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Nov/Dec 97 - Sha'ban/Ramadanr 1418

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A monthly journal published by The Muslim Women's Association (Regd. Charity)

Nov/Dec 97 - Sha'ban/Ramadanr 1418

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> THE MUSLIM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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THE EXECUTIVE & COMMITTEE

FOR THE PERIOD DECEMBER 1995 TO NOVEMBER 1997

 Pr 	esident
Mrs.	Khanam Hassan

6. TreasurerMrs. Shafghat Ghaffar

2. Secretary Mrs. Kanza Shah

7. Editor
Dr. Zubeda Osman

3. Assistant Secretary Miss Swadeka Ahsun

> 8. Assistant Editor Mrs. Jasmine Ansari

4. Membership Secretary Ms. Shirin Hassan

9. Religious Advisor

5. Social Secretary Mrs. Firdous Arif Mrs. Souraya Youssef

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY 14th Dec 1997

at The Islamic Cultural Centre 146 Park Road, London NW8 7RG

Time: 4.00 pm

ALL CORRESPONDENCE

should be sent to our new address **The Muslim Women's Association** P. O. Box 6119, LONDON SW20 OXG

Articles, letters and other matter appearing in this publication do not necessarily express the official views of the Executive Committee of The Muslim Women's Association.

Meetings of the MWA take place on the second Sunday of each month

EDITORIAL

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته Dear Readers,

Jihad is permitted to those who have been wronged and Allah is able to give them victory. Those who have been driven from their homes un justly for no cause other than their saying "Our Lord is Allah".

However our beloved Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) commanded his soldiers when sending them to war not to harm women, children, and the elderly, the frail and the sick. These people if captured were treated honourably and kindly. All such captives were treated kindly and mercifully.

There is no evidence that the followers of the beloved Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) tortured their captives or raped women and abused children. Yet in Egypt a group of people calling themselves followers of the Prophet have killed innocent people as a revenge on their rulers. Is this what Islamic Justice is about? Muslims today are trying to spread the word of Allah and the Hadith of our beloved Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) all over the world. A large number of people are accepting the faith.

Yet who can deny that some 'so called' followers are setting a devastating example by killing innocent people to revenge themselves. After these incidents people are asking themselves whether these horribly cruel actions can ever be committed by true followers of the beloved Prophet Muhammed (pbuh). He loved people and always treated them kindly. When his enemies brought in front of him as captives of war. He forgave many of them and set them free. He realised his greatest enemy's wife when she had desecrated the body of his uncle Humza the Martyr. Can the followers of such a beloved Prophet agree and condone with acts of cruelty and human degradation on people who are totally innocent?

I pray humbly and sincerely for the guidance of all Muslims and indeed of all human beings so that when anyone commits an act of injustice he should not be condoned in anyway but condemned by all Ameen: May Allah bless you all,

Dr. Zubeda Osman

THE ISLAMIC RITUAL OF BURIAL AND GRIEVING

Religious Advisor: Mrs S. Youssef

The funeral ceremony of Muslims is simple and practical to follow. The burial rites when performed correctly are very moving. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) died on a Monday (June 8. AD 632) and was buried within 24 hours. Muslims all over the world strife to follow the tradition of the Prophet in burying their dead quickly.

Preparing the shroud The body is laid out on a hard surface and is washed* normally by close members of his or her family who also participate in the final internment of the body. In exceptional cases professionals are employed for bathing the body. As a rule, it is only men who wash a man's body and vise versa for women. The body is then shrouded from head to toe in at least 3 pieces of clean white cloth, in such a way that the head can be freed later on. Care is taken to ensure that there are no knots or any sewing on the cloth, because this might obstruct the liberation of the body. Just before burial a short ceremony takes place, in the mosque or the graveside, where relatives and friends gather to bid their private farewells to the deceased, forgiving and begging forgiveness. This is followed by saying a prayer for the dead.

The burial is generally a man's affair, although in recent years women started to accompany the funeral procession. Men invariably perform the funeral rites.

Funeral rites At the graveside the shrouded body is taken out of its coffin and lowered down with shawls and lengths of cloth and the corpse is turned towards the right, its closed eyes facing Mecca, its feet

Continued on page 15

Juniors' Corner

KNOWLEDGE IN ISLAM

Khola Hassan

Islam is the religion of knowledge. The first word of the first revelation to our Prophet (pbah) was READ:

Read in the name of thy Lord who created man from a clot of blood. Read! and thy lord is most bountiful. He who taught the use of the pen taught man that which he knew not.

Thus our religion began with an urge to study and this theme is present throughout the first revelation. The words 'Iqra' and 'Allam' are repeated, and the pen is mentioned once in the space of five lines. So Islam is a religion of knowledge, not of ignorance, not of superstition nor of inherited rituals but of knowledge. It is therefore the duty of every Muslim to seek this knowledge.

The Prophet (pbuh) was an 'Ummi' which means unlettered. Yet his teacher was the angel Jibra-eel, the great messenger from Allah.

Today there are some Muslims who say that as our Prophet (pbuh) was unlettered so we too do not need to study, but they are quite wrong. Our Prophet was taught by an Angel, and left us a source from which we can get knowledge, and that is the Qur'an. Our Prophet said: "The best of you is the one who studies the Qur'an and teaches it."

The fundamental teachings of the Qur'an is faith in Allah. An example can illustrate this a person who is sitting in a strange and very dark room will be frightened to move. He will be afraid that on taking his fist step he may fall into a pit, or touch a reptile etc. However

when the light is switched on everything will be clear. He will happily and safely be able to move. Before you have faith there are many questions which are never angered. For Example: "Where did I really come from? Where will I go after death? Why was I created?" These are all frightening questions. Once we have 'Iman' it is like switching on the light, and everything becomes clear.

Allah says in the Qur'an: اللّهُ نُورُ السّموات والارض Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. i.e. the Universe and all its workings are mysterious to us. Faith in Allah enlightens them to us.

Today, the greatest scientists - the more they probe into the mysteries of the Universe the more they marvel at the greatness of God. Everything is so systematic and orderly. Never have any two of the hundreds of galaxies collided to bring disaster to mankind. Never has the sun decided to come close to the earth, and burn everything out. All this points to a great and skilled 'hand' behind everything. Some say that all this has come about naturally. This is impossible to believe. If we placed one hundred monkeys at a hundred typewriters it is impossible that even in ten years we would get from them a complete stanza of Shakespeare's.

So how can this orderly universe have come into being haphazardly? - The real knowledge is to know Cod. When we know his might and grandeur, and only then do we humble ourselves before him in prayer.

Our Prophet (pbuh) spent his life in spreading knowledge. He married the Lady Aisha at young age, and she outlived our Prophet by nearly 50 years. After the death of our Prophet, the companions or 'sahabat' came to her with their problems and questions. She had never been to a University or Academy, yet she had received knowledge from our Prophet (pbuh) and from the Qur'an.

To sum up here is a story: Once a group of youths hired a boatman to

take them for a ride on a river. The man was fairly old, and during the journey they asked him questions: "Do you know algebra, geometry, chemistry, economics, astrology?" To all these he answered "No." At this they said: "Half your life is finished and you know nothing important." To this he replied nothing.

UNION OF MUSLIM ORGANISATIONS OF UK & EIRE

At the last meeting of the Executive Committee, the following calendar of events has been adopted for the year 1997-98:

Me' rajun Nabi S.A.W. S. celebration	29 November 1997
UMO Board of Ulama Annual	7 December 1997
Conference	
Eid-ul-Fitr Reunion	7 February 1998
Twenty-fifth Winter Conference	21,22 February 1998
Hijra and Ashoura Commemoration	2 May 1998
Meeladun Nabi S.A.W.S. Dinner	7 July 1998
Sixteenth Annual Youth Conference	26 July 1998
Twenty-second Annual Youth Camp	8-12 August 1998
Twenty-eighth Annual Conference	5,6 September 1998

Please make a note of these events in your diary and publicise them among your members and local Mosques.

THE SHARP IDEOLOGICAL MUSLIM

"Forbidden unto you(for food) are carrion and blood and the flesh of swine..." (TMQ 5:3) For decades Muslim scholars of science have delved into this issue of the flesh of the swine. Years of observation and study have shown us that the pig is a dirty animal, spending its life wallowing around in all manner of mud and filth. It has been discovered that the pig is host to the tapeworm parasite, that can be transferred to man in the intestine if eaten when not properly prepared. More recently, research has shown that a deadly form of bacteria has been found to lurk in the meat of some pigs...

On this basis, then, one could assume to be well equipped to answer when asked why Muslims abstain from pork. right? WRONG! After all, as Muslims, we could take a plump shoulder joint, irradiate it, microwave it. fry it for six hours, boil it for three days and then give it a good rub down with sand paper. thus making it cleaner than a sterilised tongue depressor. But all the end of the day, we still would not cat it. This introduces the fundamental principle of Islamic ruling, i.e. that We hear and we obey.": "Say: Is there among your partners whom you associate with Allah) any who guides to the truth? Say: Allah guides to the truth. Then does he who guides to the truth have more right to be obeyed or the one who is not guided unless he receives guidance? Then what is wrong with you all? How do you judge?" (TMQ 10:35)

From this we understand that it is Allah (SWT) who defines for us what is right and what is wrong. As human beings we are limited in knowledge and in ever! other aspect of our existence. As such, we can address an issue such as the consumption of pork. evaluate the pros and cons, and come to a decision as to wheeler we should partake of it or not. But, as our knowledge is not absolute, there is no we) that we can arrive at the true ruling for this or any situation: when we make decisions, line) are made with reference to our previous experience and as such, individuals would take differing lines on the same issue. This is clear from examples such as peoples attitudes to abortion and homosexuality and is implicit in the very nature of the parliamentary system for making laws. So., it is clear man cannot for himself define the RIGHT law.

There are those who accuse the Muslims of following blindly) what is written in a book, without regard to their own thoughts and inclinations. Indeed it is they themselves who are blind. Surely if Allah (SWT) has created them and know every aspect of their nature than they know themselves, it is Allah (SWT) who is best qualified to decide what is good for them. For them to adopt their own whims and desires over their creators ruling is irrational. A simple analogy is this. The builder of

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The Muslim Women's Association (U.K.)

Headquarters London

Registered Charity No. 264608

P.O. Box 6119, London SW20 0XG

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE AND YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION TO "THE MUSLIM WOMAN"

U.K. £10.00

Overseas £18.00 (airmail)

Life membership in U.K. £80.00 Overseas £100.00

It gives us great pleasure to welco together for the cause of Islam.	ome you to our Association. We are looking for	ward to working
	— — Cut and Post — — — — — — — —	
	Date:	
To:		
Miss Shirin Hassan 63 Coombe Lane LONDON SW20 OBD		
Tel: 0181 946 1052		*
I wish to become a member of the Woman". I enclose a crossed chec to "The Muslim Women's Associa	e Muslim Women's Association (U.K.) and rece que/Postal Order in the amount of £	ive "The Muslim made payable
	First Names (Block letters p	lease)
Town	County Postal Co	ode
Country	Telephone number	
Signature	Date	



"لن تنالوا البرجتي تنفقوا مما تحبوي و ما تنفقوا من شيء فإن الله به عليم"

"You shall not attain righteousness unless you spend on others of that which you love, and whatever you spend, verily God has knowledge of it."

(The Qur'an 3:92)

MADINA HOUSE



г Ж
From
Name
Address
Telephone
I would like to make a donation/Zakat and enclose a cheque for the amount of \pounds payable to Muslim Women's Association 'Account Madina House'.
To be send either to: THE PRESIDENT, MWA, P. O. Box 6119, LONDON SW20 0XG
or direct to: The National Westminster Bank, Royal Garden Branch, Kensington High Street, London W8 5EQ (Acc no 25941364; Sort Number 50-30-10).

MADINA HOUSE

A Muslim Home for Children in Need of Care in London

AN APPEAL

MADINA HOUSE is a Muslim home for children in need of care, established in 1981 under the auspices of the Muslim Women's Association (a registered charity which has been functioning since 1962).

From its inception the organisers worked closely with the Department of Health and Social Security and all other Social Services Agencies in order to comply with the current guidelines on the running of Children's Homes. Subsequently Madina House was registered by the Department of S.S.I. under the Child Care Act.

Aim - The main aim of Madina House is to provide an alternative home for children who for whatever reason, are temporarily unable to live with their parent/s. At Madina House we provide a stable, caring background, founded on Islamic principles and practices. Since its founding we have cared for over 400 children.

The present home does no longer comply with today's regulations and we have been asked to find more suitable accommodation. Thus, we are in desperate need of finance to buy an appropriate building. Failing to do so, the future of Madina House is in question.

Please help us by giving generously to continue to care for our children in need.

Donations, whether by Cheques or Banker's Orders would be greatly appreciated.

The Muslim Women's Association (U.K.)

Headquarters London

Registered Charity No. 264608

P. O. Box 6119, London SW20 0XG

Date:

RENEWAL FOR MEMBERSHIP

Dear	With the state of	
Your yearly MWA-Me be/was due for renewal	embership (which includes the subscription	on to "The Muslim Woman") will
look forward to your	oyed the past meetings/functions and rea renewal of membership and request you thirty days (Life Membership £80.00).	ding "The Muslim Woman". We a kindly to pay the annual fee of
(Please ignore this fo	below and send it together with your payr form if you are a life member, or if you for your continuous support.	ment to our Membership Secretary. ou have already paid this year's
	Cut and Post	
To:		
Membership Secretary		
Miss Shirin Hassan 63 Coombe Lane LONDON SW20 OBD		
Tel: 0181 946 1052		
In order to renew my M to "The Muslim Woma "Muslim Women's Ass	Membership of the Muslim Women's Associan", I enclose a crossed cheque/postal ord sociation (UK)".	ociation (U.K.) and the subscription ler for £ payable to the
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a bridge who has knowledge of physics, architecture, structural science, material science and a whole host of other factors says that his bridge has a maximum load-bearing capacity of 8 tonnes. The driver of a 10 tonne lorry comes along and says that he can cross the bridge because he has seen a lot of bridges and can judge well. Surely it is the creator of the bridge who knows better than its user? In the translation of the meaning of the Quran we read: "...bur it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye know not." (TMQ 2:216)

Thus, it is apparent that if the basis of the ruling is correct then we should follow it, i.e. if a creator exists, and if the Quran is the word of the Creator, it is only rational that we adopt its rulings. Any discoveries we make about the rulings thereafter are only seen as benefits and not reasons; the reason being that "We hear and obey."

In this way, when asked such a question as, why do Muslims abstain from pork, we must answer in the only way we can afrom the very basis of our belief. As Muslims, we should intellectually prove that a creator exists, and then similarly we must prove that the Quran is the word of the creator. Any argument additional to this is superfluous. Many ayats in the Quran make it clear that an intellectual basis for belief is obligatory for all Muslims. It is from here that it is shown that, tar contrary to being blind in adoption of Islamic ruling, the Muslim has the most solid of foundations upon which his actions are built. It goes without saying, then, that the same response applies to questions of why, Islam allows polygamy, divorce, the education system, the social system, the economic system and all other aspects of the private and public ruling systems of the deen. Further to this, once we have accepted the Creator and his book as a fundamental basis, we must accept all of the Legislation that accompanies it. In the translation of The meaning of the Quran we read,

"Can you believe in one part of the scriptures and deny another? Those of you who act thus shall be rewarded with disgrace in this world and with a grievous punishment on the day of resurrection." (TMQ 2:85)

In conclusion then, this matter is solved once we refer it to the basis of our belief. Many exist, Muslim and non Muslim alike, who remain unaware and unable to defend their way of life on an intellectual basis but instead drug themselves up with thoughts which are emotional and blind. May we fear Allah (SWT), and seek knowledge, that we will not have to count ourselves among their ranks on the day of judgement.

Sister Farzana Ishaq.

The Muslim Woman

KITCHEN TALK

COURGETTES MORNAY

Rose Elliot

Ingredients

1 1/2-2 lbs. courgettes

3 oz grated cheese

1 bayleaf

2 oz butter

2 oz fresh breadcrumbs

2 heaped tbs flour

3/4 pint milk

1/4 pint vinegar

3 oz grated cheese
salt and pepper

2 oz fresh breadcrumbs
a little extra grated cheese
and pieces of butter to top

Wash courgettes; cut off stalks and cut courgettes into 1/2" pieces. Cook in a little fast boiling water with bayleaf, until tender, then drain well and keep warm. Make a good cheese sauce by melting butter, adding the flour, and when it froths, drawing pan off heat and adding milk. Return to heat and thicken, stirring all the time, then carefully stir in the vinegar, a little at a time. Simmer gently for a minute or two longer, then draw off heat, add grated cheese and seasoning. Put courgettes in a shallow oven-proof dish, pour sauce over and top with breadcrumbs, grated cheese and some pieces of butter. Place under a moderate grill or in the oven for about 15 minutes, until golden and bubbly.

For a slightly different presentation, use a large, shallow oven-proof dish; place the courgettes and sauce in the middle and cover with the topping, as above. Then pipe around the outside with creamy mashed potato, using a large shell nozzle. Place under grill to crisp the topping and lightly brown the potato, and serve garnished with parsley, tomato slices, lemon slices or what you will.

This simple way of preparing vegetables is also one of the nicest, with

the contrast between the texture of rich creamy sauce, the vegetables, which should be tender but firm, and the crispy topping. Many other vegetables can be used - good old cauliflower, of course, also celery or fennel (all of which benefit from the addition of a few button mushrooms, sauteed in butter); or for a no-expense-spared occasion, try asparagus, which is best first steamed (or use the canned variety - 2 or even 3 large cans, and drain well). Canned sweetcorn is also good use 2 cans. Artichokes and salsify can both be used. Put the peeled vegetables straight into cold water (don't worry too much about the lumpy bits when peeling the artichokes) to which a little vinegar has been added to prevent discolouring. Vegetable marrow, baby onions and leeks are all good candidates for this dish, but these three are best sauteed until tender, rather than cooked in boiling water. So, saute them, then drain off excess liquid, and proceed as above. A lovely mixture can be made from aubergines, peppers, onions and mushrooms - make up 2 lbs. of vegetables altogether, then slice them and saute them until tender, drain off liquid for use in soups or sauces and proceed as above.

(From "Not just a Load of Old Lentils" by Rose Elliot; The White Eagle Publishing Trust, 1972)

Continued from page 4

facing south. The grave is filled by all the mourners, to the accompaniment of verses recited from the Quran by the Imam. The mourners leave, the Imam stays behind, offering his final prayers for the departed soul. Islamic belief in an afterlife is founded on the notion of retribution and resurrection. The Quran speaks of the Day of the Great Rising (Yaum al-Qiyamah) when the Book of Deeds will be read.

*washed or ablution

Reference

- 1. Death and bereavment across cultures. London. 1997.
- (Dr. Pittu is Reader in Psychology at South Bank University)

MWA BUSINESS - November 1997

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Muslim Women's Association held on Sunday 9th November at the Islamic Cultural Centre at 4.00 pm.

The meeting was opened with a recitation of Ayat-al-Kursi by the Religious Advisor, Soraya Youssef.

The President, Mrs Hassan reminded members that this was the Annual General Meeting and the main purpose was to receive reports and elect office bearers and committee members.

The election programme and procedure were read out. The program consisted of: 1. Reports from the President and Treasurer 2. The election process itself

The President presented her report which covered the general program of activities and support offered to the community by the MWA. The major section of her report focussed on Madina House and the difficulties surrounding the project.

It has now become a matter of urgency that the MWA acquire a new home which would meet the criteria set out in the Children's Act. The Inspectorate had delayed enforcing the move for 3 years. Funds have been promised but promises have yet to materialise.

Westminster Social Services have suggested the MWA lease one of their properties, but unfortunately there are too many strings attached. The President concluded her report by thanking Yusuf Islam and Dr. Hamid Al-Majid, the Director of the Islamic Cultural Centre for their support. She also thanked the members of the MWA particularly the committee, and her family for continuous support over the years.

The Treasurer, Shaufghat Ghaffar, then presented her report.

The members then discussed issues relating to the magazine and membership.

It was felt that members may need another reminder as to the importance of renewing their membership. Reminders are printed in the magazine but if individual reminders have to be sent then the cost of postage, envelopes etc. is incurred by individuals namely the membership secretary.

Tea was served and the meeting was closed by the Reilgious Adviser.

Election Prograde 1997

- 1. Reports from the President Mrs Khanam Hassan Reports from the Treasury - Mrs Shaufghat Ghaffar
- 2. Election procedure:

Nominate officers according to order below:

- i. President
- ii. Secretary
- iii. Assistant Secretary
- iv. Membership Secretary
- v. Social Secretary
- vi. Assistant Social Secretary
- vii. Treasure
- viii. Editor
- ix. Religious Advisor
- x. Committee members

Committee members – 5 maximum

The Executive and Committee for the period December 1997 to November 1999

Nominations:

Post	Nominee	By whom	No. of votes
1.Presiden	Mrs K. Hassan	1. Z. Osman 2. A. Rekhi	Unanimous
2.Secretary	Kanza Shah	1. Mrs K. Hasan 2. A. Rekhi	Unanimous
3.Assistant Secretary	Swadeka Shah	 Dr. Osman Firdous Arif 	Unanimous
4.Membership Secretary	Shirin Hassan	 Dr. Z. Osman Lubna Ilyas 	Unanimous
5. i. Social Secretary	Firdous Arif	1. Dr. Z. Osman 2. Lubna Ilyas	Unanimous
ii. Assistant Social Secretary	Lubna Ilyas	1. Mrs. K. Hassan 2. Dr. Z. Osman	Unanimous
6. Treasurer	Shaufghat Ghaffar	1. Dr. Z. Osman 2. Azra Rekhi	Unanimous
7. Editor	Dr. Z. Osman	l. F. Arif 2. K. Mustapha	Unanimous
8. Co–Editor	J. Ansari	1. K. Mustapha 2. Dr. Z. Osman	Unanimous
9. Religious Advisor	S. Youssef	l. F. Arif 2 .L. Ilyas	Unanimous
10. Comittee members	Azra Rekhi Hoda Hannoo Karima Mustapha Nabila Waseem-Saeed	January American	Unanimous

MWA NEWS

The MWA held a stall in support of SOS (orphans in Pakistan) at the bazaar held by the APWA at the Islamic Cultural Centre. Kunza Shah was in charge of the stall and was supported by Lubna Ilyas.

Lubna Ilyas also contributed chicken for APWA food stall. £42.00 was raised and given to APWA on behalf of MWA.

Letters of condolence written to The Queen and Muhammad Al-Fayed have been acknowledged.

Condolences

The very sad news of Dr. S. M. A1–Darsh was announced 2 months ago. Dr. Darsh came to Britain 26 years ago as an Imam at the Islamic Cultural Centre, Regents Park. He was Imam for 14 years and held in high esteem by the Muslim community. He was an excellent Imam with great knowledge. He became chairman of Shariat Council and wrote for Q News. He spoke on Spectrum radio regularly during Ramadan. Our condolences and prayers go to his family from all MWA members. We all remember him with great respect and affection. May Allah bless him.

Meetings

There will be no meeting in January as it will be Ramadan. The next monthly meeting will be held on December 14th at 4 pm at the Islamic Cultural Centre. It is hoped that our guest speaker will by Br. Yusuf Islam, and Mrs. Layla El-Droubie, Inshallah. PLEASE TRY TO ATTEND THIS IMPORTANT MEETING.

Congratulation

Congratulation to Swadeka Ahsan, our assistant Secretary on her graduation in Arabic from the University of westminster. Well done! We are very proud of her.



Ramadan Mubarak

To all our members and all Muslim sisters and brothers and their families

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