To an extent yes it does exist in the media, but no so bluntly. In some ways, the emerging global media system is not an entirely negative proposition. It occasionally promotes anti-racist, anti-sexist message that can be welcome in some of the more repressive corners of the world. However on the whole, I think more attention is being played on being careful when presenting something of racist nature.

Nosheen Sherazi

We hear how America gained its independence after all the trouble and hardship the people had to face. And how after all their hard work, they overthrew the greatest world power at that time. But how is this information taught to the students in England? Do they discuss the harsh tereatments of the kings, and how indentured servants and slaves were treated under British rule? Of course not, they probably make it sound as if England wanted to give the states a chance so they loosened the leash and let the country become free. So as far as the issue of racism in the media: it is always there, and always will be unless you have a racially balanced team that works together.

Zafar Toor

Yes racism exists in all forms in the media. People are portrayed as the stereotypes of their race and not as individuals who should be judged upon their intellect. The media caters to the masses and they believe the masses all think alike therefore we see programs that are all black and shows that are all white. The media is a business and to make money they must appeal to the general public. If media were based on equality and fairness it would be a failure. The media is racist because it mirrors the needs of the public; if the public as a whole does not change, then neither will media.

Sumaia Iqbal

Racism in the media has grown to immeasurable proportions. This is found to be true mainly in the United States since America has the most freedom in speech. America and other countries have grown there racism to be mainly directed to third world countries and countries that are not stable in anyway. Racism plays a big role in media when minorities are viewed as well. Media usually either delivers a bogus version of the story or completely turns the story around in order to end it on a negative note. Simply watching the media and checking other resources for validity can prove this. Racism in the Media is growing at an alarming rate because the media is controlled by ratings and unfortunately more and more people are tuning in to this type of media.

Wassem El Beck

OUTRO:

Does racism exist in the media? No one in his or her right mind would deny that it does not. How diverse, or rather how racist, is television? The following fact from Mediawatch.com may surprise some: 78% of the females are white, 16% were African-American, 3% were other-worldly (aliens, witches, etc.), 2% were Asian, 1% were Hispanic and 3% were Native American.

Let’s not forget that racism is not our only problem; we ignore the sexism, the violence, the lewdity, and the overall disregard for morals and values that are lacking among our people. The media is a super power in this world, one that should be used to a good cause, not to reinforce the degeneration of the human race. If in hands of capable people, the media could be used successfully to fix our problems. Perhaps that may sound a little too optimistic to some but I believe that the media is our biggest teacher regarding stereotypes, judgments, inappropriate behaviors, violence, etc. Seldom does anything resembling useful information comes out of television.
Hajj: A Gateway to Islam and a Ticket to Paradise

by Ayla Khan

Many have read about Islam and its history, read about the struggles, the sacrifices, and the wonder and joy of a religion that still captivates us today. Yet, there is a different emotion, a different sense of being when one actually stands before the Ka‘aba and makes tawaf just as Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) and his companions did. Running between Safa and Murwah just as Hajar (p.b.u.h) did when she searched for water for her son Ishmael. Drinking zamzam, the very water she gave to her infant son. Throwing pebbles picked from Muzdulafa, at pillars designating where Satan tempted Prophet Abraham (p.b.u.h). One soon realizes that the Prophet (p.b.u.h) himself could have touched those very pebbles. By performing Hajj, Muslims come to grips with the very history that has made them who they are today, and who they will be tomorrow. As Hajjis they see it, feel it, touch it, drink it, hear it, and awe over the glory of Allah and Islam. These are the hajjis, Muslims performing the fifth pillar of Islam: Hajj.

Performed during the first ten days of the lunar month Zul-Hijjah, (the last month of the Islamic year) about two million Muslims from all the stretches of the world join together at the place of the birth of Islam. The city of Mecca holds perhaps the smallest and simplest religious monument built by man, the Ka‘bah - built by Prophet Abraham and his son, Prophet Ishmael (p.b.u.t) nearly four thousand five hundred years ago.

Hajj all begins with coming to the Ka‘bah to make Tawaf (walking around the Ka‘bah). The young and the old, even the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the prophet’s (p.b.u.h) have walked the same path as all before him/her. Many regulations come into play. Dressing like the chef's (p.b.u.h.) had done the very same. This act is the symbolic act of Muslims casting away evil not just once, but seven times, as the number seven symbolizes infinity.

After throwing the pebbles, the pilgrims sacrifice an animal, usually a goat, sheep, etc. This sacrifice is made in the remembrance of when Prophet Abraham was ordered to sacrifice his son. With their complete faith, both father and son were ready for the sacrifice, but Allah let them sacrifice animal instead, since he had the intention to sacrifice his son. When this meat is sacrificed, it is given to the poor, to friends, and a little to oneself. This meat is symbolization of giving to others, especially those who are not as fortunate as we are. Humbleness and gratitude are ordained in the souls of those who offer such. Yet, the pilgrims are not alone on this celebration, as millions of Muslims around the world join and sacrifice an animal as well. The main part of Hajj is complete and the Iram can be taken off. Eid Al-Adha, or the Festival of Sacrifice, is now observed worldwide by all Muslims. Usually, men shave their heads or clip their hair, and women cut a lock of their hair symbolizing their humility. Now, they go on back to Mecca and like in the beginning, perform Tawaf around the Ka‘bah. Prayer is offered and one drinks from the Zamzam. The final act would be to reenact the running of Hajar between Safa and Marwah. Some even go back to Mina, the 12th or 13th day of Zul-Hijjah and throw remaining stones at the pillars. Before leaving Mecca, Hajjis usually make a final Tawaf around the Ka‘bah to bid a farewell to this holy city. Though, all the obligatory acts are done, some decide to perform Umrah, a “lesser pilgrimage” unlike Hajj which is the “greater pilgrimage”.

Hajjis leave Mecca with a sense of rejuvenation and rebirth. They enter with uncertainty and perhaps confusion, but leave with satisfaction and confidence. The same is true for when a person has embraced Islam; a rebirth has taken place. History envelops a being and forces it to come to terms with reality of the past, present, and ultimate future. A requirement of all Muslims financially and physically able to do so, Hajj is not an act to be delayed for the time will come to answer to our Creator. A cleansing of the soul and and revitalizing our faith is not just a gateway into Islam, but a ticket into Paradise.

When a man asked the Prophet (SAW) “Who is most entitled to be treated with the best companionship by me?” the Prophet (SAW) told him “Your mother.” The man asked, “Who is next?” The Prophet (SAW) said, “Your mother.” Again the man asked, “Who is next?” The Prophet (SAW) said, “Your mother.” The man asked a fourth time, “Who is next?” The Prophet (SAW) said “Your father.” (Bukhari).

“Say, we believe in Allah, and that which was revealed unto us, and that which was revealed unto Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which was vouchsafed unto Moses and Jesus and the prophets from their Lord; We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered.” (3:84).

Hazrat Ibn Umar (R.A.A.) and Hazrat Ayesha (R.A.A.) relate that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “Angel Gabriel kept exhorting me about (obligations towards) the neighbour, so much so that I imagined that he might be included as one of the heirs.” (Bukhari and Muslim).
I hate showing people the distillates of my personality. When I say that, I refer to that part of me that is not coated with that superficial jargon we all use to hide our inner essence from one another. However, for some odd reason, I have felt this recent urge to express my inner self amongst my fellow Muslims. I had struggled last year in whether I was ready to reveal any side of myself to more than three people, let alone a published newsletter. Why am I telling you all of this? Well, basically, for you to all know and understand how big of a step this is for me. And whether you might relate to anything I say is up to you, but I just woke up one morning and felt that this experience I had last year is something that must be shared.

And, as an advocate of cooperative Islamic education/growth, it would be quite hypocritical of me not to share anything. So if this, by any chance, even helps one person grow, then all thanks goes to Allah, and only the mistakes are mine.

Before I begin to describe my experience, some personal background is necessary. Growing up, I would never really consider myself a bad kid. But at the same time, I was not really “good” either. I was just kind of there. I, at my essence from one another. However, for some odd reason, I have felt this recent urge to express my inner self amongst my fellow Muslims. I had struggled last year in whether I was ready to reveal any side of myself to more than three people, let alone a published newsletter. Why am I telling you all of this? Well, basically, for you to all know and understand how big of a step this is for me. And whether you might relate to anything I say is up to you, but I just woke up one morning and felt that this experience I had last year is something that must be shared.

And, as an advocate of cooperative Islamic education/growth, it would be quite hypocritical of me not to share anything. So if this, by any chance, even helps one person grow, then all thanks goes to Allah, and only the mistakes are mine.

Before I begin to describe my experience, some personal background is necessary. Growing up, I would never really consider myself a bad kid. But at the same time, I was not really “good” either. I was just kind of there. I, at my youthful stages in life, had not yet “chosen” to be Muslim, but was one just out of default (upbringing). At the age of fifteen, I had this epiphany that allowed me to really see myself for the very first time. I discovered this artificial being that lacked substance and sincerity residing within me. And I can not even express to you how much that realization changed me. Basically, this experience eventually brought me to a point in my life, particularly my senior year of high school, where I would really consider myself extremely unstable. I constantly tried to better myself, but in actuality, I was constantly bashing myself instead. I went from trying to humble myself to depressing myself.

Although, I’ll admit that my overly vulnerable feelings humbled me, in a strange way it also clouded my confidence. I had come to this overbearing realization that “I suck.” I distinctly remember sobbing hysterically many nights because of my lowered self-esteem. I had felt so shallow and fake, and nothing that anyone could say would make me feel any better. Due to my over analysis, I had spent the majority of my senior year in my room crying. In retrospect, I definitely see that experience as a gift for many reasons. Besides the fact that I learned a lot, it saved me from the anguish. Subhan’allah, it was as if I heard the answer to the question I had been searching for all that time. And this experience led me to this incredible realization on life and myself.

Yet back then, I really hated myself for my incapability to be “perfect.” It bothered me that I made mistakes and bad choices. It tore me up inside to know that I am not the most honest and sincere person on this earth. Basically, I hated myself for my incapability to uphold every single duty that Allah told me to accomplish. Have you ever felt that Allah was disappointed in you? I can assure you that that was my number one feeling at that time. There were moments that I literally felt Him looking down upon me in disappointment. Looking back, I do not know that if that was paranoia or a purging session, but I can guarantee that it was painful. I think that this obsession was rooted from this “philosophy” I have on Heaven and Hell. I know that we are always conditioned to understand that Hell is this horrible place that utterly destroys you. However, as weird as this may come across, I am not really “scared” of Hell. I am more scared of Allah’s judgment of me. I believe that Hell is the disapproval of Allah. I honestly do not think that any physical pain could even compare to the spiritual anguish I would feel if Allah disapproved of me. Can you imagine finally facing your creator on the Day of Judgment and knowing that He is unsatisfied with what you have accomplished in your life? And although I was doing nothing but sitting in my room crying, I had felt that Allah was disappointed in me. Likewise, Heaven would be the approval of my Lord. I believe that if on the Day of Judgment Allah can look at me and be satisfied with what I have accomplished, then that, to me, is Heaven. I would want nothing more then that experience. What more is there to want? What could possibly compare to my Lord’s approval of me? Anything else would be insignificant to me, because I already reached my main source.

Now, finally, comes the part that I have been trying to articulate from the beginning of my rambling session. One day, during the summer going into my freshman year of college, I think I almost had a spiritual breakdown. This obsession with becoming the perfect Muslim had gotten to me so much, that one day while making wudu I collapsed onto the floor and began sobbing. Although my crying was incredibly common that year, I had never let anyone see me cry except for one of my close friends. Not even my family had seen me cry during this time. I was always very careful about when to let my tears roll down my face, but at that particular moment I could not control them. My sobs had become so uncontrollable that my father heard me from his bedroom. Being the amazing father that he is, he ran down to the bathroom to see what was wrong with me. Once he reached the frame of the bathroom door, he stood there and looked at me in shock. He had absolutely no idea what was wrong with me. Yet, ironically out of thin air, he recited the ayaat (verse), “Say: Oh My servants who have been prodigal regarding their souls, despair not of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives sins altogether. He is indeed the Forgiving, the Merciful.” (39:53). And all I remember is that my heart halted with my tears. I looked at my father, and was in complete expectation that he was able to pinpoint exactly what was causing me this overbearing anguish. Subhan’allah, it was as if I heard the answer to the question I had been searching for all that time. And this experience led me to this incredible realization on life and myself.

After that day, I continued to over think about things, but for some reason this time it was beneficial. It was weird, because during that week it was almost as if I had become mute. I did not communicate with anyone, and it was not because I did not “want to,” but because I was not even capable of it for some reason. And it was not because I was upset, but I was just incredibly mellow. And due to that mellow feeling, I was peaceful. For the first time in my life I actually started to have mercy on myself. My speechless reaction was really just a way of absorbing it, and my tears were a reflection of my overwhelming relief.

“Mercy Killing” continued on page 11
The Prophet said, “Faith (Belief) consists of more than sixty branches (i.e. parts). And Haya (This term “Haya” covers a large number of concepts which are to be taken together; amongst them are self respect, modesty, bashfulness, and scruple,) is a part of faith.” (Bukhari)

The Prophet said, “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; and gain strength by worshipping in the mornings, the nights.” (Bukhari)

The Prophet said, “Facilitate things to people (concerning religious matters), and do not make it hard for them and give them good tidings and do not make them run away (from Islam).” (Bukhari)

THE KEYS

Allah has the keys to the unseen world. This is a compilation of the conditional statements found in the Quran and Hadith collected by the noble Imam al-Mannawi. “If you do this...you will get this.” The key is the main thing, but of course not the only thing. The key to...

Prayer: Wudu – If you have presence in wudu, you’ll have presence in prayer and vice-versa.

Hajj: Ihram

Birr: Charity, Giving out

Jannah: Tawheed

“Ilm:  
1) Asking intelligent questions  
2) Listening attentively.

Getting what you want: Patience

Walaya (Divine protection):  
1) Love of Allah and His Messenger and  
2) Dhikr of them

Increase of khayr: Gratitude

Success: Taqwa

Tawfeeq (when your will coincides with Allah’s): Fear what He said fear and Love what He said love.

Getting response from Allah: Dua

Entering into the presence of Allah (spiritually not physically):

1) Submit to Him all your affairs  
2) Love of Allah  
3) Love and hate for His sake

Bringing life to the heart:

1) Reading Quran w/ reflection  
2) Calling on Him in the last 1/3 of the night  
3) Leave off sin

—or any 1 of the above 3—

Mercy from Allah:

1) Proper worship  
2) Helping creation

Rizk:

1) To go get it  
2) Istighfar – because the nature of the world is that you’ll sin.

Dignity: Obedience to Allah

Readiness for Akhira: Having short hopes, imagine you’ll die any minute now.

The root of every good is desire for akhira, while the root of every evil is love of dunia.

Sacrificing and Making of a Muslim

by Sarah Khurshid

On January 26, 2001 an event entitled “Sacrifice and the Making on a Muslim” was held at a lecture hall in Allison Road Classroom, on Busch campus. The main speakers that attended this event included Abdullah Adhami, Mohammad Ya’qubi, Imam Siraj Wahhaj, Hamza Yusuf, and Zaid Shakir. The speeches started from seven o’clock in the evening and lasted till after eleven o’clock.

The event was a great success, with all the tickets sold out. The Islamic Society of Rutgers University (ISRU) co-sponsored this event with the New Brunswick Islamic Center (NBIC) and Badr Productions. This event was a huge success. All of the different speakers stressed the importance of sacrifice in Islam in a different way.

Abdullah Adhami was the first speaker at this event. He started off by mentioning how so many of the Muslim youths were looking forward to watching the Superbowl, yet these same people were not as interested in attending an Islamic event. Adhami said that one of the most important sacrifices that Muslims had to make for Islam was a sacrifice of one’s own time for Allah.

Imam Siraj Wahhaj sent another very clear message to his audience. He emphasized the importance of good deeds in this life and the thereafter. He remarked that an individual’s good deeds will be the only things that will stay with a person after they die. He used examples of celebrities that were never satisfied, and to them he would repeatedly ask “what next”? Having all the money in the world cannot get you to heaven. Imam Siraj Wahhaj’s speech centered on the importance of sacrificing your money and again your time in the name of Allah.

Zaid Shakir followed Imam Siraj Wahhaj. Zaid Shakir made very powerful and emotional points on the importance of one’s character. He told the story of a man who was a midget in size, yet was a “warrior in heart” and this is why everyone respected him so much.

Furthermore, Zaid Shakir spoke briefly on the importance of admitting to your mistakes and saying sorry. He said it is always better to be humble, because the person that is more readily able to admit to his/her mistakes has a stronger character.

Hamza Yusuf was the concluding speaker at the event. He talked of people that made great sacrifices in Islam. One particular example was of the man that had seventy wounds on his body because he was the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)’s bodyguard. This man instinctively jumped in front of the Prophet in order to protect him out of his love for him. Hamza Yusuf remarked that President Clinton’s bodyguards had to be specially trained in order to make them protect the President.

Just as the other speakers, Hamza Yusuf also emphasized that Islam should be an integral part of everyone’s daily life. He said that one of the things that he really appreciated about the people living in Mauritania was that they revolved their life around their prayers. Hamza Yusuf said that more people in this country have to be willing to revolve their work around prayers, and not the other way around.

All of the different speakers at this event entitled “Sacrifice and the Making of a Muslim”, made various points about sacrifice, but ultimately came to the same conclusions. Not only do Muslims have to follow the mores of Islam in order to build a stronger character and earn the respect of others, they also have to be willing to sacrifice their time and their heart in the name of Allah.
Dhual-Qadah/Dhual-Hajj 1421 A.H.

POETRY

Narraet Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, “The truest poetic verse ever said by a poet, is: ‘Indeed! Everything except Allah, is perishable.’” It is this framework of truth that my poetry is written.

Allah says of the poets in Sura Al-Shu’araa verses 224-227:

224 And the Poets it is those straying in Evil who follow them: 3237
225 Seest thou not that they wander distracted in every valley?
226 And that they say what they practice not?
227 Except those who believe work righteousness engage much in the remembrance of Allah and defend themselves only after they are unjustly attacked unjustly attacked. And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take!

On a Lover’s Tomb

In which of these tombs will my faith
Be safe from the Derision’s strafe?
Levelled, a tomb-stone with God’s name,
To one’s fame and another’s shame.

Having journeyed under dark skies
To rise and fall in Mighty Eyes,
Haughty cries quake weighty lies
Upon this land that shakes and sighs!

My dear I fear I cannot stay
For Madinah calls me near.
Walls ‘tween our hearts will fall away
As Ahmed’s love-song all will hear.

For that lavender day I pray,
When my Beloved will look my way.
Till that day I shall stay a wayfarer,
 Falling astray forward and back.

Off a Passionate path my wrath
Hath brought me naught but misery.
The people see my state and laugh;
I await a Fate they can’t see.

Having claimed our love as One,
What say you done, maim, then run?
My breast beats relentlessly for you;
Lone in the heat my sweet I come...

Where have you gone Love? Please come home!
The Devilry mocks as we moan
On Restless Pillows of Rock and Stone.
Cry thou for thine as I for mine groan.

Heartbroken I have oft spoken
To birds flying in the open.
Heart heaving for leaving this place,
Heart heavy; last in the race to see my Love’s face.

Presently dazed by the lights of life,
Yet engaged by Death the silent sage.
Lulled by another I lost my lover
To a fever of fury and rage…

This liar’s corpse lies at your door,
The lovers course to know no more.
I am for you as you are for me
A sign of times past and to be...

Will you eat the flesh of your dead
Brother as you tell of the wonders of Trust?
Will you raid my tomb for a meagre stone?
All you will find here are the bones of the past,
Lost in a Love that will eternally last.

by Saleem Safdar

The Outcast

Face is flushed crimson red
Ears are burning red hot
The sweat is simmering between the palm and cheek
The other hand holds the pencil upright swift to put his feelings down...

He turns East and the Civil War monuments are there.
He turns West and the abandoned mines from the Gold Rush are there.
He starts the handshake but it turns into the non-binding Hi.
He bites his ‘roti’ but can’t compete with hamburgers from McDonalds.
He prays on Friday but its unheard of unlike on Saturday and Sunday.
He states his name today but its forgotten tomorrow.
His joy left behind an ocean away.

by Kashif Sandhu

DID YOU KNOW?

“.....And We have sent to you The Book [Koran], as an exposition of everything (ley kule shiien)” (Quran 16:89).

The Quran mentions that all life “originated” from water. “..... We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?” (21:30)

And that man himself is “created” of water and so are all the animals on earth.
“.....And We have sent to you The Book [Koran], as an exposition of everything (ley kule shiien)” (Quran 16:89).

The Quran mentions that the universe originated from a “gaseous material.”

“Moreover He comprehended in His design the sky, and it had been (as) smoke: He said to it and to the earth: “Come ye together, willingly or unwillingly.” They said: “We do come (together), in willing obedience.” (41:11)

The First living beings were algae, and they existed in water. The fact that human beings and animals are created of water is also well established since cytoplasm the basic component of “life” in any animal cell is over 80% water.

The Quran mentions that the universe originated from a “gaseous" material.

“Do not the rejecters see that the heavens and earth were one unit then we split [or separated] them apart...” (21:30)

The “Big Bang” theory presented confirmed the “common origin” or source of everything in the universe.

The Quran states: “And the sun runs his course for a period determined for him: that is the decree of (Him), the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing.” (36:38)

Modern science has found out that the sun rotates around its axis every 26 days and is continually on a journey in space towards its homing place the solar apex.

“Have We not made the earth as a wide expanse, And the mountains as pegs?” (78:6-7)

“He created the heavens without any pillars that ye can see; He set on the earth mountains standing firm, lest it should shake with you.....” (31:10)

Mountains are like tent-pegs, i.e. they have a root extending down into the earth like anchors and this gives stability and balance to the earth. This was discovered less than 150 years ago by scientists and now accepted as a fundamental law in geology, the concept of Isostacy.

*** This information is not an interpretation or representative of the beliefs/opinion of the Staff of Al-Nasihah or ISRU as only Allah know best. All the information is available on rationalreality.com.***
goes to the Gold Kist Corporation, which has a division that manufactures Halal meat.” He further explained that Goldkist provided Mennella with authentication of the Halal meat when it was first supplied to Neilson Dining Hall. GoldKist sent them a signed letter from Imam Omar Shaheed of Masjid As-Salaam in Columbia, South Carolina who declares that the meat provided to Mennella is prepared in the Islamic manner under his supervision. The foods GoldKist provides Mennella include chicken quarters, white chicken, and other types of poultry. A different Halal meat supplier provides Neilson Dining Hall with roast beef, prime rib, and different cuts of steak including top round and pot roast. Currently, any Rutgers student can receive a Halal Food dish for dinner at Neilson Dining Hall depending on the day that he or she goes. One can distinguish the Halal meal from the others because it will be specified in writing over the serving counter if the meal is Halal or not. Mr. Riecks stated that in order to determine which nights Halal meals are served, one can check the calendar on the post board of Neilson Dining Hall or one can just send an e-mail to emeal@rci.rutgers.edu asking for the schedule. (This e-mail address is also for those students who have any questions for the dining services of Rutgers, including questions pertaining to the Halal meals). Mr. Riecks assures all Muslim students that the Halal foods served are not co-mingled with any other meals because all of the foods are cooked separately. He illustrates the situation with an example. He said, “If pot roast is served, we will only serve Halal pot roast meaning it will be cooked by itself.” He demonstrates this point to show that the Halal foods are kept clean and separate from the non-Halal foods at all times.

The availability of Halal Food within Rutgers University has resulted in a profound positive reaction amongst Muslim students. The patience, persistence, and love of a Muslim for his or her religious obligations has contributed to this vast achievement which appeared far from reach so many years ago. Attaining this access to Halal food symbolizes the blessings Allah bestows upon Muslims for abiding by His laws and guidelines set forth in the Holy Quran. Each and every Muslim should take advantage of the Halal meat being served at Neilson Dining Hall. Commented Mubassara Kathawala, first-year student, “Because Halal foods aren’t as available in college, a lot of Muslims give up and they begin turning to Haram. The Halal food at Neilson shows that Muslims do not have to lead life in that wrong manner and that through patience and hard work, in the end they can take utmost advantage of the Halal way of living and eating.”

Especially with first hand experience, it is easy to admit that living on-campus is difficult as a Muslim due to the types of unfamiliar foods that are available. Ones diet becomes distorted and unbalanced, but now Masha’allah Muslims voices are being heard and they will be heard even more closely if Muslims properly respond to this generous availability of Halal food at Neilson Dining Hall. Once Muslims begin responding actively, non-Muslims will also gain a better understanding of what is Halal meat and why it is prepared differently than other types of meat. Currently, non-Muslims are extremely confused when they see Halal meat signs in Neilson Dining Hall. Mr. Riecks stated that students ask questions through the napkin board requesting an explanation of what is Halal meat Non-Muslim students have various opinions on the current serving of Halal meals at Neilson Dining Hall. Some students such as First-Year Student Chinue Hull feel that in general, Rutgers University students should not have a problem with the serving of this new form of meat. She comments, “I feel there is no difference in taste between Halal meat and regular meat. People eat Kosher meat and they don’t complain so why should Halal meat be any different?” Students also feel that at the same time as being open to change, Non-Muslims should gain a general understanding of the significance of Halal meat to Muslims. “Students should know what’s Halal and non-Halal meat for our awareness and so we can understand the cultures of others. Even though we may disagree with the religion, there is no point in us being ignorant,” explained Sophomore Rachel Smith.

Any negative responses have not prevented the Halal meals from continuing to being served. On the contrary, management is increasing awareness amongst the staff who work at Neilson Dining Hall and the students who eat there. In the future, the Neilson post board will also have a written explanation of the meaning of Halal meat and its significance. Muslim brothers and sisters should also move forward and take advantage of this blessed opportunity to help increase awareness of those around them, so that non-Muslims are not skeptical about Halal Meat. Now that the Muslims have achieved their aim with the management at Neilson, they need to impose a greater presence at this dining hall in order to show all of Rutgers that there are many Muslims at the university who will eat only Halal meat. This will increase the demand for Halal foods and, Insha’allah, Halal meals will be served more often and with more variety within all of the Rutgers dining halls. According to Mr. Riecks, the other dining halls are not currently serving Halal meals but in the future if they receive more and more requests as did Neilson Dining Hall, then the serving of Halal meat may spread to those areas as well. The Muslims population needs to represent itself as a whole by taking advantage of the Halal food being served at Neilson Dining Hall. This is a beginning step that can immensely help the students and staff of Rutgers University recognize one of the most important dietary laws of the Muslim world.

***Schedule is subject to change.

### Calender of Halal Dinner Meal Served at Neilson Dining Hall for Spring 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARCH 2001</th>
<th>APRIL 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wednesday</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Charboiled Ribeye</td>
<td>2 Chicken Piquante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Fried Chicken Adobo</td>
<td>24 Charboiled Strip Steak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Italian Baked Chicken</td>
<td>28 Beef Pot Roast</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of course, I know that I am still a work in progress, but for once I am actually admitting that I am happy with who I “am” or at least with my goals. And that appreciation is bringing me peace of mind, a sort of tranquillity within myself.

Ironically, it is quite humbling. I would normally think that having any ounce of confidence would distance me from God. But I realized that I had interpreted it completely the wrong way. Actually, punishing myself so hard is what distanced me from Him. In actuality, what I was doing was not letting myself move on. I had not allowed myself to feel the kind mercy and love that He promised me. Even though I had always said that I knew Allah was merciful, I do not think that I really did. Because if I did, I would have never punished myself as hard as I did. I sincerely believe that I cannot be a “true” Muslim until I appreciate Allah’s mercy. Because I realized that no matter what good deeds I might have, they will not get me into heaven. Only Allah’s mercy gets me into heaven. So why should I deserve to go to heaven at all if I can not even appreciate the one thing that is going to salvage me? If I do not appreciate His mercy, then I am not really appreciating Allah (Astaghfir’allah). It is sad to say that, but it is true. Now remember, there is a difference between “appreciating” and “taking for granted.” But one must realize that God IS mercy. After all, it is one of his ninety-nine glorious attributes. And the beauty of really seeing His mercy is to know that only HE can bring me inner tranquillity nothing else.

After making this connection, all of these ayaahs and hadiths that had not made much sense to me before had finally “clicked.” Especially the hadith narrated by Khaled ibn Waleed. In this hadith, a man asks a line of questions to the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) on how to be eternally successful. One of the man’s main concerns curtailed Allah’s mercy, where he declares that, “[He’d] like Allah to bestow His mercy on [him].” The Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) responded with the words, “If you have mercy on yourself and others, Allah will grant you mercy on the Day of Judgment.” In other words, through acknowledging Allah’s awesome mercy, you will be merciful on yourself and on your limitations as a human. And recognizing His mercy will, in itself, humble you. Just like man will not let his bad deeds destroy him, he will also understand that his good deeds are not “boast worthy,” because Allah’s mercy is what surpasses all. It is almost as if this overall act creates a sense of stability within the self. It destroys the arrogance, yet at the same time gives man enough confidence to see and judge clearly. This stability will allow you to not only judge your own actions better, but to judge or lack judging your surroundings better as well.

I now know that not recognizing His mercy is completely overseeing the whole beauty of Islam. How can one really be a true believer if he does not allow tranquillity within himself? Does not the word “Islam” epitomize the meaning of inner peace? How can I, as a Muslim, ever doubt any of Allah’s mercy? And if man does not see that God understands his faults, then isn’t that almost saying that God does not understand His own creation? We are not angles, so obviously Allah knows that we are going to sin. And in a way, those mistakes are what help us grow and become closer to Him. Now, by no means am I saying to go out and commit sins, but I do believe that if we commit them, then we are supposed to use them to purify us instead of destroy us. I have learned that in this world, I sometimes have to see impurity before I see purity. We, as Muslims, have to distill ourselves from the duniya (world) and find purity in God. And I can not keep punishing myself so badly for seeing that impurity, but I should only punish myself if I do not strive to see the purity. Yet I recognize that there is so much more to see, and I know that I will never see full purity till I witness my creator on the Day of Judgment. And after all of this, I can not even explain to you how much this realization has calmed me. I am extremely thankful for Allah even creating this emotion.

After purging this entire side of me to you, I tell you this only in an attempt to bring you the same kind of peace within your hearts as in mine. Yet please understand that I do not claim to have more peace then anyone. Nor am I claiming to be scholarly or at my full capacity. I still have an arduous hike before I can even claim to be “half way there.” All I can say as a conclusion is that this is nothing more than my opinion. So I will conclude by giving you the strongest advice and starting point that I have. In the name of God, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, my advice is to find balance. When this is done, everything will fall into place.
A Game called Duniya

by Sana Khan

“Duniya” is a board game that every single human being is playing. In this game of life, players have houses, families, jobs and to sum it up, responsibilities. The goal of the game is to of course win as well as come out successful. Each player has a different adherence to success - some think it’s how wealthy one can be, others think it’s for name or fame, while still others are just playing it strategically in order to win. If a player loses, then automatically another player is entered. The life we are living is part of this game. The decisions we make are the role of the dice, and the only way one can win this game is if he or she plays it the right way. Take note that instructions come with every game as well as hints and strategies that help players win. Yet the rules set for this game are something that most desperate and determined players try to get around, which is exactly what hurts them the most.

Allah (swt) has made this game for us, and has sent down His book of instructions to guide us to success. The glorious Qur’an with its 114 chapters gives, in detail, the rules and regulations as well as examples of those players who lost due to cheating. One thinks “how can it be so hard to win something that most desperate and determined players try to do the same. However the question arises of whether or not their temptation takes them away from following the Qur’an and the Sunnah. This concern of what the other players of “Duniya” are doing prevents one from concentrating on winning the game.

“O mankind, there has come to you a direction from your.”(10:57) The Qur’an is a guide line to emulate and constantly turn to in times of doubt, choice, referral and guidance. Allah (swt) has sent down His word and given the winner and the loser of “Duniya”; a vivid picture of what the ultimate prize is as well as what the cheaters and losers receive. No one walks away empty handed nor does Allah (swt) miss any move we make.

There are a lot of spots that players time-to-time land on and wish they had not, for example, landing on a square that reads “move back two spaces”; or having to pay $100. But this is just a board game, and if one lands on the spot, he or she is not losing real money, and can end the game whenever they want. However, in life we can’t just end when we’re losing, or take back what we’ve lost, or even roll again so we don’t land on a certain spot. Life is real; it consists of choices and spaces that require thinking of immediate and future consequences in both this life and the next. Once a move is made, one can’t change it. Therefore, careful thinking and following of the rules and regulations is required.

Let’s face it - “Duniya” is a hard game to play. Not everyone comes out perfectly successful expect for those whom Allah (swt) has ordained to succeed. But we should not lose hope that Allah (swt) is there to listen to our needs and to reward those who play true and fair.

“Of Him seeks (its need) every creature in the heavens and the Earth; every day in (new) Splendor does He (shine).”(55:29) Follow the Qur’an and the Sunnah and do not be disillusioned by these worldly temptations. Play by the rules and have constant awareness of Allah (swt) so that He may reward you with the unseen.

Let Him shine and shower His Mercy on you and let no one come between your love for Him. These are some hints to follow when playing this game. May Allah (swt) guide us in every decision we make and let us remember that He is indeed quite near.

A Spiritual Journey

by Moustafa Badredlin

That time of year has just passed where the single largest annual event of our time united over 2 and a half million people, each of whom left behind all of their worldly worries and possessions in order to take part in the unparalleled experience. The event is the Islamic pilgrimage known as Hajj. Every year, millions of Muslims from around the globe meet at the Holy site of Makkah for the sole purpose of worshipping Allah (God). Why then, does no one hear anything about this event? In a time where the media over hypes just about anything, why isn’t this occasion given any exposure. Over exposed events such as the Million Man March a few years ago pale in comparison to this tremendous annual pilgrimage, yet no one has probably heard that Hajj is currently taking place this week.

Hajj or Islamic pilgrimage is a central duty of Islam whose origins date back to Prophet Abraham. For 14 centuries, countless millions of Muslims have traveled to Makkah to perform this spiritual journey. It is a duty for every able Muslim to take part of the experience at least once in their lifetime. We trace the origins of the pilgrimage and it’s rituals to the Prophet Abraham, recalling events or practices in his life and that of his wife (Hagar) and their son Ishmael. The practice of Hajj was halted for a short time. It wasn’t practiced much after that until the time of our Prophet Mohammed (SAW), who restored the obligation of performing this pilgrimage.

Since then, Muslims all over the world have made the effort to be a part of Hajj. Many people, including non-Muslims, have made the trip out of fascination alone. The experience proved to be moving enough to convert some. The pilgrimage itself takes place, each year between the eighth and the 13th days of Dhu Al-Hijjah, which is the 12th month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

There is a dress code while on this pilgrimage. The Ihram, worn by men, is a white seamless garment made up of two pieces of cloth, one covers the body from waist to ankle and the other is thrown over the shoulder. Both Abraham and Muhammad wore this garb. Women generally wear a simple white dress and a head covering. Men’s heads must be uncovered. This Ihram is a symbol of purity and of the renunciation of evil. It also is important in the fact that it shows the equality of all people in the eyes of God. Many different classes make this trip in similar apparel making them look the same. When the pilgrim wears his white apparel, he or she enters into a state of purity that prohibits quarreling, committing violence to man or animal, and having conjugal relations. Once they put on their Hajj clothes, the pilgrim cannot shave, cut his/her nails or wear any jewelry. One must be present at the holy site with the sole intention of worshiping Allah. We must not have any other reason to make this trip and removing ourselves from the above-mentioned actions rids us of any ill intentions.

Nowadays, when pilgrims undertake the Hajj journey, they follow in the footsteps of millions before them. Hundreds of thousands of believers from over 70 nations arrive in Saudi Arabia by road, sea, and air every year, completing a journey which is obviously now much shorter and in some ways less arduous than it was in times before. Nevertheless, they all finish this trip with the same sense of joy. They have all just taken part in something they will never forget.

Aman Halal Meat & Grocery

Retail And Wholesale

1161 Green St., Iselin, NJ 08830
Tel: 732.283.2885 Fax: 732.404.1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goat</th>
<th>$2.25 / lb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole Baby</td>
<td>$2.49 / lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat Mix</td>
<td>$2.99 / lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Leg</td>
<td>$3.25 / lb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chicken</th>
<th>$0.89 / lb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole Chicken</td>
<td>$0.79 / lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Leg</td>
<td>$2.49 / lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Box Chicken Leg</td>
<td>$22.00 / lb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beef</th>
<th>$2.49 / lb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef Stew</td>
<td>$1.99 / lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Beef</td>
<td>$1.99 / lb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lamb</th>
<th>$2.99 / lb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lamb Leg</td>
<td>$3.25 / lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb Steak</td>
<td>$2.99 / lb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>