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**Quarterly Hadith**

Narrated Al-Tirmidhi:  
Be mindful of Allah, you will find Him before you. Get to know Allah in prosperity and He will know you in adversity. Know that what has passed you by was not going to befall you; and that what has befallen you was not going to pass you by. And know that victory comes with patience, relief with affliction, and ease with hardship."



**Mission Statement**

To establish a comprehensive organization promoting Islamic values, encouraging dialogue, and serving the needs of a diverse Muslim community.

## Faith during Hardships Steadfastness in this Global Crisis

By Editorial Board

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The recent global economic crisis has impacted all our lives. People are losing jobs, homes, retirement savings, and even hope in the economy. Being overwhelmed by materialistic losses, people are driven into despair.

You may be thinking "Why me? I pray, pay Zakat, fast, and help my community. What am I being punished for?" Hardships don't spare even the righteous, and even our beloved prophets endured much adversity.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) & his followers suffered severe economic deprivation for 3 years due to the Meccan boycott. Instead of focusing on

his distresses, he relied on sustenance from Allah.

In Sura Al-Baqara, verses 155-157, Allah (swt) reminds us:

Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger; some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil) but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere. Who say when afflicted with calamity: "To Allah we belong and to Him is our return."

Hardships teach us lessons, and are not forever. The beauty of life is the cycle of prosperity and hardship. We must be mindful that Allah tests the strength of our iman through hardships. Such hardships are often blessings in disguise and

may open windows of opportunities.

Pray for the well-being and steadfastness of our Muslim brothers & sisters in dire conditions. Remember that this life is transient, and prepares us for the life Hereafter. If we remain resolute in our faith during adversity, Inshallah we will be blessed in the Akhirah.

In such times, it's imperative that we remain faithful, frugal, and sympathetic to others in need.

We should be optimistic about the bounties Allah will bring in the future, and be thankful for all the blessings He has bestowed on us.

# Education A Perspective

By Anwarul Islam

Thomas Babington Macaulay, a British historian, poet and orientalist, stated in his famous Minute on Indian Education of 1835, that the British education system in India needed to produce Indians who were “Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.”

Judging by the events of last 175 years, we can come to the conclusion that he had a very powerful vision; that system outlived even the empire that Britain wished to sustain with it. In fact, the educated people in that part of the world today are still caricatures of what Macaulay envisioned so long ago.

We live in a post-colonial empire that Winston Churchill called the empire of ideas. Europe was of course the incubator of ideas for the last five hundred years, and so without any creativity of our own we had no choice but to borrow ideas from them. The question is not really whether or not to borrow ideas, as that process is not in our control – dominant ideas or technology will always travel toward weaker recipients and not much can be done about it – the real question is whether or not the recipients of these ideas are benefitting from them.

The answer is a resounding no. The result of the system is that instead of being colonised by the British, we are now colonised by our own people. The lack of a sense of responsibility and morality and purpose among the educated class is the real tragedy in that part of the world; we essentially lose people the moment they receive an “education”. The real challenge of our time is how to reverse the Macaulay effect. We need to claim ownership of our educated class for the benefit of society as well as the educated class themselves. Countries that cannot reform their education system are producing societal parasites who are of no benefit to anyone.

The legacy of the colonial education system is the strong sense of individualism among the educated elites of the erstwhile colonized countries. After the 1857 mutiny, the British colonialists grew suspicious of the native population and so isolated themselves in sheltered areas away



from the masses. The educated class absorbed that idea of isolationism and, after the British left, started to demand the same privileges and opportunities for themselves.

That schism exists to this day. A college or university degree gives one a sense of entitlement without any sense of duty or responsibility. These people become the biggest beneficiaries of state welfare ever known in human history as they receive an education at virtually no cost to themselves, an education that gives them a sense of entitlement to a good life for themselves and their progeny.

Our education system is still promoting individualism and educated elites are as isolated from the mainstream populace as ever. The ghost of Macaulay is alive and well and the colonial perspective of history or liberal arts is still taught. Legendary names of Western statesmen, scientists, inventors and cultural icons are used to motivate individual achievements. Those characters are portrayed as superhumans who achieve greatness without any help from society, friends or family. It is as if they do not owe anyone anything for their success. Their disappointments in life are not part of any discussion. Basically, the so-called educated class become the reservoirs of “learned ignorance”.

At this point let us try to understand what it means to be educated, because

The Holy Quran is a primary source of knowledge for Muslims

On display, one of the oldest copies of the Quran

only with that understanding will we be able to charter the future in a new direction.

Epistemologically there is no universally accepted definition of knowledge or education, which is exactly the problem. What the British empire builders sold as education to the best and brightest of the Indians was not really education to the fullest extent of the term.

From antiquity to our present time, almost all serious thinkers thought about education and interestingly almost all of them agreed in regards to what it means to be educated. For most of us, a degree from a reputable institution is the testimony of a good education. The higher the degree, the more confident the claimant feels about the privilege of being an educated person.

But we cannot get too comfortable in approaching the idea of education this way. All Prophets of Allah, Buddha, and Confucius did not have any degree but human history is incomplete without them. We can call those and many others like them uneducated only at our own peril.

Excluding these special few, can we still use education and degree interchangeably? Not if we listen to the thinkers I mentioned before. We can exhaust ourselves in quoting many great minds but I would restrict myself to only a few.

“The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence” as Tagore puts it. According to Ghandi, education is not about learning letters but learning our duty and responsibility. Plutarch believed that the very root of honesty and virtue lie in a good education. Only the educated are free as Epictetus put it.

It is almost self evident that the concept of education has two distinct components and an education is incomplete if any of the component is missing or deficient. Most often we think education in terms of its utility. Degrees in agriculture, social science, law or medicine each have various utilities in different times and places. Similarly, knowledge to build an igloo or a pyramid or a totem pole has its own utility in certain places and times. So the utilitarian aspect of education is not the same throughout human history. What is useful in one society is of no use in another; the skills to build an igloo are of no use in the Sahara. What was useful to the colonialist Macaulay is not useful for independent nations.

The other component of education is almost universal, and that is the moral or ethical component. I say ‘almost’ because we may not agree on too many universal ethical tenets. However, if we confine ourselves to any particular society, identifying those ethical values should not be too difficult. One thing we can say

for certain is that without an ethical or moral component, an education is not complete.

In a perfect reality the purpose of education is self understanding or a clearer understanding of our existence in the grand scheme of life. We are not just an individual who is isolated from everyone else; our dependence on our Creator and on the society that surrounds us is beyond dispute. We depend on others for everything we use or consume. Understanding that harmony is the purpose of education and the individualism encouraged by today’s education is flawed at its core.

“The harmony with all existence” is the true essence of education. This is not just our choice but recognition of reality on our part. Thoughts of self sufficiency by men are the first steps towards misunderstanding ourselves. “Which, then of your Sustainers’ powers can you disavow?” as our Creator asks us in the Sura ArRahman. From the tender love of our mothers when we are helpless infants to the different type of love we receive from spouses when we are adults, all are true gifts from our Creator. A truly educated individual understands his or her own vulnerability and dependency on the Creator and His creations. He or she also learns to appreciate the wonderful support system that makes his or her existence possible and enjoyable. That is the essence of understanding ourselves and a quintessential part of educating ourselves.



#### Hajj Prayer

Devout Muslims praying for Almighty Allah's blessings in Arafat.

## Worshipping

By Syed Haque

Having been blessed with faith and enlightenment, man must strive and endeavor to perform righteous deeds and discharge his religious obligations because it is through the performance of righteous deeds that the belief and enlightenment achieve perfection, ultimately ascending towards God's Nearness. It is true that belief, enlightenment and words of purity ascends towards Him; but in this movement they are assisted by the righteous deeds. Righteous deeds are compared to the fuel

in an airplane. So long as it contains fuel, it may continue to ascend, but the moment its fuel is finished, it falls down immediately. Likewise, belief and enlightenment are so far accompanied by righteous deeds. They help ascend man towards Upper Heaven, but without the assistance of righteous deeds, man crashes like an airplane without fuel. Almighty God says in the Holy Quran: "And serve thy Lord till the Inevitable cometh unto thee 15:99". The only way to achieve self-perfection and attain the state of certainty is to strive seriously to discharge obligations, worshipping and servitude of Almighty God.

Worshipping Him in a manner as though you are actually seeing Him, and if you don't see Him, He sees you. Be conscious about His Majesty and your humility. His Eminence and your lowness. His Magnanimity and your abjectness and His Freedom from need and your neediness. Worshippers can be group into five categories.

- 1) Those who worship Almighty God because of fear of Hellfire.
- 2) Those who seek the bounties of Paradise for a period and thank Him for His bounties and blessings.
- 4) Those who worship for the sake of attaining self perfection and self nourishment.
- 5) The fifth group are the most favorite and distinguished servants of Almighty God.

Since they recognize Him very well and consider Him Fountainhead of all blessings and perfection, they worship Him and they love and humiliate themselves before His Exalted Glory. He is worthiest of being worshipped and thus they worship Him. Devotion with sincerity and worshipping is not an easy task, it requires self-purification, endeavors and struggle very much. According to the traditions, engagements in worshipping and invocation of forty days can be effective and useful for attaining inner purity, enlightenment of the soul. However, this cannot be accomplished in a single attempt; it should be attempted gradually after passing through various stages of sincerity. The value of a prayer depends directly upon heart presence and attention paid to Almighty God which is effective in attaining inner purification and God's Nearness. Benevolence, goodness, helping God's servants and solving their problems are great acts of worship that, if done with intention of God's pleasure are means of self nourishment, self perfection, spiritual migration and ascension towards God's Nearness. These are important part of Islamic worship. Surrender yourself to Almighty Allah.



Express your faith with dignity, for it's your fundamental right as a human



## Religious Freedom

### Striving with Faith in the Western World

By Irteza Binte-Farid

In the month of September, 2004, two young girls were expelled from school in Mulhouse , France , for the crime of exercising their religious freedom. According to a law in France as of September 2, 2004, any clothing or symbols that “conspicuously manifest the religious affiliation of the pupils” is punishable under the law. In accordance to this ruling, more than 100 female Muslims students were promptly expelled from their schools for the terrible crime of wearing the head-covering, or hijab, as prescribed by their religion, Islam.

It is extremely unfortunate that in this modern day and age, such religious persecution still continues to exist. Though not as violent in expression, religious persecution of Muslim or Sikh students in France is reminiscent of the religious wars of persecution that debilitated Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Bartholomew’s Day Massacre of thousands of Huguenots by the Catholic government in 1572 echoed throughout Europe and reminded religious minorities that as long there remained a government with powers of state and religion, religious freedom was an impossible dream. Thus began the migration of Puritans, Pilgrims, and other religious dissenters to a new land, America , in which they envisioned the creation of a society without a “Church of England” to punish them for their religious beliefs. However, despite this original vision, the Puritans themselves established another “Church of England,” using the combined power of church and state to shamefully expel religious dissenters such as Roger

Williams and Anne Hutchinson from the very society which had been founded on the basis of religious freedom.

The Founding Fathers were well-aware of the religious wars that had destroyed Europe in the preceding century as well as religious conflicts in the New World . In the post-Revolution era, the Fathers were gravely afraid of religious warfare within the newly-born United States of America , which was inhabited by numerous religious groups. The Fathers realized the need to protect religious pluralism in the US , primarily out of a desire to prevent conflict and disunity. However, there was also strong moral support for religious freedom from men of the Enlightenment such as Jefferson and Madison. Inspired by John Locke, the Fathers firmly believed that “the religion...of every man must be left to the conviction and conscience of every man, and it is right of every man to exercise it as these may dictate. This right is in its nature an unalienable right.” Religious freedom was thus recognized as an undeniable right, and to ensure that it was codified, the Fathers incorporated this concept into the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” The first section, “the establishment clause,” therefore neutralized the role of the government in religion and prevented them from issuing taxes in favor of or in opposition to any religious sects. Meanwhile, the following “free exercise clause” established the tenet of religious freedom, so cherished by the Founding Fathers, by explicitly stating that government

has no right to dictate the religious views of a man, as long as the free exercise of religion does not hurt other citizens under civic law.

This understanding of the “free exercise clause” has changed minimally since the days of the Founding Fathers. In fact, religious freedom has become even more of a fundamental human right today as the influx of new immigrants increases the religious diversity within the United States and increases the need to protect free exercise of religion. However, despite the relatively unchanged concept of free exercise, there has been a greater distinction made between the freedom to believe or disbelieve and the freedom to act upon those beliefs, as understood through *Reynolds v. United States*, 1897. In this case, the Supreme Court outlawed polygamy on grounds that it is injurious to the civic rights of other citizens, thus violating the “freedom to act” condition of the free exercise clause. Since then, the Supreme Court has also become more scrupulous in upholding free exercise by establishing the concept of “compelling interest,” which holds that a state must provide sufficient reasons to declare an act of free exercise unconstitutional. For example, in *Sherbert v. Verner*, 1963, the government failed to provide adequate cause to deny unemployment benefits to a woman fired from her job because of religious reasons; because it failed the “Sherbert compelling interest” test, government had to grant compensation to the defendant. Though this test was overlooked in the 1990 *Employment Division v. Smith*, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) of 1993 reaffirms that in order to deny free exercise to a certain group, sufficient reasons must be presented to overcome the compelling interest test.

The various laws and debates over free exercise continue to showcase the relevance of religious freedom in our society today. Nowhere is it more apparent than in our public school system in which members of various religious backgrounds constantly interact with one another. Despite many claims, such as that of Justice Schempp in the case of *Abington School District*, 1963, that “a refusal to permit religious exercises...is seen, not as the

realization of state neutrality, but rather as the establishment of a religion of secularism,” religion is not condemned by the government. In fact, according to the Clinton and Bush religious freedom guidelines for public schools, “students may read their

Bibles or other scriptures, say grace before meals, and pray or study religious materials with fellow students during...noninstructional time[s], clearly stating that the free exercise of religion is by no means excised by the government. However, it also states that school officials may not “compel students to participate in prayer or other religious activities,” as that would be a violation of the student’s right to disbelieve. Government rulebooks also affirm the students’ right to organize a religious or nonreligious club at school, as long as the clubs are not sponsored by the school itself and as long as each group receives equal access to facilities. In terms of school dress code, the rules allow the student to wear any religious article of clothing as long as it does not disrupt the classroom behavior. Therefore, legally, the United States government does provide set guidelines to prevent the violation of free exercise in public schools in contrast to the condition in France .

However, we must actively continue fighting for religious freedom because there is still danger of the violation of this inalienable freedom. As recently as 1998, an amendment in the House of Representatives sought to legalize the recitation of prayers in schools; the amendment was barely defeated by 62 votes, thus preventing the violation of free exercise for those who do not wish to recite prayer due to religious or nonreligious convictions. Through this example, it is clear that we cannot allow the seeds of religious persecution or intolerance to blossom into full reality as it has happened in France because once that happens, we have truly lost the ideals of freedom upon which this country was founded. As long as religion continues to define our way of life, we must strive to protect the right of each child, man, and woman to wear a head scarf or a yarmulke or a turban or not to wear any religious clothing at all, each according to his or her belief. Because in the end, religious freedom is our natural right and posterity’s right as well, and as long as we, the citizens, actively protect freedom, no one can take it away from us.



**Cordoba Mosque: Lost case of religious freedom!**

**\*\*\*\* This Essay was awarded the first prize in a national writing competition in 2008 on Religious Freedom organized by First Freedom Center – a Richmond Virginia based religious freedom advocacy group.**

**Irteza attends Albemarle High School in Charlottesville, Virginia and will be attending Princeton University in Fall of 2009.**



**Eid-ul-Adha Sermon**  
Audience listens eagerly to Imam Salie, as he gives his khutbah.

# Community News

## Rapid Growth

By Editorial Board

The Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha were solemnly celebrated in the premises of the temporary location of AMDA in Sterling Heights. Imam Dr. Achmat Salie led both prayers attended by over three hundred devotees. Community members then exchanged Eid greetings while enjoying

the snacks and drinks that were served. About fifty families attended the pot luck dinner in the evening.

Monthly Tafsirul Quran and Family Nights are being observed first Friday of every month. The discussion topic for November was Islam on Third Millennium, by Br. Eka Kristanto, focusing on current usage of Internet Radio for networking and teaching Islam. There was also a presentation on Photo Library of some Islamic miracles as mentioned in Holy Quran by Br. Nurul Amin. The December discussion

topic was Eid ul Adha [Festival of Sacrifice] & Hajj. Imam Achmat Salie discussed the different aspects and significance of each. The January event will be on Hujjaj reception, followed by a townhall meeting.

Maghrib & Isha prayers are performed daily and all 5 salats are performed during weekends in the temporary masjid of AMDA located at 38810 Ryan Road in Sterling Heights. Juma prayer is also performed every Friday with the khutba starting at 1:30 PM.

Alhamdulillah, AMDA academy started its 2008-2009 school year in September 2008 and classes are held at Larson Middle School on Sundays. Over sixty students are enrolled in classes. The senior students of the Academy participated in the clean up of the two mile stretch of John R Road in Troy adopted by AMDA. These students are also getting ready to be trained in home energy saving program and help families to prevent heat loss from their homes in the spring. This program, known as Interfaith Youth Energy Squad (IYES) is conducted by an interfaith group.

### **Imam's Spotlight continued from pg. 8**

...a vacation and a rewarding experience.

Increase the level of trust in any group, community, company, or society and only good things happen. Exclusivity is a downward spiral. We first exclude persons from another culture, then another nationality, then another city, and then another class or family within a city. This poses a danger to unity. Muslims are either righteous or self-righteous. They soon become I-specialists. I am better than him or her. With trust goes forgiveness and amnesty when necessary. With trust goes a declaration of goodwill and peace. 'No matter what happens, in good times and in bad, we have to be the brothers no one expects us to be'—the letter of apology of Azhar Usman to our Afro American brothers stated.

If our Prophet, our exemplary leader, had to start a regime of revenge, or a memorial of Muslim persecution after his entry into Mecca, Islam would not have been what it is today. On his entry into Mecca, in the eighth hijri the Prophet let the ghosts of persecution of the past free. He set Islam on the highway of progress.

Victims do not have to become victimizers as Fanon and Mamdani predicted. Those who have been humiliated before could still avoid humiliating others. Those who have been excluded from decision-making could still include others. They could implement the Qur'anic imperative to return evil with what is better by remaining humble healers. Move beyond victimhood and at least avoid victimizing—do not live in the shadow of your humanity. A shadow disappears when light shines straight upon the object at noon. Be in the noon light of forgiveness. South African and Ruwandans could not move forward without forgiveness. The most heinous sin is shirk (associating partners with Allah); yet Allah treats even polytheists with kindness. Allah says: "Perhaps you dislike a thing or event and Allah places in it an abundance of goodness". Friedman wrote that Uganda's Indian population was expelled by the dictator Idi Amin. Today this group has more millionaires than any other group in Britain. They were stripped of all worldly assets but used their misfortune to their advantage through hard work, strong family bonds, and devotion to education; they became an exemplary and prosperous community.

An eye for an eye would leave the whole world blind. In South Africa, victims of apartheid moved beyond victimhood to become peace makers and global brokers for reconciliation. These leaders set the ghosts of apartheid free. In the process they obtained real freedom. Islam, down through the years, has thrived when it fostered a culture of tolerance (tasamuh) as in Al Andalus (Muslim Spain). 'Cultures can change. They are not wired into our genes. They are products of contexts, and contexts change. Muslim Spain was one of the most tolerant societies, in the history of the world. Cultures need two primary intangibles to change' (Friedman). In 1998 the city of Dalian in China, Friedman recalled, had few tall buildings. Six years later, in 2004 its many new glass and steel towers and tall buildings made it almost unrecognizable. Cairo, where he studied in the '70s, had three tall buildings, 30 years later; it still had three tall buildings. The Chinese progressed because of 1) their willingness to pull together and sacrifice and 2) because of the presence of visionary leaders willing to use power to push for change rather than enrich themselves and preserve the status quo. South Korea., Hong Kong, Bahrain, Dubai, Singapore, Malaysia possesses the two primary intangibles 1) the will to change (adopt and adapt) and 2) the leaders who drive the change. China, with bullet trains that run at 200m/h, has even surpassed the USA in its infrastructure.

What do these examples have to do with us? Everything! If we want to progress, or become a pocket of excellence with best practices and next practices, then we would need 1) a willingness to accommodate, include, adapt, adopt, and be accountable and 2) the leadership using their power to make that happen. Arguably, some of these states or city states are morally decadent, but Muslims aspire for the best in this world and in the Hereafter.

# Signs of Allah

## Distribution of Earth's Fresh Water

By Dr. Md. Nurul Amin

There are many statements in the Holy Qur'an that may thus be compared with modern scientific knowledge. This requires some intensive studies and research of this kind requires scientific knowledge covering many different disciplines. It is not so easy, however, for many to acquire in depth knowledge, for mainly a literary background cannot give all such knowledge. Indeed, such questions hardly seem to occupy a place in our field of religious education. There is another reason why such statements are not immediately apparent. Quranic verses bearing on a single theme are scattered throughout the Holy Qur'an. This Book is indeed a book of guidance and we should invest some time to collect the data on a precise theme from all over the Book and brought them together under a single heading. This requires times in tracking down the verses, in spite of the existence of themes provided by various translators, for such lists may perhaps be incomplete and indeed, in many cases, they often are.

During my professional engineering design works in Iran I was assigned to study the water transmission from Iran to Qatar in 1985 for supplying surface water for domestic, agricultural, and to prevent saline water intrusion inland which was the result of withering of plants due to depletion of groundwater in Qatar. In addition, during my graduate study at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor I worked in a project for site characterization of Wurtzmith Air Force base from 1994-1996. I am trying in this paper to establish these research facts with what Allah SWT mentioned in the Holy Quran already 1400 years ago.

We know approximately 70% of the earth's surface is covered with water, a sign of our merciful

Allah's bounty to His living organism's on earth and is a sign of His perfect balanced creation. This large mass of water is created according to precise measure in order that the earth holds it and thus affords an environment suitable for life to nourish and flourish on it. From this ~70 % of total water resources, only ~3 % represents fresh water and ~97% represents saline water. This constitutes 0.3 % represents all water on Earth and freshwater of lakes and swamps. In addition, this 20% of all freshwater is in one lake, Lake Baikal in Asia and another 20% is stored in the Great Lakes (Huron, Michigan, and Superior). It is found that the rivers hold only approximately 0.006 % of total freshwater reserves. One might be surprised at how little of the Earth's water resources is stored as freshwater on the land surface, as shown in the Fig. 1. One can see that life on Earth survives on what is essentially only a small percentage of Earth's total water resource. These systems allow people to live in places where nature doesn't always supply enough water or where water is not available at the time of year it is needed.

Almighty Allah SWT attracts our attention to the extreme importance of a very simple fact in our life i.e. fresh water. We take it for granted that fresh water is there for us to drink, and we forget the immense power to keep it pure from contamination due to misuse. In The Holy Qur'an, Allah says:

Have you considered the water which you drink?

Did you send it down from the clouds, or We are the senders?

Was it Our Will, We could make it saline then why do you not show grateful?

Surah: Al-Waqiah, Chapter 56 verses (68 – 70),

**Earth Water System**  
Distribution of Earth's water, and the Water Cycle.

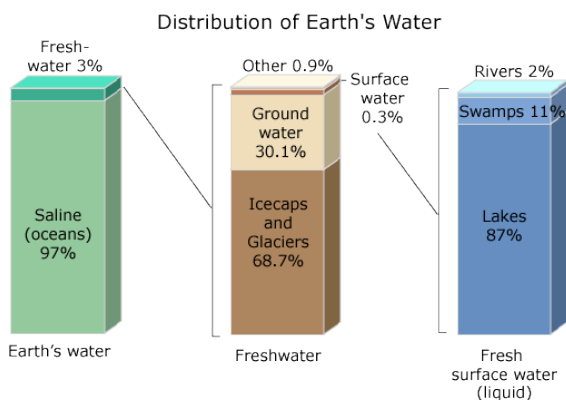


Fig.1: Source: Gleick, P. H., 1996: Water resources. In Encyclopedia of Climate and Weather, ed. by S. H. Schneider, Oxford University Press, New York, vol. 2, pp. 817-823.

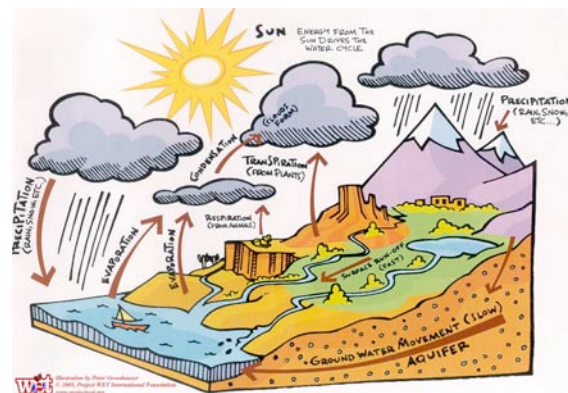


Fig. 2: Hydrologic Cycle

The hydrologic cycle as shown in Fig. 2 is one of Allah's miracles to sustain life on earth. Rainfall, as we have seen, is the result of the condensation of water vapor ascending from the vast areas of water on the earth's surface, and under certain climatic conditions it falls down in the form of rain drops, hail or snow. Rainfall in itself is amazing, for it shows Allah's perfect order in the universe.

We can see from Fig. 1 the 3 % fresh water and 97% saline water are following to Allah's Natural Laws and they cannot transgress the boundaries of each other. Allah SWT says,

It is He Who has let free the two bodies of flowing water: One palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter; yet has He made a barrier between them, a partition that is cannot be transgressed.

Surah; Al Furqan, 25 , Verse 53

Many organizations contaminates the surface and ground water by improper dumping of various hazardous wastes that are located in some near shore areas may be hydraulically connected to lake, coastal and estuarine waters. For example, the superfund site of Oscoda, the Wurtzmith Air Force Base was contaminated by hazardous wastes from fire training and jet fuel contamination since 1941. For these sites, a major concern was the contaminations of the mass waters of the Lake Huron due to groundwater flow from the Air Fore Base. The influence of lake water on the partitioning and potential migration of contaminants that are present in the soils and groundwater located at the site was part of the research. Due to the interactions among lake water, groundwater, soils, sediments, and the chemical contaminants, complex physical and geochemical processes generally affects the transport and mobility of chemicals from the waste site.

A typical near shore disposal area may be visualized as consisting of the source of contamination, a contaminant plume, groundwater which may be confined or unconfined, and seawater intrusion areas as shown in Fig.3. Aquifers (water bearing strata) located in coastal areas are generally recharged inland and the seaward/lake slope of the strata and water level fluctuations in the lake/sea causes the fresh water to flow towards the lake/sea. Water discharges from unconfined aquifers primarily by evapo-transpiration and by direct discharge into springs, streams, tidal waters. Because seawater has a higher density than the fresh groundwater, a density-dependent mixing zone will form at the boundary between the fresh and saline groundwater. In this zone, there will be a constant change in the composition of the fresh groundwater as it mixes with the saline groundwater.

In coastal areas with strong tides, tidal mixing zones may vary form from the movement of seawater into the aquifer. The tidally mixed zone may be important in estimating the amount of groundwater extracted due to tidal pumping. Tidal pumping is used to describe the process where higher density tidal waters mix with groundwater at high tide, and then as the tide recedes, the mixture of seawater and fresh groundwater is drawn out into the coastal waters. Because, this process repeats every tidal cycle, appreciable volumes of groundwater can be extracted by tidal pumping. Evidence of seawater/lake water intrusion can be obtained from groundwater monitoring wells that rise and

fall in conjunction with tidal fluctuations and saline or brackish concentrations of seawater salts measured in groundwater or inland surface water samples.

The physical forces of tidal fluctuations and groundwater flow at different sites will determine the degree to which tidal waters come into contact with contaminated material and the groundwater flow will determine the net discharge of groundwater into coastal and estuarine waters. Once the waters mixes, the partitioning and sorption behavior of the contaminants will be governed by the physical and chemical properties of the resulting solutions (solvents) and substrates (sorbents) existing at the site. In some of these sites the length of mixing zone was a part of advanced study that some researchers are still working hard.

Therefore it is evident from the above research examples that the two verses from the Surah Furqan indicates Allah's power and generosity for it is but a miracle that the fresh water does not mix up with the saline water. There is a divine rule that governs this relationship, for it has been proved that fresh water floats over saline one due to density and temperature stratifications, as if there is a barrier that forbids them from being mixed up. We cannot help but thinking what would have happened if these barriers were not there! Surely, fresh water would not have been available and life would have been impossible.

Furthermore, the holy Quran contains or mentions many matters relating to the nature of the universe which were unknown to men before but which subsequently through evolution and discoveries of Science have fully confirmed - a field where an untutored mind would have most certainly lost in wild and contradictory speculations! These three examples showed what Allah SWT mentioned in the Holy Quran that these are examples only the intelligent people who reflects can understand.

The Quran is a Book which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, which they may mediate on its Signs, and that men of understanding may reflect.

Surah: Sad chapter ;38, Verses :29.

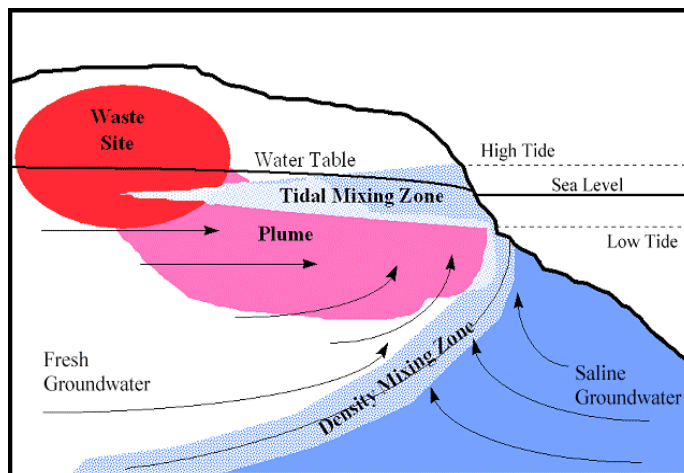


Fig. 3: Diagram of a Typical Hazardous waste site.





How important is the Masjid to you? Merely a place for Eid prayers, or a fundamental part of your personal life?

Left: A beautiful minaret in Cairo

Bottom: Change is necessary for progress



## Demanding Professionalism In our Masjid

By **Yahiya Emerick**

Where do you go if your son is rebelling? What do you do when your daughter wants to marry someone against your wishes? Your uncle is feeling depressed lately. Who can help him recover? Your spouse is too materialistic and is neglecting the spiritual life of your family? Who can help?

If you have ever been faced with issues similar to these, then you have probably tried to get help in the one place where you would expect to get it: the Masjid. Perhaps you called or paid a visit to the Masjid office in the hopes of finding a sympathetic ear, or maybe you met with the Imam or director to discuss what's ailing your life.

But if your experience is like most people in most places, you wound up having to look elsewhere for assistance. You just couldn't find the support you needed in your local house of worship. Maybe no one answered the phone; maybe your calls

were never returned or, if you did manage to get a personal meeting, perhaps the Imam or director spoke little English or merely used the opportunity to lecture you on fiqh issues. Hardly a solution to real life problems!

If we say the Masjid is the focal point of the community and open its doors five times a day for prayer, shouldn't the Masjid be open for other needs the believers have as well? But what I've seen all too often is that those who build and operate the Masajid have little expertise in organizing a life-giving institution. Just because someone can make a million dollars living off medical insurance billings doesn't mean he can run a spiritual and communal project!

What I'm telling you is not the disgruntled ramblings of an emotional person. I'm quite happy being Muslim no matter what the strengths or weaknesses of my community are. After

having visited countless Masajid across the country, I wish merely to call your attention to a most pressing issue; that of the need for professionalism in the Masajid.

I don't know how many of you are "reverts," or, people who have accepted Islam, but if you are reading this, do you remember what going to church or the synagogue was like in earlier years? Put aside for a moment the faulty theology and mistaken notions that were taught in those places. Remember what the structure was like. If you needed counseling, the minister or rabbi was well qualified and available. If you had children there were fun and interesting youth activities throughout the week. If you were poor you may have received help. If you merely needed a good book on your religion, there was a wonderful, staffed library on premises. Do you see where I'm going?

Nearly every single Masjid built and operated in North America has been built, funded and operated by immigrant Muslims. (With the exception of a large number of African American Masajid.) After extensive interviews with immigrant Muslims, it seems the perception of the Masjid "back home" is of a place to make salah, do janazah, 'Eid celebrations, etc... Family and personal matters are handled through other channels: relatives, friends, youth clubs, etc... After all, everyone's a Muslim so the Masjid is just a small feature in the spiritual and social life of the community.

Enter the new world: the immigrant builds a Masjid with the good intention of having a place for the community to gather and make Salah and do Eid, etc... But when members of the community have needs that only a Muslim would know how to deal with, bingo! There are no Muslim relatives in great abundance. The few Muslim friends one may have are all busy making money and there are no Muslim youth clubs or community activities beyond dinners once a month or fundraising events. So where does the community member go? He or she seeks out non-Muslim help at best or leaves the problem unsolved at worst. The Masjid has no place in their life.

Even if the Masjid has a few pitiful programs to enhance the life of its members, more often than not, they're staffed only sporadically by people who just came from a village back home. They are not professional in their manner according to Western standards- they may not even show up on time to anything- and they are not equipped to deal with the issues confronting the Muslim minority experience. I'm not saying all volunteers in the Masjid are similar to this description. Don't get me wrong. But in all my time as a frequenter of Masajid, I've only met about nine or ten truly competent people.

Contrast the above scenario with the average church or synagogue. The institution is built to serve as a community center right from the start. Youth programs are a priority and are well-planned and fun. Women are represented on the board and on all committees. Volunteers are chosen for their trustworthiness and reliability. They are made to feel that their job means something and they are well-coordinated and friendly. The minister or rabbi speaks English fluently, even if they are an immigrant, and knows Greek, Hebrew or Latin on the side. In order to be the leader of the community, the minister or rabbi had to undergo extensive training which included, besides the religious subjects, counseling, administration, management,

music and singing, public speaking, research, etc.... culminating in the award of a D.D. (Doctorate of Divinity).

I'm sorry, but the little certificates from madrasahs all over the third world do not prepare an Imam for the task of leading the Muslim community in North America. Before you take offense at this statement, consider this: what is your definition of an Imam? Islamically, the Imam is supposed to have some authority over the community. He is to be elected by the Muslims and given respect and listened to. But in every Muslim community I've been in, the Imam has no authority, little respect and merely leads the prayers and recites some du'as. At the most he may teach some classes here and there on Qirah or Aqeedah. Even if he is a hafiz the situation is still pretty much the same.

If this is your definition of what an Imam means, then you need to remember all the complaints we have about why the Muslim world has declined in the last five hundred years. Islam was relegated to the Masjid. Imams were prayer leaders and little more. Islam had little hold over a person's personal or social life. This is how Islam is viewed in Muslim countries; this is one reason why the immigrant Muslims had to leave their countries to begin with. Their homelands are, by and large, screwed up.

So why do we want to set up our Masajid here on the same model that caused our destruction over there? I can't figure it out. Ministers and Rabbis are considered authority figures in their respective communities and generally have the allegiance of most members. Our Imams are usually under-educated and have no authority with little backing from anyone. Some wealthy patron, pretending he knows how to be a Masjid director, is almost always the real power in the Baitullah. And it's real hard to tell such a director that his local Muslim community is drifting away from the faith when he lives in a mansion and drives a Mercedes. He'll say to himself, "I made a fortune, therefore, I know what's best for the local Muslim community."

Meanwhile, all around him, the youth are becoming kuffar, the women are forgetting Islam, the elderly are being abandoned in homes, the people who want to convert are disillusioned and the men are 'Eid Muslims only, if that. Everyone turns to the non-Muslim society for support, help, entertainment, money and even spiritual meaning. Until and unless we inject professionalism in our Masajid, then our community will continue to shrink even though pundits cry about there being six million of us.

We need trained staff, even if you have to pay them. We need Imams with professional training in many subjects related to human relations and we need a process of inclusion that would make women, the youth and the luke-warm Muslims feel a part of the over-all life of our Masjid. In short, the Masjid is not just a place of prayer that we can build to heal our guilty feelings of doing haram business dealings- it's a place for Muslims and their lives. By its very nature and what it must mean for the community, it must be run professionally, and not like a club.



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# Imam's Spotlight

## State of Islamic Union

By Imam Achmat Salie

The single greatest advantage a culture can have is the ability to foster adaptability and adoptability. Muslims who come from homogenous communities need to accommodate diversity and become inclusive. Embracing diversity is a necessary good not a necessary evil. This diversity includes diversity of cultures, languages, classes, and opinions. All members of a community should have the opportunity to contribute, improve, advance, and achieve. They should not be held responsible for what their forefathers did. The Prophet did not hold Ibn Ubayy's children who were Sahaba account for the deeds of their father. At times, the Prophet (Peace be with him) forgave treason committed by a loyal Companion such as Hatib al Balta'i. Obstacles to unity are a poverty of ideas, poverty of dignity, and poverty of sympathy-or selective sympathy. In The World is Flat, Friedman avers, "One of the greatest virtues a country or community can have is a culture of tolerance. When tolerance (tasamuh) is the norm, everyone flourishes, because tolerance breeds trust and trust is the foundation of innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity". Tolerance, in the grand sense of the term, as we have said should be the norm not the exception. In Arabic, tolerance (tasamuh), forgiveness, generosity, empowerment, kindness, and vacation all share the same root letter. . A forgiving, empowering tolerance is truly... **cont. on pg. 6**



### Supplication

A devout man supplicating to his Almighty Creator.

## Reader's Blog

### Community Comments

By You!

email us at [newsletter@amda.us](mailto:newsletter@amda.us), and voice your opinions and concerns. We appreciate your comments!

## AMDA Key Events

### Semi-Annual Fundraising Dinner

Friday, April 3rd, 2009, 7 PM

Location: AMDA Mosque

38810 Ryan Rd., Sterling Heights

### Quarterly Salat Timings

January							February							March						
Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha	Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha	Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
1	6:38	8:02	12:37	3:47	5:10	6:35	1	6:26	7:47	12:47	4:18	5:46	7:07	1	5:51	7:08	12:45	4:46	6:22	7:40
5	6:39	8:02	12:38	3:50	5:13	6:37	5	6:23	7:42	12:47	4:23	5:51	7:11	5	5:46	7:03	12:45	4:49	6:26	7:44
10	6:38	8:01	12:41	3:55	5:19	6:43	10	6:18	7:37	12:47	4:28	5:57	7:16	10	6:36	7:53	1:43	5:52	7:33	8:51
15	6:37	8:00	12:42	4:00	5:25	6:48	15	6:11	7:29	12:47	4:32	6:05	7:23	15	6:27	7:44	1:42	5:56	7:39	8:56
20	6:35	7:57	12:44	4:05	5:31	6:53	20	6:04	7:22	12:47	4:38	6:11	7:29	20	6:18	7:36	1:41	5:59	7:45	9:03
25	6:32	7:53	12:45	4:11	5:37	6:59	25	5:58	7:16	12:46	4:42	6:16	7:34	25	6:08	7:27	1:39	6:02	7:51	9:10
30	6:28	7:49	12:46	4:16	5:43	7:04	28	5:52	7:10	12:46	4:45	6:21	7:39	30	5:59	7:18	1:38	6:04	7:56	9:16
				3:21							3:50							5:09		