

Ok, So Now I am
Muslim ~ Now
what?



**A Guide to Learning Islam's
Practices and Beliefs**

OK, So Now I am a Muslim - - Now What?



A Guide to Learning Islam's Practices and Beliefs
A Refresher Course for All Muslims

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Dedication:

This book is dedicated to all Muslims and especially to the new converts who need basic knowledge and instruction to go on the straight path. It is also dedicated to those who helped me along the way and those who held out their hands in welcoming and especially to my husband who taught me how to love Allah with All my heart and soul.

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Chapter 1 - My Humble Beginnings

I must remember my own humble beginnings many years ago when I became a Muslim. I wish I could say it was an extremely simple process, but it was not. If I look back about how Allah had planned my life out to a tee, it is nothing short of a miracle.

I am not sure if you will believe my story, but this is what happened to me. When I was 9 years old my mom sent me to bible school camp and there I met a woman named Janie Arrowood. My camp bed was next to hers and she taught me much. She would take me aside each night and talk about God. I confided in her that I was afraid to die and she gave me this tiny red Bible and told me, "I am reading to you out of this tiny bible now, but when you die God reads to you from this bible." I was so calmed by her words and before the camp was over I was a born again Christian.

I went home and joined the church and even at the age of 9 started teaching Sunday School. I loved my class and the more I learned, the closer to God I became. I could feel him ever so close to me and almost like the power of God was within reaching distance. I became humbled and reverent and the more I read and studied, the more I felt I was being called to be a Missionary. So I prayed to God, if you are truly calling me to be a missionary give me a sign.

Well he gave me a huge sign and I was so frightened by what happened to me that I ran away from God and the church. I was only 9 years old and I just could not handle what was happening to me. My mom had a fit and even the church elders tried to convince me to come back, but I would not.

Eventually after a few months, I did calm down enough and went back to church and teaching, but I was not close to God again like before. I prayed and prayed, but never had that feeling again.

So for years I was trying to get that closeness to God again and just could never get there. Funny when we are called it may not happen again or ever, so we must run like wolves to him when he calls.

So as I went from religion to religion searching, but I just could not find God again. I was an original Southern Baptist member and in those final days I was going to a church of 10,000 people called 4 Square Church. We praised God all the time with song and raising our hands in the air. It was uplifting, but not close enough.

So I decided to move close to the church, so I could go more often than ever. I quit my job, gave notice on my apartment and went to seek a new apartment. Funny each and every apartment I went to refuse to even show me the apartment.

So I asked the pastor what was I doing wrong and he said, "God does not want you to move to Van Nuys, he wants you to say yes." So I went back to Downey, took back my job and my apartment and said "yes" to God.

Within 2 weeks I got fired from my job. Now I was stunned, how come I did everything I was told and now I lost my job. I had been working part time in another job and went to my other boss and said what am I going to do and she told me, to work very hard and be a success. So I did that and within 2 months I was the number one sales person and I bought a new white Mercedes. I said yes.

During this process I met a woman who recently came back from Egypt. She knew of my quest to be closer to God and told me that she wanted to give me a present. She handed me the Glorious Quran. I took the Quran to my home and for 3 days read. I read about how Allah gave us direct orders on how to live our life and the punishment we would get if we did not lead that life. I read about praying and humbling yourself and when I prayed to Allah, I felt very close. I felt better than I had in those 30 years of searching.

So I told my friend, I want to be a Muslim. So we went and searched for a Mosque. We could not find one, but finally in Orange County we found a Mosque and I went in and talked to the sheik about being a Muslim. He first told my friend to leave the room, as she was a Catholic and told me to sit down. He told me all you have to do is sign this "Shahadah" statement.

"ASH-HADU ANLA ELAHA ILLA-ALLAH WA ASH-HADU ANNA MOHAMMADAN RASUL-ALLAH".

The English translation is:

"I bear witness that there is no deity worthy to be worshiped but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger."

Ok, I said and I signed. That date was November 23, 1993. I was so happy. I went outside and met a woman named Fatima from India and she took me under her wings. A man was so excited and told me, I want you to come to lunch at my house tomorrow. I was shocked at the tone of this man and frightened. Fatima told me this was a great honor for this was a very good sheik. He wanted to take care of a new Muslim. So she went with me and we had lunch with his family and children.

He gave me my first prayer rug. I was so excited I had a gift. I then went to class to learn how to be a Muslim. It was very much to learn and I found the more I studied the more I had thirst for knowledge. I was happy. I was making all the changes I was supposed to, such as not painting my fingernails anymore and removing all paintings and statues from my home.

They were shocked in how quickly I did everything I was supposed to do. After 3 months they told me that there was a man who wanted to marry me and I refused as I wanted to know more and told her the best Muslim gets the best husband. So again I read the whole Quran and after 6 months they came to me again and said there is another man who wants to marry you and I finally agreed to see the brother.

One week later we were married. We only had 7 years together before he died, but he taught me more in those 7 years than I had learned in 30 years of searching. It is not so much how much Quran we read, but it was about how much we loved Allah, and his most beloved Messenger. So real faith comes from the heart. I would watch him daily pray and cry. I would watch him read the Quran over and over and I watched how his whole life was dedicated to his religion.

One day I was watching Amr Khalid on TV about doing Zikr and I told my husband, "If I do this zikr and pray and read Quran I can go to heaven." He laughed, "He said not enough. You must do more." I was shocked, but Amr Khalid said I could go to heaven if I did some simple zikr on my fingers after salat. So through watching him, I begin to realize that the true religion entails many things and much more than just praying.

My late husband died on January 24, 2002 and I never cried. I was sad at his passing, but I always remembered his words to me, "Whatever Allah is happy with I am happy with."

So being happy with our destiny is part of the religion and accepting your destiny is important. So imagine how Allah loved me so much that even at the age of 9 years old he was planning for the day I too would be Muslim. I am humbled and too much in shock to think that out of all the millions in the world Allah, Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala chose me. None of my family is Muslim and I pray one day they will be.

We must know that life is very short and that maybe unexpectedly we will die. So if you choose life over death, choose to walk with me on this day and to say the Shahadah

"ASH-HADU ANLA ELAHA ILLA-ALLAH WA ASH-HADU ANNA MOHAMMADAN RASUL-ALLAH".

The English translation is:

"I bear witness that there is no deity worthy to be worshiped but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger."

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Chapter 2 - First Steps

I told you basically what happened to me, but there is more. You have much to learn and do. After you take your shahadah, you must go home and take a shower and pray. Not knowing how to pray will not invalidate your religion, but it is good to know the basics. You can follow my instructions below and follow the video on how to do wudu.

After you pray, you will feel alive and you will feel humbled and you will feel so much love in your heart that I cannot explain. You **MUST** love Allah and His Messenger more than your mom, more than your family and more than your husband. Following the commands of Allah are very important.

We all make mistakes, so don't worry if you sin or fail. Allah is very forgiving, except for one sin and that is the sin of associating partners with him. This pertains to saying that Jesus is the son of God or that he is the Lord. You must believe that Allah is the only God, He is your Lord.

After this you will hopefully find a class to attend to learn how to be a proper Muslim. Going to a good class is important, but it is not required. Remember going to a class where the women or men are backbiting and not living a devout life is better to be avoided. Sad to say in this day and time, we see more and more people spending their time chit-chatting and little time praising Allah.

What I did to get to know the most devout women of my Mosque was to help serve meals on Friday. After the kutbah (Friday lecture), all the families would gather to eat their diner meal. We served lunch to everyone for a price of course. I so envied all the families sitting together on the lawn enjoying each other's time and yet many Muslims envied me.

I would hear many women come to me and ask for a dua. They all wanted to know my story, but I was shy. I just did not fit in very well. The same goes for my life in Jordan now, people cannot understand why I stay in Jordan alone with no family when I could go to America and live in a land they longed to go for. I keep telling them that I want to go to jannah (heaven). If someone asked you today how much would you pay to go to jannah with no recompense and not have to stand under the hot sun on judgment day, what would you say? One million, five million or a trillion. I have a chance to go to jannah as a martyr and no trip to America can give me that.

Sometimes I think of remarrying because it is lonely, but I must keep on tract and do my duty here on earth. If you marry you must follow the leadership of your husband and if he wants to go to America, you must follow. Now a question comes up that you may be wondering about:

Can a Muslim woman who has converted to Islam marry a non-Muslim man?

Converting to Islam should be the happiest day in a woman's life, except if married to a non-Muslim husband. The Sharia ruling on this case is strict.

More and more women are converting to Islam in large numbers, as a result of their desire to be close to Allah and all that Islam holds. A new Muslim convert is perceived as a new baby in the sense that he/she has absolutely no sins. Even if new Muslim convert has sinned in the past, it's believed that their sins will be forgiven by Allah. The dua (supplication) of a new convert is accepted also.

Thousands of women in Europe and all over the world are flocking to Islam. But why are women flocking to Islam in the thousands? According to Charles Easton's book, *Islam and the Destiny of Man*, "We have lost hope in today's Christianity which is following the whims and desires of people and are searching for such a religion which does not have this."

Happiest Day of a Muslim Woman's Life

For newly-converted Muslim women, the new religion may be associated with some stumbling blocks. The possibility of having to sacrifice a husband whom has been faithful and dutiful brings many complications and tests. Many women are being asked to divorce or annul marriages in the event that a non-Muslim husband refuses to convert to Islam. It takes strength of character and extreme faith to be able to walk away, sometimes penniless.

In Muslim nations, there are many Mosques and homes willing to help new converts to Islam, as it's believed that helping others brings great reward and blessing. According to Islam, giving a date to a Muslim convert will bring blessings to the giver. It's believed that the Muslim woman who opts to leave family for the sake of Allah will also have blessings, both in this life and in the next.

Islam is built on many principles and the [40 Hadiths of An' Nawawi's](#) speak of what Islam is really about. By memorizing the hadith, a new Muslim convert will know everything about Islam and its beliefs, which promise to grant them paradise.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him*) has said, "Those people from amongst my ummah, who memorize forty hadith (traditions) pertaining to those issues of religion, which they are in need of, Allah shall resurrect them on the Day of Judgment as jurisprudents and scholars." (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 2, pg. 156; Al-Ikhtasaas, pg.2) A Muslim Woman Cannot Marry a Non-Muslim Man

In Islam, it is forbidden for a woman to marry a non-Muslim man, as decreed by Allah in the Quran. A woman's faith must be strong if she is to follow what Islam dictates. Islam forbids this type of marriage because traditionally, the husband is in charge of the household and the wife must obey the husband. If there are children involved, the complications increase with a two religion household.

Muslims believe that Allah, the Almighty, says: "And do not give (believing women) in marriage to idolaters until they believe, and certainly a believing servant is better than an idolater, even though he should please you." (Sura Al-Baqarah, verse 221)

According to Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal Nadvi, Imam of Calgary Mosque, Canada, and Former Professor at King Saud Univ., Saudi Arabia, "In the light of the foregoing verses and according to the practice of Muslims, it is absolutely Haram (forbidden) for a Muslim woman to get married to a non-Muslim man. This is one of the basics of Islam, and any woman is not supposed to violate the ruling whatever the case may be."

A Muslim Convert Must not be Married to a Non-Muslim Husband

According to the above ruling; a woman cannot marry a non-Muslim or a non-believer. According to the Sharia or learned scholars, a newly converted woman should give her husband a chance to convert before ending the relationship. Many scholars believe the wife should give the man time to consider conversion; the recommended consideration period spans three menstrual cycles (approximately three months.)

During this time, Muslims believe that the newly-converted wife must not have sex with her non-Muslim husband. If, after three months, the husband will not convert to Islam, the devout Muslim wife will seek legal separation; she is considered divorced and free to marry again. After the grace period is up, if the husband and wife desire to remarry, a new marriage contract must be drawn up.

This fatwa is declared by Imam Quduri in his writings called, Mukhtasar. This ruling, however, would not be applicable to a Muslim woman seeking to live in a non-Muslim country with laws of marriage. There, a legal and binding divorce is required.

According to Sheikh Mustafa Az-Zarqa, "As for the marriage of a Muslim woman to a non-Muslim man, there is no way to justify it. It has been categorically forbidden by the Qur'an: 'And do not give (believing women) in marriage to idolaters until they believe.'"

Marriage in Islam is for Protection

Marriage and fatwa rulings are meant to protect all parties. The Sharia make such rulings in an attempt to prevent women from abandoning their religion. Abandonment of Islam (or Apostasy) is considered a grave sin and in some countries, it's a punishable crime.

Therefore, Muslims believe that it is best to always follow the Quran and sunnah (ways) of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) as they make decisions.

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Chapter 3 - Prayer - How to Begin, What to Learn and What to Read?

Al Fatiha is the Beginning and the End of Your Life

If you learn nothing else in the Glorious Quran, you must memorize the first chapter of the Quran, Al-Fatiha. It contains only seven verses, but those simple seven verses is the basis of all Islam. Reciting Al-Fatiha is for Allah, what else you recite is for you.

So it is fard (mandatory) that you recite Al-Fatiha in the beginning of your prayer. As a new Muslim, you may recite this first chapter in your native tongue. So if you are an American, you may recite it in English until you can learn it in Arabic.

You may write the verses on a piece of paper and hold that paper with you while you are praying. So before you attempt to pray to Allah, write the Sura (chapter) of Al-Fatiha on a piece of paper and then begin.

Niyyah (intention) is the first requisite of any prayer. When I first became Muslim I went to Orange County Mosque to learn all about Islam. My friend asks some women to teach me how to pray and one woman told me, "Ha, she has no intention, so why would we teach her to pray?" I was crushed and went home.

After that I was determined that no one could hurt me as I did have the niyyah and I would show them. So I went to the very first row of the mosque and prayed every Friday. I learned by watching the other sisters. I carried my little paper until I could memorize the verses in English and then Al-hamdilillah I learned the chapter in Arabic.

Here is the English Translation and Transliteration for Sura Al-Fatiha:

1. In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

Bismillaah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem

2. Praise be to God, Lord of all the worlds.

Al hamdu lillaahi rabbil 'alameen

3. The Compassionate, the Merciful. Ruler of the Day of Reckoning.

Ar-Rahman ar-Raheem Maaliki yaumid Deen

4. You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help.

Iyyaaka na'abudu wa iyyaaka nasta'een

5. Guide us on the Straight Path

Ihdinas siraatal mustaqeem

6. the path of those who have received your grace;

Siraatal ladheena an 'amta' alaihim

7. not the path of those who have brought down wrath, nor of those who wander astray.
Ghairil maghduubi' alaihim waladaaleen

Aameen

Now What do These Verses Mean?

Now before you even attempt to learn these verses in Arabic, memorize them in English. Know them well and then understand the explanation of what Allah, the Merciful is saying to you. To memorize in Arabic before you understand the meaning is useless.

A person who does not speak Arabic will get twice the reward compared to an Arabic speaker when he recites Quran. A Muslim convert who lives a good life will have the reward of the Shaheed (martyr) when he dies, so you will lead a blessed life. Many Muslims will ask you to say dua for them as the dua of the Shaheed is held in higher honor, so know that you have been chosen to be blessed by Allah, the Most Gracious.

The explanations of these 7 verses are below:

Al Fatiha is the Essence of the Quran and it teaches the perfect prayer. Al Fatiha is the beginning of every prayer and used in healing. When a person is sick, you should place your hand on the illness and repeat the Sura seven times. It will relieve more sickness and ailments than conventional medicine when accompanied with belief.

The first four verses are praising Allah by his names he has attributed to himself. Allah needs no praise, but by praising him we obtain mercy. Allah knows our needs and does not need us to utter the need, but he wants us to ask him for whatever we need. He is ready and willing to listen.

Although the words Rahman and Rahim have been translated to show "Most Gracious and Most Merciful," the true Arabic words are stronger. Many Arabic phrases have no justifiable English translations.

When beginning your prayer you say Bismillaah *ar-Rahman ar-Raheem* (*In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful*). This is said once at the beginning of each Sura. When you begin another Sura (chapter) you must say this again.

Before starting any prayer you must seek refuge from the accursed Shaitan (devil) who whispers to you to disturb your prayer. Say: A'uzu bil Allah min al *shaitan* al rajeem. Pray in the direction of the kibla and make sure you are dressed properly. Women must wear socks, but cannot cover their face or hands. Men must wear no socks. Many women will wear purchased prayer outfits or long dresses and hijabs (head coverings).

Verse five talks about worshipping none, but Allah. We do not believe in the trinity and Allah is one and He alone do we worship and no one else. It is a sign of disbelief to attribute any partners to Allah and it is the only unforgiveable sin.

Verse six tells you to be shown the straight path. Even in adversity, we must praise Allah and understand that he knows best.

Verse seven, the final verse, tells you to be in the company of those who follow Islam on the straight path and protect us from those who go astray or have forgotten their Lord and their training.

Then the sura is ended with Ameen, not Amen as non believers say, but "Ameen."

Memorizing in Arabic

In order to recite properly, you must listen to proper recitation. Go to: <http://quran.com/1> and listen over and over. Click on transliteration on the left so you can see the English and the Arabic words. Play this recording many times.

Then write the transliteration out on paper and place in front of you in case you stumble. Once you have perfected this Sura, you are ready to learn another short Sura. Many new Muslims will memorize Al-Ikhlās, Sura 112. It only has four verses and this Sura alone can grant you so many blessings. A man recited this Sura in every prayer he said and when he died 70,000 angels accompanied him to jannah (heaven).

Sura Al-Ikhlās

Bismi Allāhi arrahmāni arrahīm

1. Say: He is Allah, the One.
2. Allah, the Eternal, Absolute.
3. He begetteth not, nor is he begotten.
4. And there is none Like unto Him.

The 3rd verse is pertaining to non-believers who claim that Jesus is the son of God and here Allah tells you that this is a lie. How sad he must have felt on the day when he heard the people saying this and then how they fell down in worship to his Prophet Isa and not to him.

You will find in your journey to know Islam better, that more people will attack you for these simple verses. More Christians will fight you to their death claiming that 1st that Allah is not Arabic for their God and second that Jesus is God. It is best not to argue and to remain silent. We are told to remain silent if we have nothing good to say. These futile arguments will gain you nothing. Allah, The Benefactor, does not need anyone to defend him.

Arabic Translation of Sura Al-Ikhlās

1. Qul huwa Allahu ahad
2. Allahu assamad
3. Lam yalid walam yoolad
4. Walam yakun lahu kufuwan ahad

Prayer is the Basis of Everything in Islam

Praying to God (Allah) is not as simple as it seems. It is impossible to learn how to pray until first learning everlasting love, faith and devotion. There are many books written on the positions of salat (prayer) and books on how the beloved Prophet Mohammad prayed, but few delve into the first rule in Islam and that is love. Until the heart is on the straight path, the prayer cannot be perfected.

The Prophet Muhammad once said: "Allah does not accept the Prayers of an individual until his heart achieves in it what his body has achieved." [Al- Ghazali in Ihya-Uloom ad-Deen]

Islam teaches Muslims to love Allah (Arabic word for God) and Prophet Mohammad more than their own life and more than their family. Deen (faith) cannot be taught, but it can be gifted to the Muslim by Allah as a blessed gift or event. When the heart is happy,

It was narrated that Anas said: The Prophet said: "No one of you truly believes until I am dearer to him than his father, his son, his own self and all the people." Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 15; Muslim, 44.

Preparations for Praying to God

When speaking to God in prayer or dua (supplication), Muslims should call him by his most beautiful names. Allah has [99 beautiful names](#) that can be used. It is acceptable for a new Muslim convert who does not speak Arabic to recite the prayer in the native language until the prayer can be learned in Arabic. It is also permissible to hold a piece of paper with the written words in the beginning.

The 99 names of Allah can be said in the native language of the speaker also, such as Ar-Rahim (the Merciful). It is imperative to learn the Fatiha (first chapter of the Quran in Arabic) as soon as possible. Making intention to make your prayer can be done silently and not necessary to speak the intention. Doing wudu, purification (instructions below) and cleaning the teeth with a miswak is sunnah (ways of the prophet).

Remove all interruptions out of the mind, such as televisions, radios and intended work schedules. Place a barrier in front when praying and remember that there is to be no pictures or statues in the home, especially in the prayer area.

Preparing the Heart to Pray to God

Fear of Allah and judgment day will help in preparing the Muslim's heart. A true Muslim is steadfast in the religion and devout towards Allah at all times. Prophet Mohammad never sought revenge against anyone unless they attacked Allah. The way Prophet Mohammad has taught the believers to be in this life is with sincere love of Allah and his messengers. There are many messengers that a Muslim must love, not just Prophet Mohammad.

Missing one prayer will bring many hardships in this life and the next. An intentional missing of salat can cause the Muslim great harm on judgment day, so running quickly to salat is required to please Allah.

How to Pray to God

Once the heart has achieved pureness and totality of love and devotion then, the Muslim can prepare to pray to God. Praying to God can be done in many ways. The Muslim can make supplications to Allah for anything that is needed, such as health, wealth or sons. Here is a list of the required prayers for every Muslim:

Fajr - Early morning prayer - 2 rakats (units).

Dohr - Noon time prayer - 4 rakats, except on Friday which is 2 rakats for men.

Asr - Afternoon prayer - 4 rakats.

Magrid - Prayer at sunset - 3 rakats.

Isha - Evening prayer - 4 rakats.

To learn the proper way to pray, the Muslim must practice and learn the positions and words. A video to watch on [how to pray to God is here](#).

Summary

Learning how to pray to God takes study and devotion to the exact ways to prostrate to Allah. Pray to God as if it was the last prayer and that death is imminent. Purifying the heart and doing a proper wudu is a requirement along with praising Allah. Allah hears the prayers of those who praise him regularly.

To watch a video on how to do wudu and pray properly go to: [How to Pray](#)

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Chapter 4 - What are the Islamic Requirements for Clothing in Islam?

The very first gift I received when I became a new Muslim was a prayer rug. To this day some 19 years later, I still have that prayer rug. I remember when I went to Hajj and people looked at my very simple and thin prayer rug. They chuckled a bit, as Mecca has some very beautiful prayer rugs, but few knew the real importance of this gift.

After I took my shahadah (profession of faith) a man came running up to me and invited me to his home for dinner. I stepped back and a woman came to me and told me he was a very religious man and he wanted to have great honor by having this new Muslim at his dinner table. She accompanied me to his home and there his family treated me to such a meal you could not even imagine and he presented me with this gift. The love and the Iman this family had been too much.

The woman who came with me presented me with a hijab (head covering). The hijab is required for all women to wear when in the presence of any male not their father, brother or husband. These male guardians are called [mahrams](#).

At first I only wore my hijab or head covering to the mosque as I was shy, but after I met the man I would marry, I wore it continuously. This man told me, "You do not wear the hijab for me, you wear it for Allah." I went home and prayed and the next day I put on the hijab and never took it off when I left my home or were in the presence of people not my mahrams.

I wrote this very quirky article about women's dress requirements and stripy socks. May you gain knowledge from my humor?

Are Stripy Socks Permissible for Women?

Stripy socks are worn by everyone, so why are they forbidden for Muslima (women in Islam)? Islam recommends avoiding fashion trends, so wear striped socks in the home.

A pair of striped socks, large rings, an arm-full of gold bracelets or shoes that make lots of noise while walking all have one thing in common: these items are forbidden in Islam. Muslim women must never wear apparel, jewelry or other items that bring attention to the body, or cause a lustful look from a man.

When the woman is in the home, it is permissible to wear striped socks and all the beautiful jewelry that one desires. It is customary for the Islamic woman to gather at parties, wearing jewelry and makeup, but this is not permitted on the streets where men can view them.

Is Wearing Make-up Allowed in Islam?

When attending a party or wedding, the woman must wear a niqab (face covering) on the way to the party. So it's a moot point, as this eliminates the chance that someone will see the makeup. According to Sheikh Muhammad Nur Abdullah, former president of the ISNA (Islamic Society of North America) and member of the Fiqh Council of North America, states, "Wearing makeup in general is part of *zeenah* or beautification, which is forbidden to be shown to non-*mahrims*. Therefore, a woman cannot wear makeup outside her home. But in general, a Muslim woman should be modest when she goes in public.

"As for wearing makeup in her house or to beautify herself for her husband, a woman should be moderate and should not take extremes in anything. If she maintains this level of moderation, there will not be any harm *in sha' Allah*."

In Sura an-Noor, ayah 31, Allah says, "And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their private parts and not show of their adornment except only that which is apparent, and draw their veils over their (necks and) bosoms and not reveal their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male servants who lack vigor, or small children who have no knowledge of women's private parts. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn you all to Allah in repentance, O believers, that you may be successful."

Clothing Guidelines for Muslim Women

According to the Islamic scholars, the Muslim woman's clothing should have the following characteristics:

The woman must not dress as men do;

The hijab or clothing must cover the entire body. It is permitted to not cover the hands and face (according to some Fiqh schools, but some say they must be covered also);

Women should not pattern their clothing after non-believers;

The design must not consist of bold designs to avoid attracting attention; and

The woman may not dress to be arrogant in any way. as to show her wealth.

Islamic scholars have placed these conditions on the Muslim women's dress in an attempt to protect the woman from men's lustful gaze. The Muslim man must not look directly at a woman so as to catch her eye. This is haram (unlawful) in Islam. The women's dress

code was dictated by Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him*) 1,400 years ago and it has not changed to this day.

Islam states that women must cover the breast with her head coverings. So the hijab should come over the breast, unlike the modern day styles, where the scarf is slung over the head with white pins and broaches. It is meant to protect women from the gazes of men. Hijab is not meant to be an adornment; it serves as a protection from negative attention from men.

Islam is all about protecting the modesty of women and this dress code will help the Muslima follow the sunnah (way of the prophet and his wives). It is perfectly acceptable to wear "stripy socks" in the home, but not out in public where men are present.

Quranic Verses on the Modesty of Both Woman and Man

There are several verses in the Quran that address the topic of modesty:

"Say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty ; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what must ordinarily appear thereof. " [Quran : 24.31]

"Say to the believing man that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that will make for greater purity for them, and God is well acquainted with all they do." [Quran : 24.30]

"And O ye believers turn you all together toward God, so that ye may attain bliss." [Quran: 24.31]

Here is an example of a prayer outfit



A good source for Islamic Clothing online is SHUKR Clothing:
<http://wwwshukronline.com> The prices are not cheap, but they are of the best quality

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Chapter 5 - Family in Islam

The family in Islam is the basis of all beginnings. It is how children are brought up and how the spouse is treated. The total family unit is one and not separate and it is a union that begins with the love of Allah and ends with the mercy of Allah. Let not anyone speak badly about his spouse as it is not permitted in Islam. What is permitted is love and fear of judgment day.

When anyone wants to know about family life in Islam, they should look to our Prophet Mohammad and follow his steps. He is the total embodiment of the Quran and he practiced what was taught to him by Angel Gabriel. He was fair, kind, compassionate and he love to joke with his wives. No one had a right to see his wife unless there was a screen present and no one could ever be rude to his family.

Family in Islam is the same as one person. The whole family supports each other and the whole family stands together. One of the best things about Islam is how the family support system works. Nothing is so valuable as the wife on her first day of marriage and nobody and I mean nobody can ever harm one of the children. Family honor and pride will always survive.

1. Divinely Inspired Beginning:

All marriages and unions are inspired by Allah and are united by Allah's mercy. The marriage does not come around by socializing with the outside forces, but by pure destiny.

O Mankind, be conscious of your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul, created of like Nature, his mate, and from the two created and Spread many men and women; and be mindful of your duty to God whose name you appeal to one another and to (the ties of) the womb. Verily God watches over You. [Q 4:1]

Marriage is sunnah and the hadith states:

Marriage is a part of my Sunnah. Whoever runs away from my path is not from amongst us. [Ibn Majah, Book of Marriage]

2. A strong contract:

The marriage begins with a contract between both the husband and wife. It is called Mithaqan ghalizah, a strong contract. It begins with the paying of dowry to the wife and the agreeing of both parties to treat each other with love of Allah and fairness to both parties.

The husband must pay for all the expenses of the marriage in addition to the dowry. The wife owes the husband obedience and loyalty. She is obliged to raise his children, watch over his money and to speak kindly to him and his family.

3. Family and Islam:

The spouse is responsible to be strong in their faith. The man may marry a non-Muslim, but the wife may not marry a non-Muslim.

This is because the husband is the head of the family and the wife must be obedient to the husband. Should the husband be a non-Muslim he could cause harm to the wife's religion.

The institution of marriage means that the wife is submissive to the husband in his sexual desires. That she would submit when called upon and the same goes for him. The ideal of marriage is to keep sin away from the individual and that a family unit would be created. Children come through a marriage built on love and commitment. It is the job of the wife to raise the children as devout Muslims.

Islam forbids all forms of fornication, including pornography, masturbation and the looking at other women. The Muslim is taught to lower their gaze and that the look of a man is worse than an arrow in the head. Islam is a strict religion and must be guarded at all times by marriage. A wife must greet her husband in the best of manners.

4. The ways to jannah:

The only ways for the wife to go to heaven is by three ways:

Obedience to her husband.

Not having fornication with anyone.

Praying on time.

Not the most devoted person can enter jannah who did not take care of her husband. A husband's happiness is required in all marriages. So the wife should strive to greet him dressed beautifully, talk to him in a kind manner, clean his home, take care of his children and guard his wealth.

5. Equality:

Allah created both men and women equal. He did not require the man to pray more than the wife or vice-versa. He did not require more charity on the woman than the man; he did not require anything more of either. Allah created both man and woman equal, but there must be a head of the home.

The man may not require his wife to do anything against Islam. He cannot tell her to stop praying or don't read the Quran. He can only guide her to the best of manners. For surely the best among you is the one who treats his wife the best.

6. Family Unit and its duty:

The reason for family units is to preserve ones faith and to protect one's self from temptation. In Islam early marriage is suggested to avoid the temptation of sins. It is stressed to have family gatherings and socialize with other Muslims to increase ones faith and togetherness of the family.

The best spouse is the one who helps the other increase their Iman or faith. The family that prays and reads Quran together is the family with the strongest bounds. A husband and wife who help the other one become the best Muslim, is the family that survives.

There are many families in Islam who do not follow the sunnah, but that is not our concern. We are forbidden to care about what is not our concern. What concern the family is being a strong unit and a family that fears Allah. In the beginning the love of Allah has brought the husband and wife together. Through this devotion, Allah will cause a love for each other. He will cause them to have a stronger love than if they had met socially.

In Islam there is no dating or socializing with the opposite sex, so a man is assured his wife is chaste. Having faith in each other brings on respect and honor for the other person. As the children grow, they will learn the same morals. One of the best qualities of a Muslim is morals and manners.

The family in Islam is a strong unit built on love and trust of Allah. Unlike many other societies, the family is more important than anything. Family honor and pride of the children and spouse is most important. Equal treatment on both sides and yes laughter. It was sunnah to laugh with ones wife and to make jokes with them. It is sunnah to treat your wife very good. What is the family in Islam? It is everything.

For More information: Read: [10 Tips on How to be a Successful Wife](#) - [10 Tips on How to be a Successful Husband](#)

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Chapter 6 - Holidays in Islam

We have two holidays in Islam, Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha. These are celebrations after Ramadan and after the pilgrimage, or shall I say after the end of Hajj. We do not celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, Christian holidays such as Halloween and Christmas. We as Muslims should not imitate anything Christians do.

Are Muslims Allowed to Trick or Treat and Celebrate Halloween?

Is it difficult for Muslim children to be surrounded by non-Islamic holidays in the schools? Of course it is. Small children, especially will not understand why they must be excluded from parties, fun and laughter. But, there are some simple steps to help young children keep busy during these times.

Halloween is one holiday that Muslims do not celebrate. Muslims observe just two holidays: Eid Al-fitr and Eid Al-adha, and it is forbidden for a Muslim to join in a celebration in other holidays.

Muslims Celebrate Eid Al-Fitr Holiday

Muslim celebrates Eid Al-fitr, which is the four-day holiday after Ramadan. It is one of the major holidays and it is a time for celebrating with the children. It is a time when most of the children have brand new clothes and many toys. It is time where many home place lights of the crescent moon on their homes in decorations. It is time when there are sweets, drinks and much laughter.

Eid Al-fitr is thanking Allah for his mercy and his forgiveness of their sins. On this day, Muslims visit the neighbors, family members and friends, carrying presents to many. It is a time when [mamoul \(a date cookie\)](#) is served. It is a time when [knaafeh](#) is eaten with their friends.

On the first day of Eid, it is traditional to serve [mansef and rice](#), for the lunch meal. This is rice with yogurt and meat. The meat is usually lamb and it is served with very thin bread underneath. It's not uncommon to see people finishing their meals and running to the next home amid an atmosphere of merriment.

Muslims Celebrate Eid Al-Adha Holiday

Eid Al-Adha is the holiday after the pilgrimage and it is celebrated much the same way as Eid Al-fitr. The difference in this celebration is the sacrificing of the lamb to Allah. The meat is divided into three pieces. One for the family, one for the neighbors and one part for the poor people. The first day of Eid is very busy, preparing the sacrifice and cutting the meat.

Eid Al-Adha is very special as a celebration of the pilgrimage and the welcoming of the people who went to Hajj (pilgrimage). The people do make mamoul, but on a smaller scale.

Things for Muslim Children to do on Halloween

Watching other children prepare for a holiday full of costumes and candy can be difficult for a Muslim child, who does not celebrate Halloween. There are several ways that Muslim parents can help their children cope with any feelings of jealousy or exclusion.

Remind the children ahead of time of the two holidays that Muslims celebrate. Remind them of the fun time that everyone has on those days. Then gently remind them that every culture has their own separate holidays that the other non-Muslim kids didn't get to celebrate.

Contact the school principal and tell them that the children will not be attending school on Halloween, due to the many Halloween-related festivities that are common at schools (i.e. Halloween parades from class to class) on this day. Also explain to the teacher why the children will be absent. It is better not to surround young children with things they might not understand and staying home from school on this day can help the child avoid hard feelings.

Plan a special evening at one of the fellow Muslim family's home for all the children. Provide some activities for the children and their families away from the Halloween celebrations. It is better to plan a private gathering of Muslims together listening to Islamic songs, to help the children appreciate their own culture.

If planning to stay home, draw shades, blinds or curtains and turn off the visible lights at the home (particularly on the porch or house front, which traditionally signals that trick-or-treaters are welcome.)

Explain the real meaning of Halloween and how it originated. This is a good way to help the children appreciate the day as a holiday that's associated with another culture, rather than a day that's all about tricks, candy and costumes.

Plan an outing for the next day to a real fun place that is considered "Halal" (permissible). Plan to treat the children with some special treat, such as ice cream on the day following Halloween, thereby giving the kids an experience that they can eagerly anticipate.

Small children may not understand the complexities of the Islamic religion, but it is the job as parents to guide them in the right path. Through proper guidance and education, it's a Muslim parent's hope that all the children will grow in their faith and patience.

Do Muslims Celebrate Christmas?

One of the hardest adjustments I had to make was giving up Christmas. It was not so hard the celebrating of Jesus' birth, as it was the singing of Christmas Carols, lighting the tree and the exchanging of presents. I so wanted to think of dad playing Santa Claus and I so loved the memories of our childhood dreams.

Dad always played Santa when we were small and each year he would bring us lots of candy, nuts and of course tangerines. Mom would make some peanut brittle and take us out for sodas or something and miraculously when we came home Santa had been there and the house was full of toys.

My first year as a Muslim I said nothing, but it was hard. So what can you do if your family insists you join them? If you are still living at home, try to explain to them about your religion and how you deeply love and care for them, but that this year is going to be different.

If anyone gives you a present, keep it in your closet until after the Christmas holiday and thank them kindly for the gesture. Explain to them about your religious beliefs so next year they will not bring a gift. I got my husband a much wanted gift for him one year longing for some kind of thoughts of the holiday and he absolutely refused to open the gift until a few days after Christmas. He was extremely religious and would never insult his lord by following the ways of the non-believers. Mo was a very smart man.

The year before my husband died, he had dreams of his impending death. On Christmas Eve of his very last year on earth he went to town or SUG as we call it here in Jordan and came home with three small brown bags. The first one contained some mixed nuts. The second one contained some chocolate covered creams and the third contained some mixed candies. He also had a bag of tangerines and a Coca Cola.

I almost cried as he remembered how my childhood was. He told me, "Your life is so horrible with me and I want you to have 10 minutes of happiness." We were very poor and he felt bad he had nothing to give me. I almost cried. We sat down and watched some TV and ate our treats. Mo died one month later exactly, just as he dreamed on January 1st, 2002.

Carols, Lights, and Fresh Christmas Trees - Is Celebrating Wrong?

Is there anything wrong with a Muslim convert buying a fresh tree and decorating it with ornaments and lights? For a Muslim, this is forbidden.

The best day of any devout Muslim convert's life is when they recite the shahadah (declaration of faith) and are welcomed into Islam. It is a day of great joy and jubilation and Muslims believe that it is a day when one's sins are washed away. The new Muslim

is like a newborn baby, pure and clean. It is also a day when the new Muslim convert stops celebrating Christmas holidays.

One of the more difficult things for a new Muslim convert to accomplish is to go away from Christian Holidays and to follow the sunnah (way of the Prophet). In Islam, one can think of Jesus as a prophet, just like Moses, Abraham, Noah and others, but Muslims do not celebrate their birthdays.

Christmas is about celebrating Jesus birth. Since Muslims are not allowed to celebrate births — not even the Prophet's birth — Christmas is a forbidden celebration for Muslims. Actions like celebrating birthdays or accepting invitations to a birthday party are considered bid'ah (innovations).

Muslim Converts Should Respect Others During the Holidays

Muslim converts should remember this holiday is not only about Jesus and his birth, but about family gatherings and gift giving to others who are less fortunate. For this reason, it's believed that one should be kind and gracious to all neighbors. Muslims are expected to respect the holiday and they must never mock others for their celebrations. Kindness and an easy manner is the best way to show non-Muslims, the real love of Islam.

"And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides God, lest they insult God wrongfully without knowledge. Thus We have made fair-seeming to each people its own doings; then to their Lord is their return and He shall then inform them of all that they used to do," according to Quran, 6:108.

Muslims are also advised, "Do not argue with the People of the Book unless it is in the politest manner, except for those of them who do wrong. Say: 'We believe in what has been sent down to us and what has been sent down to you. Our God and your God is [the same] One, and we are Muslims before Him.'" (Quran, 29:46).

Fresh Christmas Trees are Still Christmas Trees

In America, there are millions of Muslims and they are surrounded by the joys and laughter of the Christmas season and their minds begin to wonder. They become more and more Americanized in their thinking and begin to ask, "Is it wrong to buy a Christmas Tree and to decorate it just for the children?"

Some Muslims may decide to purchase fresh Christmas trees and leave them in a clay pot with soil and decorate them with lights and ornaments and then after the season is over, the tree is planted outside. Technically, this practice goes against the sunnah and all Muslims are advised to abstain from this practice.

Muslim Holidays Display Outside Christmas Lighting

Many homes on EID (Muslim holidays) do decorate their homes with lights similar to outside Christmas lights and they place decorations on their homes and doors. Is Christmas decorating any different? The difference is that on EID, Muslims are celebrating and praising Allah and sending blessings on the most beloved Prophet Mohammad.

Decorating for Christmas and celebrating with non-believers is against Islam and forbidden. The only holidays that a Muslim celebrates are the two EIDs (al-fitr and al-adha). Many Muslims are tempted to exchange gifts with family members, as this is traditional in America and other westernized cultures.

The Muslim convert who has recently left their family may be sad and depressed at this time of the year as they recall gathering around the Christmas tree singing songs and opening presents. But for a convert, the Christian holiday season is a good time to gather with fellow Muslims and have a religious gathering, such as a lunch served and listening to Quran. This can eliminate feelings of loneliness, while promoting fellowship with individuals who share the same religious beliefs.

Converts to Islam Should Know that Music is Forbidden in Islam

Recent converts to Islam may not be aware, but music, whether it is Christmas music or pop-culture music, is forbidden in Islam except with the use of a drum (ad-duff). It is traditional at Islamic wedding to have a drum there for music. Music is haram (forbidden). If you listen to many Christmas songs, the lyrics state that Jesus is the son of God and this is attributing partners to Allah and this is considered shirk (unforgivable sin).

According to Abdullah bin America, "We wish our Christian neighbors joy and peace of their holiday, but [for Muslims] Christmas has nothing to offer and much to avoid."

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Chapter 7 - Things that are Prohibited in Islam

The above article emphasizes that we do not listen to any type of music, but what else is prohibited in Islam?

Backbiting Or Gheebah*

Prophet Mohammad (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) (Sallallaho Alaihe

Wasallam) said: 'One who is involved in the evil wishing (enmity), he got separated from me.' (Muslim)

And Prophet Mohammad (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said: "Deen is the name of well wishing and sincerity." With bad wishing, suspicion or distrust also gets associated, that is also Haram.

Allah Ta'ala says: "O Ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in such cases is a sin:"

Prophet Mohammad (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said: "Save yourself from suspicion (Badh-Guman) as to be suspicion is the biggest lie." (Bukhari, Muslim)

Evils of suspicion and the behavior with backbiting

These days, among many factors, one of the strongest factor responsible for disunity and problems among Muslims, is strong suspicion (Badh-Guman), as one sees his Muslim brother with suspicion which is based on very weak doubt and false reports. Then with trivial reasons they go on supporting that false belief till that suspicion reaches the stage of firm belief. From this, these bad problems develop:

To look down upon others.

To hate him and to be jealous on him.

To attribute his good actions to some passion and lust of nafs.

To do his backbiting.

To be happy on his loses and dishonor and many other bad things are the result of this suspicion.

Muslims should try their best not to become suspicious of (the fellow Muslims) even in the strong evidences but should try to throw away this suspicion from their hearts by attributing it to something good. Hadhrat Eisa (AS) once admonished a person after seeing him

stealing something, that person swore by Allah that he was not a thief. Then Hadhrat Eisa (AS) said:

"The name of my Allah is true, my eyes see false"

Attributing partners to Allah is an unforgiveable sin. We should not question what Allah and Prophet Mohammad as told us. Allah has stated that Jesus is not his son, so that is it and no questions asked. Allah has told us that Jesus was not crucified, but someone in his image, so that is it no questions. Too many questions will bring the whispering of the shaitan and we as human beings do not have the right to question and I never ever did.

Envy is another huge sin. We should never envy our neighbors when they get a new car or a new home. We must always say when we see something new or beautiful, Ma Shallah (God has willed it).

Another thing we must not do is to say, "I wished I had not done such and such." We believe in destiny and never regret a decision you had made, even if something tragic occurred. Simply say Allah has decided a thing and he did as he pleased.

Having faith is the basis of our religion. We trust in Allah for all things. If we don't have money, we believe in Allah to provide. If Allah takes a job away from us, then we know that he will provide us a new job. If we are sick, we know that he will make us well. Faith healing is the best way to be cured.

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Chapter 8 - Hajj and Umrah

Hajj is a must once in your lifetime if you can afford to go, but umrah (the lesser pilgrimage) is not required. Umrah however is cheaper and easier to do. The entire umrah procedure takes around three hours, where a trip to Hajj takes around 20 days.

You will never regret a trip to Mecca and Medina. These are some of the best benefits of being a Muslim, so learn about why we love these mosques so much. You will also be able to see the grave of Prophet Mohammad, Abu Bakr and Omar Kitab. You will be able to smell the musk of jannah and to see a place where angels reside often. No greater pleasure in this life, than the ones you will be given at these very holy places.

I have done hajj and four umrahs. I did two for myself and two for people who could not go to umrah. I have seen things that I could not imagine and I have walked in the same places my Messenger walked. It is an experience of a lifetime.

Here are some of the guidelines of hajj and umrah. Hajj and umrah guidelines will include what to do and what not to do. In order to have an accepted pilgrimage you must follow certain criteria towards your intention, your religion and the treatment of the holy sites. It is not easy to complete a pilgrimage, whether big or small, but with these hajj and umrah guidelines you will be in perfect shape to have a hajj mabroor (accepted hajj)

1. Intention or Niyah - You must first make the intention to go to hajj or umrah.
2. Tawbah - Pray two rakats and seek Allah's forgiveness. It is good when on your hajj journey to be close to the pious ones and stay far from those who choose to spend their days gossiping.
3. Fulfillment of debts - Pay all people you owe. If you have monthly debts, then make sure those are paid on time. Your family must be taken care also. You cannot go to hajj and leave your wife and children without food or money for the month.
4. Education - All Muslims must educate their self before going to hajj and umrah.
5. Departure - You must leave your home happy and fulfilled. Make sure to do two rakats before leaving your home. Ask all your friends and neighbors to forgive you, especially anyone you have had any problems with in the past.
6. Ibadah - Make sure to be very good and make your salat exactly on time. Follow the rules of Islam towards everyone.
7. Gift - It is good to present a gift to a poor person before you leave and then once you arrive you should give charity to a local, such as a street sweeper of the Haram.
8. Do very much durood when at Medina and to harm the Mosque or its people are a very great sin. Drink very much zam zam water and ask Allah for your health.
9. Your time is very short on hajj and umrah so value each moment and don't spend your time admiring the decorations and people. Spend your time worshiping Allah.

Why Do Muslims Love Masjid Al-Aqsa?

Besides loving the mosques at Medina and Mecca, we love Masjid Al-Aqsa. Prophet Mohammad descended from Masjid Al-Aqsa, the third holiest mosque in the world when he went to heaven during the Miraaj. Read about the miraaj here: The Al- Miraaj - <http://learnislam1.blogspot.com/2011/12/al-miraj-prophet-mohammads-journey-to.html>

The love of Al-Aqsa mosque is based on this wonderful journey, but there is much more. To understand Islam, learn to love the 3rd holiest mosque in the world.

Masjid Aqsa is where Prophet Mohammad descended from on the night journey (Al Mirajj) to visit heaven and Allah. It is one of the holiest places on earth.

Masjid Aqsa is the second mosque built 40 years after the Kabah in Mecca. Masjid Aqsa is held to be the third most important mosque in the world due to the fact that Muslims believe Allah chose this mosque as a place where Angel Gabriel would take Prophet Mohammad to heaven.

It was an important part of the history of Islam that Allah chose this path for all Muslims to know the value of this Masjid which has been destroyed twice. The Masjid sits in the back of an area called Al-Haram al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary) which has more than 35 acres of gardens, fountains, buildings and domes.

Just the mention of the word Al-Quds (Jerusalem) will send chills down the back of most Muslims. Masjid Aqsa has been in the heat of many battles, as access to the holy Mosque has not always been available. At times only men over the age of 40 have been allowed to pray.

Jai Miraj to the Heavens

"Praise be to Allah Who has taken His servant by night from the Sacred Mosque (Mecca) to the Farthest Mosque (Jerusalem)." Sura 17, verse 1.

In 621 AD Angel Gabriel took Prophet Mohammad from Masjid Mecca to Masjid Aqsa Mosque and from there Prophet Mohammad was taken to the seven heavens to see everything and Allah. Prophet Mohammad went to each level of heaven and visited all the prophets and saw the angels of the throne. The Prophet then was taken to see Allah.

He conversed with Moses about the amount of prayers being done and then saw Prophet Issa (Jesus) on the 2nd level also. It was a night celebrated each year by Muslims who marvel at this wonderful miracle. For this reason Masjid Aqsa is very dear to Muslims.

Muslims in Jerusalem would lay down their lives to protect this holy Masjid. The day will come as Muslims have been told when the Mosque will fall as will the Kabah in Mecca. There will be a day when the word Allah is not known also. The day of the dajal

(anti-Christ) and the world will be in such bad shape that no Muslim will want to be alive then.

Prophet Mohammad use to pray for protection from the dajal and all Muslims should follow his lead. In order to understand fasting, love of the prophet and Hajj, the Muslim must first understand why Masjid Aqsa is loved so very much.

Benefits and Virtues of Masjid Aqsa

Any Muslim who prays one prayer in Masjid Aqsa will get the reward of praying 500 prayers anywhere else. The Masjid in Medina has the reward of 1000 prayers and the Masjid in Mecca has the reward of 100,000 prayers. Although it was built second after Masjid Mecca, the reward for prayers is only 500.

Abu Hurairah is quoted as saying that Allah's Messenger [peace be upon him] said, 'set out deliberately on a journey only to three mosques: this mosque of mine (in Medina), the Sacred Mosque (in Makkah) and the Al-Aqsa Mosque (in Al-Quds) (Bukhari & Muslim)

When someone asked Prophet Mohammad about Masjid Aqsa and not being able to travel there in person to do salat (prayers), the Messenger of Allah [peace be upon him] said, 'He should make a gift of oil to be burnt therein, for He who gives a gift to the Al-Aqsa Mosque will be like one who has prayed Salaah therein.' (Ahmad & Ibn Majah)

Over and over again Prophet Mohammad showed the world of the value of this mosque. It was a mosque where Prophet Mohammad did salat in the congregation also. Allah, The Creator, showed the world of the importance of this mosque by having Angel Gabriel go there first with Prophet Mohammad.

Prophet Mohammad the Friend of Allah

The value of Masjid Aqsa is not measurable and the love that flows from the very walls is not imaginable. Masjid Aqsa was built by prophets and it is an area where many prophets are buried also. The history of Masjid Aqsa must be preserved.

What a beautiful night it was when Prophet Mohammad made the very famous night journey. At first Prophet Mohammad was frightened and asked if the message from Allah was that of mercy or wrath? The prophet was stunned to see Angel Gabriel and 70,000 other angels standing in the bedroom calling him.

Prophet Mohammad was presented with water from heaven to wash with and a turban to wear which said, 'Muhammad the servant of Allah; Muhammad the prophet of Allah; Muhammad the beloved of Allah; Muhammad the friend of Allah.'

Muslims around the world visit Masjid Aqsa to see where all this history took place. It is a mosque that is special to any visitor and a mosque that will always be the center of controversy. Masjid Aqsa a true site to be seen and loved.

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Chapter 9 - Love in Islam

Love is vital in Islam. We love Prophet Mohammad more than our own family and we love Allah with every breath we take. We love the three sacred mosques and we love what Allah has ordained for us. My husband always told me, "Whatever Allah loves, I love."

We will be judged on our intention, our hearts. A prayer is accepted when it comes from the heart. If you want to know if something is correct, ask your heart and if you have sins, black dots will be added to your heart.

Your heart rules your life, tells you how to live and is the sole reason you are physically alive. With a bad heart, you may be evil. You will do bad things and go against the will of Allah. We say that you have a white heart if your actions and deeds are pure.

Sins are like trees. The tree carries many leaves and those leaves weigh heavy on the limbs. Sin does the same thing to the body. We must release the sins and be pure again. Getting rid of sins come in a few ways. First we can pray to Allah for forgiveness and say this dua:

"O Allah, You are my Lord, there is no god but You. You created me and I am Your servant and I try my best to keep my covenant (faith) with You and to live in the hope of Your promise. I seek refuge in you from the evil done by me. I acknowledge your favors upon me and I acknowledge my sins. So forgive me as none forgives sins, but You.

Pray two rakats of fard (required) salat and then pray two rakats of voluntary prayer and before your final salam in the prayer, raise your hands and say this dua. The best dua is during prayer.

Zikr to Allah

Another thing to do is to praise Allah. After prayer you can do zikr on your finger joints. It is best to use the right hand. You should say:

33 times Subhan Allah - Glory be to Allah or Exalted be Allah.

34 times Allahu Akbar - Allah is the Greatest.

33 times Al-hamdulillah - All praise is due to Allah.

No greater zikr is there than, "la ilaha ilalla" (there is no god but Allah). This grants you jannah. The second best zikr is al-hamdulillah.

Another good zikr to say is la La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah, there is no power or strength except with Allah. This is said also in time of illness, when you are seeking

protection from this life and in remembrance of the great gifts Allah has bestowed on you.

Anger - A Sin in itself

Prophet Mohammad told us, "Do not get angry." But many of us will get angry and we will have trials in this life. If someone harms us, we should say, "Hasbi Allah wa *ne'mal* wakeel. The meaning is "Allah suffices me and he is an excellent guardian." We should not curse the person or wish for ill health to that person. Allah's punishment is worse than anything we can do and the moment we try to seek revenge, Allah stops.

It is better to remain quiet and not to argue, even if you are right. We believe in Islam that it is better to say nothing, than to speak bad. As a new Muslim you will face many trials and people will yell at you and call you a liar. Your family may not support you and you may even be abused in public. It is best to remain calm and rely on help.

As much as we try, we cannot save the world. We cannot convince some people that Jesus is not God and we cannot allow them to know the real Islam as they are tainted with the media exposure of hate. Trust in Allah as he needs you not to defend him. What he needs is for you to pray, do good deeds and think of death often.

By thinking of death, we will remember how to live. Fall not into the paths of those who do wrong and hurt others. Do not spend your days drinking coffee and talking about your neighbors. Spend your day in remembrance of Allah, the Creator, the Healer, the one who gives life and death.

It is my utmost wish that my book has blessed you with knowledge to begin your path in Islam and to learn love of Allah and Prophet Mohammad. May Allah, the Merciful forgive me if I have stated anything incorrect.

Ameen.

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