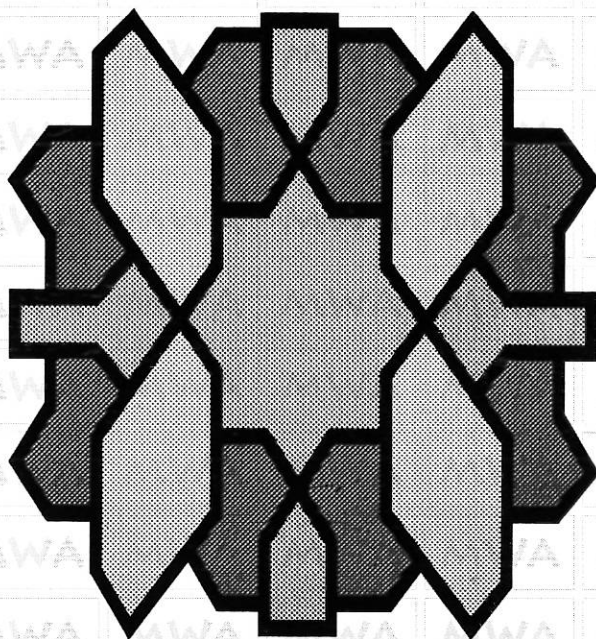


The **MUSLIM WOMAN**

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IN THIS ISSUE

- Editorial	3
- Milad Al-Nabi	4
- The Abode of the Souls	5
- Greeting: Peace be upon you	6
- Poetry	7
- Madina House Appeal ..	8
- Children's Corner	10
- Kitchen Talk	13
- Medical Column	12
- MWA Business	15

Membership of The Muslim Women's Association is open to all Muslim Women.

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THE EXECUTIVE & COMMITTEE

FOR THE PERIOD DECEMBER 1995 TO NOVEMBER 1997

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NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY 13 October 1996
at The Islamic Cultural Centre
146 Park Road, London NW8 7RG
Time: 4.30 pm

ALL CORRESPONDENCE
should be sent to our new address
The Muslim Women's Association
P. O. Box 6119, LONDON SW20 0XG

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

CAMP '96 AND MORE

Summer has come to an end and a lot of interesting activities were organised in the holidays around the British Isles specifically for Muslim youth. One outstanding event the Young Muslims UK and Islamic Society of Britain 'Camp '96' held at Worcester. People from all over Britain came together to experience the pleasure of praying, eating and playing sports in an Islamic "village" atmosphere. An important event was organised by Camp '96 was a well planned career fair which was aimed at approximately 5,000 participants.

Those of us who were not able to attend the camp, had the opportunity to attend talks and meet visiting scholars in the Capital and other cities in the UK. The Islamic Cultural Centre in London invited Br Jamal Badawi from Canada in August. His talks were enriched with nuggets of knowledge from the Qur'an and Hadith and the audiences appreciated him immensely. Then there was Imam Wahhaj from Brooklyn who addressed a packed hall in the same month in Brent, as he delighted everybody with his humour and thought provoking speech. He warned individuals from becoming wrapped up in 'cocoons' and making the folly of isolating themselves from the rest of the community. Furthermore, he encouraged Muslims to pool their skills and resources together in 'halal' businesses as there was a growing consumer demand for Islamic products.

Another event this summer was set in the beautiful surroundings of Nottinghamshire at the Jamiat Al Karam. This was an exclusive gathering of selected men, women and youth who wished to benefit from the knowledge of scholars on a one to one basis by participating in an intensive course of classical Arabic and subjects such as fiqh and aqeedah. Hamza Yusuf from US was one of the inspiring teachers at this course. The course provided accommodation and meals and cost £300 per person.

Those of us who were fortunate to attend Muslim gatherings/events or camps this summer should write to us and share their experiences with us. We would also like to hear from you if you have any interesting stories or anecdotes about travelling.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Dr Mikhail Rose, lecturer at the University of Westminster will be our Guest Speaker on Sunday 13th October 1996 at the Islamic Cultural Centre after Asr prayer.
He will be giving a talk on Islam and illustrating this with slides.

THE SIN OF SHIRK

“La illaha illallah Muhammadur rassulullah”. There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger. These are the words every Muslim says upon embracing Islam. It is the first pillar of Islam. The first part, “There is no god but Allah ...” is the basis of Tawhid, a fundamental belief in Islam. If you don’t believe in Tawhid you cannot be a Muslim as you could not accept the other beliefs as all are based on this belief.

Shirk is the violation of Tawhid. Simply translated that comes to mean “associating anything Allah”. This means not to worship idols, believe God has a son, daughter, father, mother, that there are more gods etc.

“In the name of Allah, the most Merciful, the most Kind.

Say, He is Allah, the One.

Allah is Eternal and Absolute.

None is born of Him nor is he born.

And there is none like Him.”

(Al-Iklas)

The above surah - Al-Iklas sums up this up very well. But shirk gets more complicated. Looking again at the Shahaadah (Declaration of Faith), the first pillar of Islam. We see the very first part - “La ilaha” meaning ‘there is no god ...’. The word ‘ilah’ here not just means God but other things/persons people worship - sun, fire, king, holy person etc. But ‘ilah’ also refers to desires and passions meaning shirk is not so simple. Also there is major and minor shirk, the latter being less serious and the aforementioned making you a non-Muslim. Major shirk is worshipping idols, believing in trinity etc. Minor shirk is things like pride and jealousy as I will explain.

Being superstitious is shirk as you are believing another other than Allah knows what will happen. God is all knowing and supreme. To complain or beg of him is also wrong as you are challenging His superiority over all and his limitless knowledge. Everything that happens even a drought for example has a reason that only Allah knows. Having a false sense of pride or holiness also breaks tawhid as it is hypocrisy. To do things for the sake of show and popularity is wrong as you aren’t doing it for Allah’s sake rather thinking there is someone as superior as Him or more, as it is they are who you feel you

must please. Also believing you can deceive Allah is also challenging His superiority over all. To believe something is yours and have pride in it, or pride in yourself is also wrong as everything, even your body belongs to Allah. It is He who gave you your beauty, health, talents and intelligence. This also means not to be selfish but share and give generously, remembering that it is Allah who gave it all to you. Being jealous or envious of another as they may be pretty, clever, wealthy etc and you are not is wrong. Everyone is equal, it is your faith that counts not your money, beauty or talents so be thankful of what you have. Likewise you shouldn’t yourself better than another for any reason. Also believing in magic is shirk as you are believing that people can produced miracles. It is OK to watch magic shows for entertainment, children especially enjoy them but to start believing in some of the “magic” is not permissible. This includes believing in things such as supernatural powers, an ability to know the future or witchcraft.

So how bad is shirk? Well tawhid is really important as the surah mentioned before (Al-Iklas) is said to be equal to one third of the Qur’an. The reason for this is that is summaries 1/3 of the beliefs outlined in the Qur’an - obviously a lot of the Qur’an is to do with tawhid. When a person becomes a Muslim they declare that there is no God but Allah (this is the Shahaadah). so obviously tawhid is the fundamental and foremost important belief. When the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was asked what the greatest sin was the Prophet declared, “that you associate a partner with God (despite the fact) that He has created you”. (Hadith) This shows us how serious it is and that we must steer well clear of it.

But how do we avoid shirk? The main part of shirk is easy to abstain from but then it gets harder. Not to take pride in yourself or be jealous can be difficult for many people. Especially to have pride in one’s work is often natural but you must remember that all your talents and resources come from Allah. So, with willpower it can be avoided. But then there are superstitions. OK so you don’t really have difficulty in believing opening a umbrella inside or cracking a mirror brings you bad luck. These days it’s all a big joke to most people, But horoscopes. Few think of them as shirk but they are as it’s people saying they have the power to look into the future, only Allah has knowledge of the future. You get daily stars in almost every newspaper and often you happen to read yours anyway. These horoscopes are very vague like, “... remember friendship matters ...”, this could mean anything. So then you have an argument with your

friend. You don't take it as a coincidence but start believing it. People say it's not bat to read horoscopes just for the fund of it. Others say it is dangerous as you might not take it as a mere coincidence and the more you read horoscopes the more you start looking for things to happen. Horoscopes can even lose you friends if you start to believe in star sign matching. If you give in to peer pressure, say you buy a pair of Mike trainers so people will count you as 'one of the crowd' then that's shirk as I explained before, it's important not to do this and forget about what others think of you as they are unimportant. Allah is the supreme judge not them.

We need willpower, faith and determination to stay away from shirk, but Insha-Allah, with Allah's help we will remain steadfast and gain a place in paradise.

Misbah Arif, aged fifteen.

GREETING: Peace be upon you

We as Muslims have to greet one another. The Qur'an says: "And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet with one better than it or return it." (4:86).

The greeting of a Muslim to another Muslim is "Assalamu-alaikum", peace be upon you. The reply would be "Wa-alikum-moes-salaam". It means, on you be peace as well.

The greeting and reply has a definite meaning and significance in the way of life of Islam. Everything you do in Islam has a meaning and purpose.

When someone greets you with - peace be on you, this signifies that your life, property, and honour is safe in his hand. If you reply his greeting with - on you also be peace, signifies that you will also protect his life, property and honour.

The significance is that from the very first meeting a sense of mutual security and peace is given to one another. There can be no ill-feeling and malice. If there is then you should not greet or reply the greeting.

The other significance of Islamic greeting is that it demolishes the vanity of "High Class" people. It destroys social disposition. It creates a deep, true and real feeling of brotherhood.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), formulated the rule that irrespective of social position, one who is riding shall first greet one who is walking, the one who is walking shall greet the one sitting, the small party shall greet the big party, and the junior shall greet the senior.

POETRY

I AM A MUSLIM

I am a Muslim
That is True
Believing in Allah
And Muhammad too.

I read the Qur'an
Which is Allah's book
It teaches us goodness
Not to be a crook.

I obey my parents
Day and night
I love my neighbours
And we never fight.

The prayer I say
Five times a day
We believe in one God
And to Him we pray.

I eat only things
Which are *Halal* and good
And besides *halal*
I eat no other food.

When Ramadan is here
We fast thirty days
And we try our best
To mend our ways.

May Allah keep me a Muslim
Till my Dying day
Make me serve everyone
That is what I pray.

Ameen.



”لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تَحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ“

“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

دار المدينة



From

Name

Address

Telephone

I would like to make a donation/Zakat and enclose a cheque for
the amount of £ 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 Health & Social Security 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.

REMEMBERING THE HUNGRY AND THE DEJECTED ...

The Qur'an and the Prophet's traditions enjoins men and women to act charitably. It is through practising charitable acts that our faith strengthens and our behaviour towards others is motivated by virtue and compassion. Those of us who practice virtuous acts for the love of Allah and His Prophet are referred in the Qur'an as the Companion of the Right Hand.

This honourable status is bestowed on those who strive to: "... freeing the bondsman; or the giving of food in a day of privation; to the orphan with claims of relationship, or to the indigent (down) in the dust." (Sura Balad, v. 13-16)

These ayats are particularly poignant as one only has to scan the newspapers to read about daily accounts of human suffering world-wide. Whole communities in countries such as Iraq are being wiped out because of shortage of basic amenities such as drinkable water, food and medicine. The economic collapse of the country has been accelerated by six years of sanctions since the Gulf War. The country has experienced further devastation recently with cruise missile attacks which were launched by Washington, in response to Iraqi forces advancing into Kurdish haven in the north. Once again, the build up of American troops and arms in the Gulf, can only spell further disaster for the people of Iraq as the aftermath of heavy bombing left a trail of devastation in the region, contaminating the air and water supply - not to mention the affect of radiation on the young and the unborn child!

The Kurds have suffered tremendously in the region as well and in September of this year there was a mass exodus of Kurds to Iran. An account of a Kurdish refugee camp on the borders of Iran was published in the Sunday Times.

"Scuffles broke out as a single bread van arrived to feed more than 5,000; people chased after a single tanker that brought water, others could no longer care, sitting exhausted in the dust and staring blankly into space."

The scenario of human suffering is similar whether the refugee camp is in Iran, Bosnia or Rwanda. There are millions of orphans made destitute as a result of wars, coups or mutinies. Populations are being forced to flee in traumatic circumstances, escaping from oppression or famine and epidemics. Children and the vulnerable members of the community are being lost, killed or injured in the mayhem of mass migrations.

It is a special kind of a person who can sacrifice their time, comfort and wealth in order to alleviate some of the suffering of a person or people who have lost everything. The Qur'an recognises that the task is difficult but the reward is great for those who aspire towards charitable actions.

Jasmine Ansari

THE LINK BETWEEN FOOD AND HEALTH

We're what we eat as the saying goes! According to health experts we should be aware of the food we eat so that our bodies are absorbing the right amount of minerals and vitamins on a daily basis. Vitamins and minerals are essential for the body to function properly. They help combat diseases and improve the immune system. Vitamins are naturally provided for us through fruits and vegetables, and they are recommended to be eaten raw or lightly cooked.

Minerals such as zinc, iron, selenium and calcium can be found in a variety of foods. Selenium helps maintain a healthy liver and is contained in shellfish, wholemeal bread. Calcium helps to maintain strong bones and is acquired from milk, cheese and greens. Iron can be found in red meat, eggs and broccoli.

It makes sense to give some thought when we plan our meals. A sensible diet should include 5 servings of fruit and vegetables each day, according to the 1982 National Cancer Institute's guidelines.

From: "Understanding Nutrition", Hawker Publications, London, 1996.

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 welcome you to our Association. We are looking forward to working together for the cause of Islam.

----- Cut and Post -----

Date:

To:

I wish to become a member of the Muslim Women's Association (U.K.) and receive "The Muslim Woman". I enclose a crossed cheque/Postal Order in the amount of £ made payable to "The Muslim Women's Association UK".

Title (Miss, Ms., Mrs., other) First Names
(Block letters please)

Surname

Address: Street

Town County Postal Code

Country Telephone number

Signature Date

KITCHEN TALK

TOMATO, APPLE AND RAISIN CHUTNEY

Ingredients:

1 3/4 kg (4 lbs) ripe tomatoes, skinned and chopped
1/2 kg (1 lb) cooking apples, peeled, cored and chopped
225 g (8 oz) onions, chopped
450 ml (3/4 pint) white malt vinegar
225 g (8 oz) sultanas
1 tablespoon salt
1/4 teaspoon each ground cinnamon, allspice, ginger, paprika and
cayenne pepper
350 g (12 oz) sugar

Method:

Put the fruit and vegetables in a preserving pan with a little of the vinegar, the sultanas (raisins), salt and ground spices. Simmer gently until just boiling, then cook, uncovered, for 1 1/2 - 1 3/4 hours. Dissolve the sugar in the remaining vinegar, add to the pan and simmer until the chutney has thickened. Pour into hot sterilised jars and seal with vinegar proof tops.

Yields about 1 1/2 kg (3 1/2 lbs)

From: "Family Cooking", published by Octopus Books Ltd., 1978.

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

Your yearly MWA-Membership (which includes the subscription to "The Muslim Woman") will be/was due for renewal on

We trust you have enjoyed the past meetings/functions and reading "The Muslim Woman". We look forward to your renewal of membership and request you kindly to pay the annual fee of £10.00 within the next thirty days (Life Membership £80.00).

Please fill in the form below and send it together with your payment to our Membership Secretary. (Please ignore this form if you are a life member, or if you have already paid this year's subscription). Thank you for your continuous support.

----- Cut and Post -----

To:

Membership Secretary

In order to renew my Membership of the Muslim Women's Association (U.K.) and the subscription to "The Muslim Woman", I enclose a crossed cheque/postal order for £ payable to the "Muslim Women's Association (UK)".

Title (Miss, Ms., Mrs., other) First Names
(Block letters please)

Surname

Address: Street

Town County Postal Code

Country Telephone number

Signature Date

MWA BUSINESS - September 1996

MINUTES OF MWA MONTHLY MEETING

Acknowledgements

The President of the Muslim Women's Association thanks all the children who contributed to the Milad al-Nabi event by reading articles or reciting passages from the Qur'an. A special thanks to Sister Khadija Knight for hosting the event, and all the MWA members who contributed refreshments.

Message from Sarajevo

Sister Saida Sherif sends greetings from Sarajevo to all the members of the MWA. Her endeavours have taken her now to Sarajevo where she is training young Imams to become fluent in speaking and understanding English.

Sister Saida has been going to Bosnia frequently in the past three years, and most of our member are well acquainted with her work at the Ostrozac Centre, from her letters which have been printed in previous issues of the Muslim Woman. The rehabilitation Centre now is fully functional with a resident doctor and nursing staff. The Centre has a pharmacy, and a dental surgery which serves the surrounding villages. What will this enterprising Lady be doing next?

Jasmine Ansari

Our congratulations to Dr and Mrs M Badawi on the birth of their grandson. Baby is the fourth child of Mr Faris and Mrs Faris Badawi. May Allah Almighty bless the family.

Congratulations to Miss Misbah Arif, daughter of our Social Secretary, on gaining Star A in Islamic Studies. Misbah Arif is a student at the Islamic Cultural Centre, 146 Park Road, London N W8 7RG

Our very best wishes to Mrs Shafqat Ghaffar, our Treasurer, who is recovering from an operation. We wish her speedy recovery.

OUR NEW ADDRESS

All Correspondence should be sent to our new address
The Muslim Women's Association
P. O. Box 6119, LONDON SW20 0XG