

المجلة الشهرية

# *The* MUSLIM WOMAN

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THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MWA WILL TAKE PLACE ON SUNDAY, 9TH MAY, AT 4.30 PM, AT THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE, 146 PARK ROAD, LONDON NW8

#### MWA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT	Mrs Khanam Hassan
SECRETARY	Mrs Nisa Ali
ASST. SECRETARY	Mrs Karima Mustafa
TREASURER	Mrs Mavis Badawi
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ARTWORK/PRINTING	

MEETINGS OF THE MWA TAKE PLACE ON THE SECOND SUNDAY EACH MONTH

by Sayyid A. Ala Mawdudi

## FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

Islam means obedience to God. And it is a matter of common sense that this obedience cannot ensue in full measure unless man knows certain basic facts of life and reposes firm faith in them. What are those facts? And what are the primary essentials which a man must know to fashion his life, in accordance with the Divine Way? This we propose to discuss in the present chapter.

First of all, one should have unshakable belief in the existence of God, for unless a man has a firm and unalloyed faith in God's existence, how can he render obedience to Him?

Then, one must know the attributes of God. It is the knowledge of the attributes of God which enables man to cultivate in him the noblest of human qualities and to fashion his life in virtue and godliness. If a man does not know that there is One and only One God who is the Creator, the Ruler, and the Sustainer of the Universe and there is none else to share with Him even a shred of the Divine power and authority, he may fall a prey to false gods, and offer his homage to them to solicit their favour. But if he knows the divine attribute of *tawheed* (oneness of God), there is not the least possibility of his falling a prey to this illusion. Similarly, if a man knows that God is Omnipresent and Omniscient and He sees, hears, and knows everything that we do in public or in private – nay, even our unexpressed thoughts! – then how can he afford to be indulgent and disobedient to God? He will feel that he is under eternal vigil and will, therefore, behave in the most appropriate way. But he who is not aware of these attributes of God may be misled, because of his ignorance, into God's disobedience. So is the case with all other attributes of God. The fact is that the qualities and attributes which a man must possess, if he wants to pursue the way of Islam, can be cultivated and developed only out of profound knowledge of the attributes of God. It is the knowledge of God's attributes which purifies a man's mind and soul, his beliefs, morals and actions. And a mere cursory acquaintance with, or just an academic knowledge of, these attributes is not sufficient for the task ahead – there must be an unflinching conviction firmly rooted in the mind and heart of man so

that he may remain immune from insidious doubts and perversions.

Moreover, one must know in detail *the way of living* by following which one can seek the pleasure of God. Unless a man knows the likes and dislikes of God, how can he choose and adopt the one and reject the other? If a man has no knowledge of the Divine Law, how can he follow it? Thus the knowledge of the Divine Law and the Revealed Code of Life is also extremely essential in this respect.

But here, again, mere knowledge will not suffice. Man must have full confidence and conviction that *it is the Divine Law* and that *his salvation lies in following* this code alone. For knowledge without this conviction will fail to spur man to the Right Path and he may be lost in the blind alley of disobedience.

Finally, one must also know the consequences of belief and obedience and those of disbelief and disobedience. He must know what blessings would be showered upon him if he chooses God's way and leads a life of purity, virtue, and obedience. And he must also know what evil and harrowing consequences would follow if he adopts the way of disobedience and revolt. Thus the knowledge of life after death is absolutely essential for this purpose. Man must have an unwavering belief in the fact that death does not mean the end of life; that there will be resurrection and he will be brought to the highest court of justice, to be presided over by God Himself; that on the Day of Judgment complete justice will prevail; and that good deeds will be rewarded and misdeeds punished. Everybody will get his due and there is no escape. This is bound to happen. This sense of responsibility and accountability is quite essential for the full-fledged obedience of the Law of God.

A man who has no knowledge of the world to come may consider obedience and disobedience quite immaterial. He may think that obedient and the disobedient will both meet a similar end: for, after death, both will be reduced to mere dust. With this attitude of mind, how can he be expected to submit to all the inconveniences and troubles that are inextricably associated with the life of active obedience, and shun those sins the commission of which does not apparently bring to him any moral or material loss in this world? With this mental attitude a man cannot acknowledge and submit to God's Law. Nor can a man, who lacks *firm belief* in the life hereafter and in the Divine Court of Judgment, remain firm and steadfast in the turbulent waters of life with its attraction for sin, crime, and evil; for doubt and hesitancy rob a man of his will to action. You can

remain firm in your behaviour only if you are firm in your beliefs. If you carry a wavering mind you cannot remain firm and steadfast. You can whole-heartedly follow a course only if you are sure of the benefits that will accrue to you by following it and of the losses and grievances that will engulf you if you disobey it. Thus, a profound knowledge of the consequences of belief and disbelief and of the life after death is extremely necessary for canalising life into God's obedience.

These are the essential facts which one must know if one wants to live the life of obedience, i.e., Islam.

#### FAITH – What does it mean?

Faith is what we have described in the foregoing discussion as 'Knowledge and Belief.' The Arabic word *Iman*, which we have rendered in English as faith, literally means 'to know', 'to believe' and 'to be convinced beyond the least shadow of doubt'. Faith, thus, is firm belief arising out of knowledge and conviction. And the man who *knows* and reposes unshakable belief in the Unity of God, in His Attributes, in His Law and the Revealed Guidance, and in the Divine Code of Reward and Punishment, is called *Mo'min* (faithful). This faith invariably leads man to a life of obedience and submission to the Will of God. And one who lives this life of submission is known as *Muslim*.

This should clearly bring home the fact that without faith (*Iman*) no man can be a true Muslim. It is the indispensable essential; rather, the very starting point, without which no beginning can be made. The relation of Islam to *Iman* is the same as of a tree to its seed. As a tree cannot sprout forth without its seed, in the same way it is not possible for a man, who has no belief to start with, to become a 'Muslim'. On the other hand, just as it can happen that, in spite of sowing the seed, the tree may not grow for a multiple of reasons, or if it sprouts, its growth may be impaired or retarded, in the same way, a man may have faith, but due to a number of weaknesses, he may not become a true and staunch Muslim. Thus we find that faith is the starting point and leads man to the life of submission to God, and that a man cannot become a Muslim without faith. On the contrary, it is possible that a man may have faith but, because of the weakness of his will-power, poor training, or bad company, he may not be

living the life of a true Muslim. As such, from the viewpoint of Islam and *Iman*, all men may be classified into four categories.

1. Those who have firm faith – a faith that makes them absolutely and whole-heartedly submit to God. They follow the way of God and devote themselves heart and soul to seek His pleasure by doing all that He likes and by avoiding all that He dislikes. In their devotion they are even more fervent than is the common man in pursuit of wealth and glory. Such men are true Muslims.

2. Those who do have faith, who believe in God, His Law, and the Day of Judgment, but whose faith is not deep and strong enough to make them totally submit to God. They are far below the rank of true Muslims, deserve punishment for their defaults and misdeeds, but still they are Muslims. They are defaulters and wrongdoers, but not rebels. They acknowledge the Sovereign and His Law and, although they are violating the Law, they have not revolted against the Sovereign. They admit its supremacy and their own guilt. Thus they are guilty and deserve punishment, but Muslims they remain.

3. Those who do not possess faith at all. These people refuse to acknowledge the sovereignty of God and are rebels. Even if their conduct is not bad, and even if they are not spreading corruption and violence, they remain rebels and their apparent good deeds are of little value. Such men are like the outlaws. And as, even if any action of an outlaw is in consonance with the law of the land, he does not become a loyal and obedient citizen, in the same way the apparent good of those who revolt against God cannot compensate for the gravity of their real wrong, revolt, and disobedience.

4. Those who neither possess faith nor do good deeds. They spread disorder in the world and perpetrate all kinds of violence and oppression. They are the worst of the people; for they are rebels as well as the wrongdoers and criminals.

The above classifications of mankind clearly shows that the real success and salvation of man depend on faith (*Iman*). The life of obedience (*Islam*) takes its birth from the seed of *Iman*. This Islam of a person may be flawless or defective. But without *Iman* there can be no Islam. Where there is no *Iman* there is no Islam. Where there is no Islam there is *Kufr*. Its form and nature may be different, but in any way it would be *Kufr* and nothing but *Kufr*.

This brings home the importance of *Iman vis-a-vis* a life of true and total submission to God.

From: Towards understanding Islam, Publ. by UK Islamic Mission, London, 1980

## KITCHEN TALK

BY A. Muslim

### MUSHROOM AND MOZZARELLA RISOTTO

#### Ingredients:

175g open mushrooms	750ml basic vegetable stock
225g Mozzarella cheese	pinch salt
3 tablesp. oil	4 tablesp. chopped parsley
1 large onion, thinly sliced	2 tablesp. grated Parmesan
225g short-grain brown rice	cheese

#### Method:

Thinly slice the mushrooms. Coarsely grate the Mozzarella cheese. Heat the oil in a saucepan over a low heat. Put in the onion and soften it. Put in the mushrooms and rice and stir them for one minute. Pour in about one-third of the stock and season with the salt. Simmer, uncovered, until nearly all the stock has been absorbed, about 15 minutes. Pour in a further third of the stock, simmer, uncovered, again for another 15 minutes or until that has nearly all been absorbed.

Add the remaining stock and simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes or until the rice is tender and the liquid has reduced to a creamy textured glaze.

Take the pan from the heat and fork in the cheeses and the parsley. Serve as soon as possible after the cheese has been added.

Serve with either a salad or a cooked green vegetable such as broccoli or spinach.

by Muhammad R. Reroze

## THE COMPANION

Abu Bakr stayed with the Prophet (peace be upon him) in Makka until the *Quraysh* stepped up their campaign against the Muslim community. The Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) then allowed his Companions to emigrate to Ethiopia. Abu Bakr went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to ask his permission to emigrate along with the others. The permission was given. Abu Bakr then mounted his camel and started on the rough journey. After a journey of one or two days from Makka, he reached a place called Bark al-Ghammad where he met Ibn al-Daghna, the chief of a tribe. He asked with an air of surprise: "Where are you going, Abu Bakr?"

Abu Bakr replied: "My people have expelled me, troubled me and made life miserable for me. So I want to travel in the world and to worship and obey my Lord."

"No! By Allah, you are the glory of the tribe. You help the strangers and do good deeds. O Abu Bakr, a man like you cannot be found easily. Go back, and you shall be under my protection. Worship your Lord in your own land!"

So Abu Bakr returned with him, and when they entered Makka, Ibn al-Daghna went towards the *Ka'ba*. He spoke loudly to the chiefs of the tribe sitting in the courtyard of the shrine: "O people of *Quraysh*!" I have given protection to Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Qahafa. Now nobody should approach him except with good intentions."

Days passed and nobody approached Abu Bakr for any good or evil purpose. Abu Bakr used to offer his prayers in a place near his house. He was a man of tender heart and was extremely sensitive. Whenever he stood up to recite the Qur'an, he wept and made others cry. Tears rolled down his cheeks as a result of the recitation. A large number of children, servants and women stood behind him in prayer.

They looked at him and wondered at his expression and

movements. Some elders of the *Quraysh* were afraid of the influence of Abu Bakr's prayers on these children and servants.

They appealed to Ibn al-Daghna: "O Ibn al-Daghna! You have not protected this man so that he may trouble us. Whenever he prays and recites what Muhammad has claimed to have been revealed to him, he cries aloud. We are afraid that our children, women and old people will be led astray. Go and ask him to stay in his house where he can do what he likes."

Ibn al-Daghna went to Abu Bakr and said: "O Abu Bakr, I have not protected you with the purpose that you may trouble other people. They do not accept your position and that is why they feel troubled by you. Go to your house, and there do what you like."

When Abu Bakr heard Ibn al-Daghna ordering him to pray in his house, he looked pained. He felt that Ibn al-Daghna was wilfully controlling his freedom of belief and worship. He realised that protection by Ibn al-Daghna or any other person was not fitting to his position as a believer with a strong faith, and that Allah's protection was stronger and more everlasting than that of Ibn al-Daghna or others like him. He addressed him: "Shall I relinquish your protection?"

Ibn al-Daghna replied: "yes, relinquish my protection".

Abu Bakr answered: "I relinquish it".

Ibn al-Daghna went to the *Ka'ba* and announced: "O people of *Quraysh*! Abu Bakr bin Abi Qahafa has relinquished my protection. Your enemy is with you!"

Abu Bakr stood up for a moment and then began walking towards the *Ka'ba*. On his way, he met one of the notorious characters of the *Quraysh*, who threw a handful of dust at his head. By chance, al-'As bin Wa'il passed by Abu Bakr at that moment. Abu Bakr said to him: "Don't you see what this fellow has done?" al-'As answered: "Have you not brought it on yourself O Abu Bakr?"

Abu Bakr replied quietly, as if he were talking to himself: "O Lord."

The call to Allah's faith spread among the people with greater intensity as time went on. People from *Yathrib* (Madina) embraced Islam, and gave their pledge to the Prophet (peace be upon him) that they would give him full protection with their lives and possessions, and would spend their lives and blood in the cause of Allah and the propagation of Islam. The Prophet

(peace be upon him) saw the hardships of his Companions and ordered them to go to *Yathrib* and live there with their brothers in Islam until Allah improved their circumstances. Abu Bakr went to see the Prophet (peace be upon him) and to seek permission to travel to *Yathrib*. The Prophet (peace be upon him), however, did not allow him to travel and said: "Don't be in a hurry. Perhaps Allah may provide you with a companion."

Abu Bakr became quiet, and he requested that the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) might be his companion. Abu Bakr bought two camels for eight hundred *dirhams*. He kept them at his house in order to feed and prepare them for the journey along with his companion, the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Allah ordered His Prophet (peace be upon him) to migrate on the day the *Quraysh* had planned to assassinate him. The Prophet (peace be upon him), therefore, visited the house of Abu Bakr soon after midday. Abu Bakr was surprised by the arrival of the Prophet (peace be upon him) because it was not his habit to come at that time. He usually came in the morning or in the evening. Abu Bakr welcomed the Prophet (peace be upon him) cordially, and requested him to sit on his divan. After a few moments rest, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Abu Bakr: "Come, let us go!"

Abu Bakr replied: "O Prophet of Allah, here are my two daughters, that is all that I have."

"Allah has ordered me to leave home and migrate", the Prophet (peace be upon him) told Abu Bakr.

Abu Bakr cried with joy: "Companionship, O Prophet of Allah!"

After a while, Abu Bakr said: "O Prophet of Allah! Here are the two camels which I was preparing for this day."

From: Abu Bakr - The first Caliph  
The Islamic Foundation, Leicester, 1976

(to be continued)

## LETTERS TO THE MWA

Nina, one of our sponsored children from Lebanon writes:

My dear Ladies from Muslim Women's Association,  
(LE/BB/333)

I write you this letter hoping you are in good health and because you are always helping me with my day to day life and because you always encourage me to be good. We are now in the middle of the school year. I have covered more than half of my schooling. I am good at school and I always have good marks. Thank you for your help. My family wish you a long life and hope you can remain a good assistance to needy people.

Before I close I want to tell you that I am now in the fourth intermediate class, and I hope to pass the official exam.

Yours sincerely  
Nina

Good News for all the Muslims

Dear Chairman,

Please find attached an A4 size colour poster which we are sure you will find both interesting and educational.

We are delighted to confirm that all Wrigley products are animal fat free.

Following discussions with Doctor Selim at Goodge Street in London, he has kindly provided us with your address and we hope that you will site this poster on the notice board for all to see.

We would like to thank you in anticipation of your support.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to write to us at the above address.

Yours faithfully,

## MWA BUSINESS

by Nisa Ali

### COMMITTEE MEETING

A committee meeting was held on Sunday 14 March 93. The meeting was opened with a recitation read by Mrs. Karima Mustafa. Apologies were received from Mrs. Gul Amin, Mrs. Soraya Youssef, Mrs. Q. Bashir, Mrs. Azra Rekhi, Dr. Zubeda Osman.

Mrs. Amina Adristold us about the plight of some of the Bosnian men who are in Britain to receive artificial limbs. She mentioned one young man who lost both his arms. His artificial limbs will cost £86,000.00. MWA donated £380.00 towards the cost. This sum was collected among the committee members taking part in the meeting. Thank you for your generosity. May God reward you many times.

MWA also donated £25.00 to the Muslim Teachers' Ass. in support of their essay competition.

### EID DINNER

The Annual Eid Dinner was planned for Sunday 11 April 93. Tickets will cost £4.00 per person and £10.00 per family of four. - Volunteers to help serve at the tables etc. Members are requested to bring water jugs and dishes for serving. Members are requested to be at the ICC at 4 pm.

EID GREETINGS were received from our Sister Mariam Omar from South Africa.

### VIDEO RECORDER FOR MADINA HOUSE

Have you a video recorder which is no longer needed? Madina House would be most grateful to receive it.

## MWA EID DINNER

by Nisa Ali

Our Annual Eid Dinner was held on Sunday, 11th April 1993, at the Islamic Cultural Centre, London. We heard Sura Al-A'la very beautifully recited by Anas Hassan. Then, Dr. Al Khech El Kashif, one of the resident Imams at the Centre, opened the function with a recitation from the Holy Quran. He spoke a few words about the plight of the Bosnian situation.

Then Dr. Esmet El-Said, President of the Arab Women's Council addressed the gathering:

"I feel it a pleasure and a duty to attend the Annual MWA Eid Dinner we enjoy together every year after the solemn fasting month of Ramadan. It helps to restore our true identity by promoting our friendship and by strengthening our ties. In Islam racial and ethnic divisions do not exist. We all belong to the same human race and our holy islamic beliefs are unifying our hearts and souls.

"Unfortunately, the whole islamic world is suffering today, and these tragic events are affecting us all. But by joining hands and hearts and by offering help to those who suffer the divine justice will prevail in the end.

Thank you again, and may our prayers and God's kindness and mercy protect us all."

Mrs. Amina Adris is one of the main-co-ordinators for the Bosnian refugees in Britain. In her speech she highlighted the problems facing our brothers and she highlighted the problems facing our brothers and sisters who are here as refugees and as well as those who are unable to leave the war zone. Mrs. Adris made an appeal for funds to help a man who lost his sight while fighting in Bosnia.

By the end of the evening £537.00 was collected for this cause. Out of this amount £35.00 was given to the driver, who drove the Bosnian guests to and fro. The remaining £502.00 were sent to the Bosnian Organisation towards the cost of the treatment of the poor young blind man. We feel deeply grateful to all our guests and members who donated so generously towards this cause.

The Muslim Teacher's Association presented a basket of flowers and a pen to Mrs. Khanam Hassan, President of the MWA for her valued support.

She addressed the gathering with the following words:

"I would just like to welcome you all here today to the MWA's Annual Eid Dinner. It is very good to see so many of you here today. This event - like Eid itself - is an occasion for both celebration and contemplation. We have come together to celebrate the faith which binds us together and gives us a sense of purpose and inner strength, and we have also come to contemplate, and to express our sympathy for those who share our religion, but not our good fortune.

In particular our hearts and minds are focused on the terrible trials and difficulties of the Bosnian Muslims. Our hearts and prayers are with them at this time. We pray to Allah Almighty that the torture and massacres of Muslims in Bosnia may stop. Meanwhile, we must try to do whatever we can to help the victims.

This, however, is not a day for lengthy speeches. I will, therefore, conclude by thanking you once again for coming here today, and I hope that you will have a pleasant evening.

May Allah Almighty bless you all. Thank you."

We were pleased to welcome among our over 400 guests 120 Bosnian refugees, men, women and children. We were very happy to greet among our welcomed guests

Begum Nusrat Sami, the wife of the High Commissioner of Pakistan and President of APWA; Dr. Esmet El-Said, President of the Arab Women's Council and her secretary Mrs. Shehnaz; Madam Tyjanny; Dr. S. Darsh of the UK Shariah Council and his family and representatives of various organisations.

Mrs. Amina Idris, the Bosnian lady who organised the Bosnian party to the dinner informed our President to say how much her fellow Bosnians enjoyed the dinner, how much they appreciated the warm welcome extended to them by the MWA and the other guests.

As always, we had a good attendance of members and well wishers. It was a joy to see that the spirit of Ramadan had not yet faded - families and old friends took the opportunity to celebrate together again.

We raised £675.00 at the door (Dinner Tickets). We thank all the people who helped with the preparations of an enjoyable evening and a very special 'thank you' to the team of young ladies whose co-ordinated efforts assisted us so well.

#### CLOTHES FOR BOSNIAN REFUGEES

Mrs. Amina Adris would like to hear from anyone who could donate clothes which is in good condition (no saris and no shalwar/chamis) for the Bosnian people. Could you please make sure that all the pieces are washed and ironed. Scarves, prayer mats and tasbees would also be welcome. For details of collection point etc. contact Mrs. Khanam Hassan on 081-946 1052.