



Editorial

The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held last month in Beijing, China, has focused the world attention on several issues, including gender equality, role of women in society, children's rights, and family. More than 180 countries and delegations participated in the conference. Some of the Muslim delegates attempted to present the Islamic viewpoint with regard to the issues of the conference. However, there was no noticeable, concerted effort by National and International Muslim organizations to explain the true Islamic teachings regarding women; to clarify the differences between these teachings and the anti-Islamic practices in some Muslim countries; and to present the following facts regarding women in Islam to the conference participants:

■ Men and women have complementary, rather than, competing roles in the society. Just as Allah (SWT) created the day and night as different, but essential complements to each other, the male and the female are created to complement each other.

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى . وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى . وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى .
(سورة الليل - آية ١ ، ٢ ، ٣)

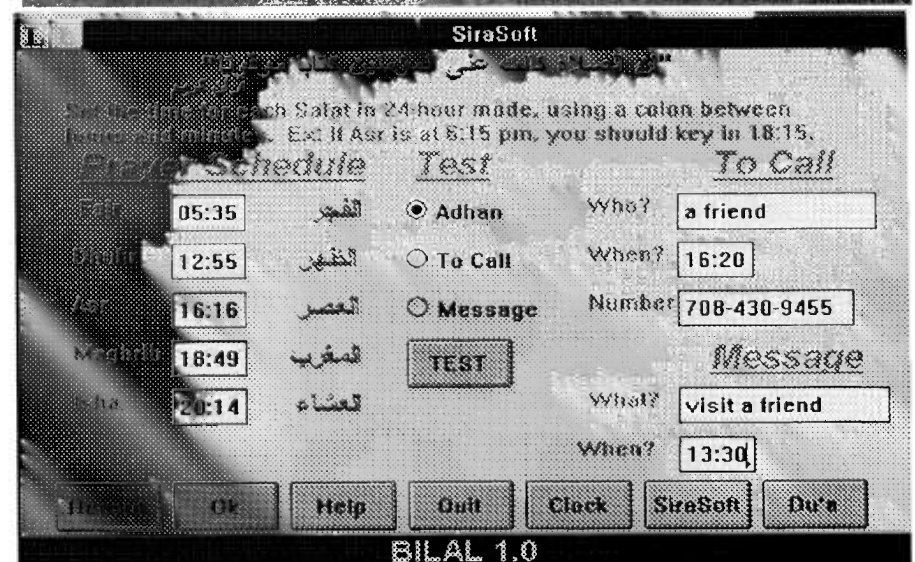
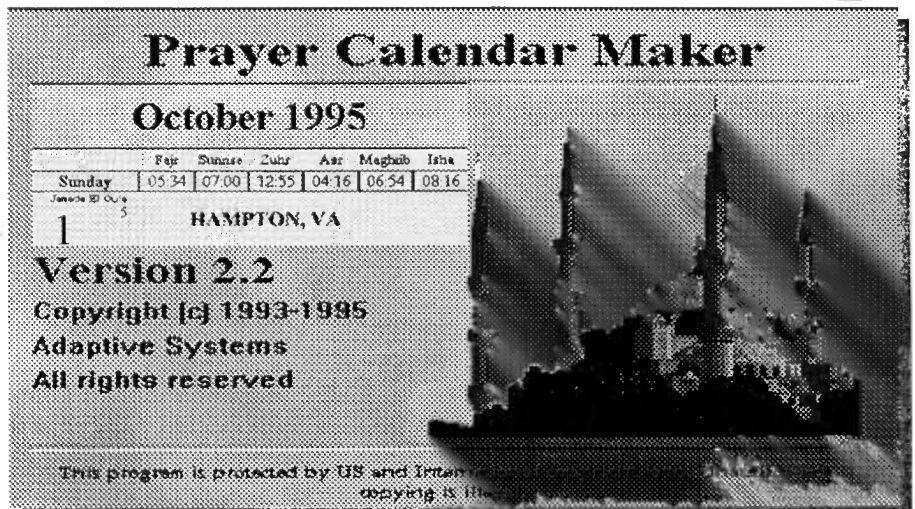
"By the night as it envelops. And by the day as it appears in brightness. And by Him who created male and female" (Qur'an 92:1 to 3)

Each gender is supposed to perform its own functions, and has its own special characteristics - primary and secondary, in certain spheres of life. Yet both genders have common characteristics in many spheres. Each is indispensable to the other, and each

Software for Prayer Calendar, Azan, and Event Scheduler

For Muslims who are spending a lot of time on the computer, and do not want to miss their prayers, two software systems are useful. Both are for the IBM PC. The first program is the *Prayer Calendar Maker*. It generates weekly, biweekly, and monthly calendars with the Islamic months, and the daily prayers times displayed for more than 30,000 cities in the U.S. (including their latitude and longitude, support for time zone, and day light time saving). A prayer alarm facility can interrupt the user, with a mosque dialogue box, indicating the time for the prayer. User notes can be added to the calendar through a cut and paste capability. The program is available from **Adaptive Systems, 2973 Harbor Blvd. #526, Costa Mesa, CA 92626, Tel. (714) 434-0199** (see top figure).

The second program is "*Bilal 1.0*". By setting the daily prayer times, a full Azan is called at each prayer time. The program has also a facility for making du'a after the Azan; an event scheduler and a recorder for user's messages, which can be played back. The program is available from **SiraSoft Inc., 9229 S. Thomas Ave. Bridgeview, IL 60455, Tel./FAX (708) 430-9455** (see bottom figure).



Reflections

Dr. Ahmed K. Noor

Supplication

الدعاء



One of the most important forms of worship in Islam is *Du'a*. It is the subject of 212 verses in the Qur'an and several sayings of the Prophet (PBUH). Several questions arise about the subject, including: Why *du'a* is that important in Islam?; Is there an etiquette for *du'a*?; Are there preferred times and occasions for *du'a*?; What are the results of performing *du'a*?; How do we increase the chances of our *du'a* being answered?; And how should we feel when our *du'a* is not answered? In this article, an attempt is made to answer these and other questions on the basis of the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH).

Meaning of the word *Du'a* and Importance of *Du'a*

The Arabic word *du'a* means supplication or invocation. It refers to the act of calling on Allah (SWT) for help, protection, inspiration, or blessing. It is the humble request from the individual (or group) to his (their) Lord and Creator.

The importance of *du'a* can best be demonstrated by the following sayings of the Prophet (PBUH)

الدعاء هو العبادة

Du'a is itself worship

ليس شيء أكرم على الله تعالى من

الدعاء

Nothing is more honorable in Allah's sight than *du'a*

Du'a implies an acknowledgment by the suppliant of the Lordship of Allah. One should believe that Allah is certainly able to answer his/her *du'a*, and He is the only one that can answer the *du'a*. In other words, *du'a* is an acknowledgment by the person that he/she is unable to achieve what he/she wants by himself/herself. Some of us,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴾

(سورة البقرة - آية ١٨٦)

"And when my servants ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I respond to the invocations of every suppliant when he/she calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). Let them also, with a will, listen to My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way." (Qur'an 2:186)

when we think we are able to achieve our goals, do not turn to Allah with *du'a*.

أفضل الذكر : لا إله إلا الله ، وأفضل

الدعاء : الحمد لله .

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّاظٍ . أَنْ رَأَاهُ
اسْتَفْنَى .

(سورة العلق - آية ٦، ٧)

"Nay! Verily, a human being does transgress all bounds. Because he/she considers himself/herself self-sufficient." (Qur'an 96:6,7)

Allah in His mercy provided us with the opportunity to make *du'a* to Him directly, with no intermediary (see Qur'an 2:186).

Du'a is closely related to a number of other acts of worship, including *Zikr* (remembrance of Allah); *Istighfar* (asking forgiveness of Allah), *Tasbeeh* (glorification); and *Taubah* (repentance). For example, *Zikr*, which is a way to come near Allah (SWT), can be considered to be *du'a*. On the other hand, *du'a* which includes beseech, humble prayers, and praise of Allah is also *zikr*. The Prophet (PBUH) said :

Exhortation for *Du'a*

Because of the significance of *du'a* in Islam and its effect on our attitude and behavior, we are repeatedly reminded in the Qur'an about the importance of making *du'a*

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي

سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ ذَاخِرِينَ .

(سورة غافر - آية ٦٠)

"And your Lord says: Call on Me; I will answer your (prayer) :but those who are too arrogant to serve Me, will surely find themselves in Hell - in humiliation!" (Qur'an 40:60)

The Qur'an warns us against leaving out *du'a*. For example,

قُلْ مَا يَغْبَرُ بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ

(سورة الفرقان - من آية ٧٧)

"Say : My Lord pays attention to you only because of your invocation to Him." (Qur'an 25 :77)

Also the Prophet (PBUH) said

إنه من لم يسأل الله تعالى يغضب عليه

Allah's wrath is on the one who does not call upon Him for help.

Du'a brings us nearer to Allah; nourishes our longing and desire for Him; and makes us fearful of doing anything which would not be pleasing to Him.

■ *Du'a* brings us nearer to Allah; nourishes our longing and desire for Him; and makes us fearful of doing anything which would not be pleasing to Him.

■ According to the Prophet (PBUH), *du'a* can intercept a calamity and holds it at bay until the day of Resurrection.

■ Even when *du'a* is not answered, it results in either removing evil from the suppliant, or rewarding him/her in the hereafter.

وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ
قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ
(سورة الأعراف - من آية ٥٦)

"and invoke Him with fear and hope;
Surely Allah's mercy is (ever) near
unto the good-doers." (Qur'an 7:56)

Results of Performing Du'a

It is our duty to make du'a to Allah, to achieve what we think is good for us. However, we should accept the decision of Allah regarding answering our du'a or not. Sometimes, in our rage, or because of our limited knowledge, we ask for things which are harmful to us.

وَيَدْعُ الْإِنْسَانُ بِالشَّرِّ دُعَاءَهُ بِالْخَيْرِ
وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ عَجُولًا
(سورة الاسراء - آية ١١)

"The prayer that a person should
make for good, he/she makes for evil;
for the human being is ever hasty."
(Qur'an 17:11)

The Prophet (PBUH) informed us that supplication can intercept a calamity, and holds it at bay until the day of Resurrection. Even when the supplication is not answered, it results in either removing evil from the supplicant, or rewarding him/her in the hereafter.

لا يغنى حذر من قدر، والدعاء ينفع
مما نزل، ومما لم ينزل، وإن البلاء
لينزل، فيتلقاه الدعاء،

فيعتلجان إلى يوم القيامة

Precautions are of no avail against the
decree of Allah, but the supplication
benefits in case of a calamity that
strikes or about to strike. And when a
calamity descends, the supplication
intercepts it and holds it at bay until
the day of Resurrection.

ما على الأرض مسلم يدعو الله
بدعوة إلا أتاه الله إياها، أو صرف
عنه من السوء مثلها

No Muslim on this earth makes a

supplication to Allah except being
granted what he/she asked for, or
having equal amount of evil removed
from him/her.

ما من رجل يدعو بدعاء إلا

أستجيب له، فيما أن يعجل له في
الدنيا، وإما أن يدخر له في الآخرة

No person makes a supplication
without being answered, either in the
present world, or be rewarded for it in
the hereafter.

Etiquette of Du'a

There are certain conditions and
manners that must be observed while
making a du'a to Allah (SWT). These
are described in the Qur'an and in
sayings of the Prophet (PBUH), and are
summarized subsequently :

■ Pursuit of lawful means of
livelihood.

■ Du'a with attention and humility,
in voice neither loud nor low; and with
confidence in its acceptance. Allah
(SWT) says:

اذْعُرُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً
(سورة الأعراف - من آية ٥٥)

"Call on your Lord with humility and
in private." (Qur'an 7:55)

وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا
وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا
(سورة الاسراء - من آية ١١٠)

"And say your prayer neither aloud
nor in a low voice, but follow a way
between." (Qur'an 17:110)

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

ادعوا الله وأنتم موقنون بالإجابة،
واعلموا أن الله لا يستجيب دعاء
من قلب غافل لاه .

Make Du'a with confidence in its
acceptance, and know that Allah does
not accept the Du'a of a person whose
heart is heedless and inattentive.

■ Facing Qibla while making du'a
■ Raising one's hands to one's
shoulder. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

إذا سألتم الله فاسألوه ببطون
أكفكم، ولا تسألوه بظهورها

Supplicate Allah with the palms of
your hands, and do not supplicate Him
with their backs upward.

■ Starting the du'a with Allah's
praise and blessings on His Prophet
(PBUH). The Prophet (PBUH) said:

إذا صلى أحدكم فليبدأ بتحميد
الله تعالى، والثناء عليه، ثم
ليصل على النبي، ثم ليدع بعد
بما شاء .

When any one of you prays, he/she
should begin by glorifying and praising
Allah, then he/she should invoke
blessings on the Prophet (PBUH), and
after that he/she should supplicate
Allah for anything he/she wishes.

■ Du'a without a sin or breaking
blood ties, and avoiding hastiness for
its acceptance. The Prophet (PBUH)
said:

لا يزال يستجاب للعبد ما لم يدع
بإثم أو قطيعة رحم، ما لم
يستعجل، يقول: قد دعوت فلم
يستجب لي، فيستحسر عند
ذلك، ويدع الدعاء.

Supplication of a person will continue
to be answered as long as it contains
nothing sinful, and does not involve
breaking ties of blood relationship;
and the person does not become
impatient and says : I have made
supplication after supplication and it
was not answered, then he/she stops
making supplication.

■ Repeat the du'a three times.

Opportune Times and Opportune occasions for Du'a

The most opportune times and
occasions for du'a are : the day of
Arafah, the month of Ramadan,
Fridays, at the time of encounter of
armies, at times of panic, at the time of
rainfall, the last part of the night, at
dawn, when one's heart is soft and

tender, between *Azan* and *Iqamah*, and during prostration. Some of the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) concerning these times are:

إن في الجمعة لساعة لا يوافقها عبد مسلم ، وهو قائم يصلى ، يسأل الله فيها خيرا إلا أعطاه الله إياه

Every Friday there is one hour, no Muslim will pray to Allah and ask for something good, without being given what he/she asked for.

الدعاء لا يرد بين الأذان والإقامة

The supplication made between the *Azan* and *Iqamah* is not rejected.

أقرب ما يكون العبد من ربه وهو ساجد ، فأكثروا الدعاء .

The servant is nearest to the Lord when he/she is prostrating to Him, so make many supplications in this state.

The Qur'an and the Prophet (PBUH) taught us the recommended *du'a* to make at different times, and in different occasions, including : on waking up at dawn, on wearing clothes, on leaving and entering the house, at bed-time, at the time of sorrow and grief (see the side bar on the right) , before going on a journey, on boarding a ship or a plane, and when confronted with a difficult or unpleasant situation.

Results of *Istighfar*

Many blessings and rewards result from *Istighfar* (begging the forgiveness of Allah). These include forgiveness, abundant rain, increase in wealth and children, power , and protection from the punishment of Allah (SWT). Look at the following verses from the Qur'an:

وَيَا قَوْمِ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا
إِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَدْرَارًا
وَيَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَى قُوَّتِكُمْ
(سورة هود - من آية ٥٢)

"And O my people! ask forgiveness of your Lord and repent to Him, He will send you the skies pouring abundant rain, and add strength to your strength." (Quran 11:52)

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ
غَفَّارًا . يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ
مَدْرَارًا . وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَيَنْبِنَ
وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ
أَنْهَارًا.(سورة نوح - آية ١٠ إلى ١٢)
"Saying, Ask forgiveness from your
Lord; for He is oft-forgiving; He will
send rain to you in abundance; Give
you increase in wealth and sons; and
bestow on you gardens and bestow on
you rivers (of flowing water)".
(Qur'an 71:10-12)

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَهُمْ
يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ .

(سورة الأنفال - من آية ٣٣)

"Nor will He (Allah) punish them while they seek (His) forgiveness." (Qur'an 8:33)

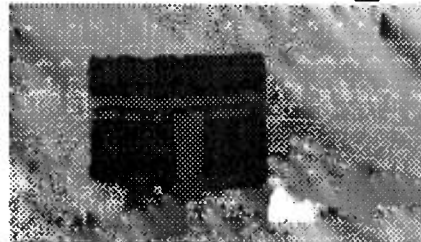
The Prophet (PBUH) used to beg the forgiveness of Allah seventy times every day.

إنى لأستغفر الله فى اليوم سبعين
مرة (حديث شريف)

Epilogue

Allah (SWT) settled the descendants of Adam on earth, and started their life with a system based on peace and order. The root cause of the chaos and the disorder , which we are witnessing today in the world , is that people broke away from the service of Allah, and gave themselves up to the service of themselves, or of others. The order can be restored by acknowledging Allah as the sole Guardian, Protector, and Helper, and by invoking Him alone

I pray to Almighty Allah to guide us to the straight path, and make us among those who earn their livelihood from lawful sources, and those whose *du'a* is answered. Ameen



Supplications at the Time of Grief and Sorrow

الدعاء عند الكرب

The Prophet (PBUH) said :

ألا أخبركم بشيء إذا نزل برجل منكم كرب ، أو بلاء ، من أمر

الدنيا دعا به ففرج عنه ؟ دعاء ذى

النون : لا إله إلا أنت سبحانك إنى

كنت من الظالمين .

Do I tell you something: When a person is in distress, the supplication of Prophet Yunus (PBUH)- which he made when he was in the belly of the fish - can remove the distress. "There is no god but You, You are far exalted and above all weaknesses, and I was indeed the wrong doer".

Also, the Prophet (PBUH) taught us to make the following *du'a* at times of grief and sorrow :

لا إله إلا الله العظيم الحليم ، لا

إله إلا الله رب العرش العظيم ، لا

إله إلا الله رب السموات السبع

ورب الأرض ، ورب العرش الكريم .

There is no god but Allah, the Mighty, the Forbearing; there is no god but Allah, the lord of the throne; there is no god but Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and the Lord of the throne of honor.

اللهم رحمتك أرجو ، فلا تكلنى

إلى نفسى طرفة عين ، وأصلح لى

شأنى كله ، لا إله إلا أنت .

O Allah, I hope for your mercy, so give me not over to myself even for as little as wink of an eye, and set right all my affairs, there is no god but You.

يا حى يا قيوم برحمتك أستغيث

O the Living, O the Eternal, I seek help in your Grace.

The last *du'a* is to be repeated in the morning and the evening.

From Haram to Halal

By Dr. Ahmad H. Sakr

Islam demanded from Muslims to follow, adopt, and practice the *Halal* (lawful) in their daily life. On the other hand, Islam instructed Muslims to shun away, disdain, and forbid what is *Haram* (unlawful).

Muslims have no right to change the *Haram* into *Halal* for any reason. In as much as they have no right to change *Halal* into *Haram*. Muslims have to accept what has been revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), to practice it, and to live it in its totality.

To live and practice the teachings of Islam, one has to seek the best, and the best is no more than what has been made *Halal* by Allah (SWT).

In a non-Muslim society such as the American society, Muslims cannot jump from *Haram* to *Halal* in one step, in a twinkle of an eye. They cannot change the existing infrastructural systems of the un-Islamic society in one day and in one step. To be realistic, they have to have done the following :

- Sincerity and good intention that they want to live according to the teachings of Islam.
- They have to plan a strategy for moving from *Haram* to *Halal* systems.
- They should take the initiative in changing themselves and their un-Islamic habits and customs.
- They should try to apply the teachings of Islam step by step and enrich themselves with the knowledge of Islam.

To go from the lowest level i.e. *Haram* to the highest level i.e. *Halal*, one has to realize that it takes time, effort, energy, knowledge, wisdom, money, and the like. Also, one has to realize that he/she can go only one step at a time, otherwise nothing can be changed or improved.

Some of the steps needed to be considered between *Haram* and *Halal* are the following;

Haram : unlawful

Makrooh : disliked

Mashbooh : suspected

Ja'iz/Makrooh : possible with dislike

Ja'iz/Maqbool : possible with

acceptance

Maqbool : accepted

Mustahabb : liked

Recommended

Strongly recommended

Halal : lawful

The step-by-step approach is advisable in all aspects of life, and in every system to be achieved, i.e. religious, social, cultural, economic, educational, industrial, political, legal, judicial, agricultural, and even in the fields of customs, habits, traditions, manners, behaviors, and the like. If an Islamic state has to achieve the *Halal* in any aspect of life, one has to give those in authority the benefit of the doubt, and know that it takes time, effort, money, and manpower to achieve the *Halal*.

The concept of step-by-step might be the wisest idea to be followed in order to reach the highest level of acceptance by Allah, i.e. the *Halal* that Allah (SWT) has prescribed for human beings.

Those who have recently accepted Islam, should realize that they should abandon the un-Islamic customs and habits of their society. However, it takes time to practice, and become familiar with, the Islamic instructions; such as *salat* (prayer), *siyam* (fasting), *zakat* (poor-due), *Hajj* (pilgrimage), Qur'an memorization, *Tafseer*, *Hadith*, *Fiqh*, *Seerah*, *Sharee'ah*, and other aspects of Islam.

Our beloved Prophet (PBUH) informed us to take Islam as an easy way of life, and instructed us to apply it step by step so as to understand and enjoy what we are doing. It was reported by Abu Hurairah that the Prophet (PBUH) said :

إن الدين يسر ، ولا يشاد الدين

أحد إلا غلبه ، فسدوا وقاربوا

وأبشروا ، وإستعينوا بالغدوة

والروحة وشيء من الدلجة .

The religion (of Islam) is indeed easy. Whoever makes it tough is a loser. Hence, follow it with moderation, be close (to it), give glad tidings, follow it in the morning, afternoons, and during the last hours of the night.

It is most important that one takes the initiative and starts with one

step at a time. First, he/she should give himself/herself the time to acquire the knowledge, then try to practice what he/she learned. He/she should associate himself/herself with those who are *'Alims* (knowledgeable) and those who are sincere in practicing their religion. He/she should be aspiring for the best, and the highest degree in Islam, i.e., the *Halal*, and the degree of *Ihsan*.


In so doing, Muslims will be able to change from *Haram* to *Halal* for the love of Allah. Finally, it is left to Allah to help them achieve their aims and objectives. Indeed Allah will not change the condition of an individual, a group, a community, a nation, or an Ummah, unless they are ready to change themselves. Allah indeed has said in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا
مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ .

(سورة الرعد - من آية ١١)

"Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change their inner selves" (Qur'an 13:11)

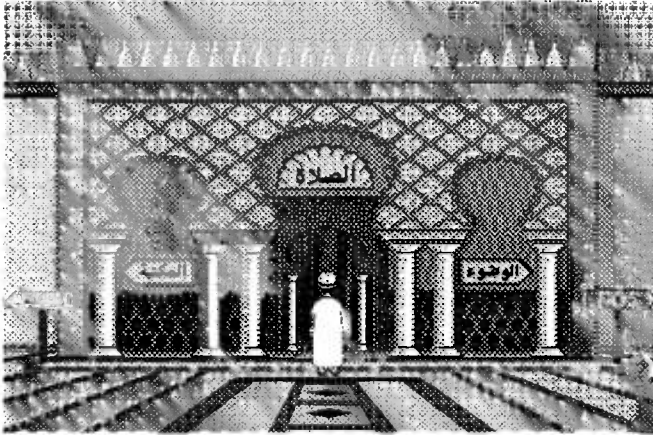
The concept of step-by-step should not be misunderstood by saying that I will not start fasting till I finish all matters regarding prayers. Or, I will not perform *Hajj* till I finish the other pillars of Islam; or, I will not read *Hadith* till I finish reading the whole Qur'an; or, I will not read anything about *seerah* or *fiqh* till I finish reading the whole Qur'an or the whole *Hadith*; or, I will not go to the Friday prayers till I am praying the five daily prayers on time. This is not what is meant by the concept of a step-by-step approach for applying Islam. Islam is a total way of life, and one has to try to apply all its teachings as much as possible, within one's limited capacity, within one's limited understanding, within one's limited situation, and within one's limited threshold .

I hope and pray that Muslims will do their best to apply Islam in their private life, as well as in their public life. Ameen 

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

New Multimedia Educational Software

Two new multimedia software systems for the IBM PC are reviewed subsequently. Both systems require windows 3.1. The first is "*Ta'alem Al-Salah*" for teaching the essentials of Wudu and Prayers. It requires 2 MB of RAM and 6 MB free disk space. It has both animation and sound in Arabic. It is available from Sakhr Software Co. Free Zone Nasr City, P.O. Box 5189 H. West code 11771, Cairo, Egypt, Tel. (202) 274-9929, FAX (202) 274-0044.



The second system is the "*The Arabic Tutor*" for beginners. It requires 4 MB RAM and 25 MB on the hard disk. It is available from International Computer Center, 285 E. 13th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97401, Tel. (503) 342-6479, FAX (503) 342-2374.



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Editorial

has an equally important - but different role in the society.

■ Women are accorded full spiritual and intellectual equality with men, and are encouraged to practice their religion and to develop their intellectual faculties throughout their life. The Qur'an, in addressing the believers, often uses the expression "believing men and women" to emphasize the equality of men and women in regard to their duties, rights, virtues, and merits [see, for example, Qur'an 33:35]. In the Qur'an, Eve (the wife of Adam) is not considered to be temptress, seducer, or deceiver. Rather, equal blame is placed on Adam and Eve for

disobeying Allah (SWT), and for eating from the forbidden tree. Adam and Eve begged Allah's forgiveness, and were both forgiven.

■ The role of women in the family - taking care of their home- is a very respectable, and vitally important one to the happiness of the husbands, and to the physical and spiritual development of their children.

■ The Qur'anic conception of marriage is that of love, mercy, mutual care, respect and tranquility. The wife is not considered to be the possession of the husband.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا
لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي
ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ. (سورة الروم - آية ٢١)

"Among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them and He has put love and mercy between your hearts : verily in that are signs for those who reflect." (Qur'an 30:21)

Kindness and respect to the wife, the mother, and to all women, have been very much emphasized in the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH), for example :

من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فلا يؤذ جاره ،

واستوصوا بالنساء خيرا

Whoever believes in Allah and the final day should not hurt (or trouble) his/her neighbor, and I advise you to take good care of the women.

خيركم خيركم للنساء

The best of you are those who are best (in treating) women

إن الله تعالى حرم عليكم عقوق الأمهات

Allah Has made unkindness to your mothers unlawful for you .

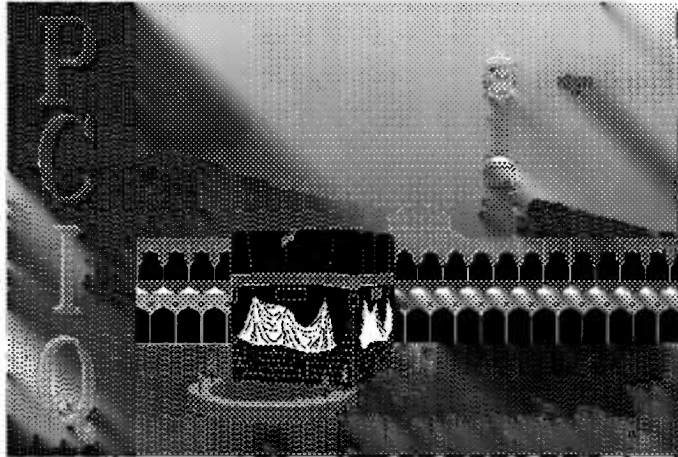
■ Muslim mothers have a great feeling of security about the type of care and consideration they can expect from their children when they reach old age.

■ The high standards of morality in thinking, behavior and appearance, are equally demanded by Islam from both women and men. Dress fashions and social patterns which reduce women to sex objects, and exploit them as such, are not acceptable in Islam. The dress code for women signifies rejection of an unacceptable system of values which debased women.

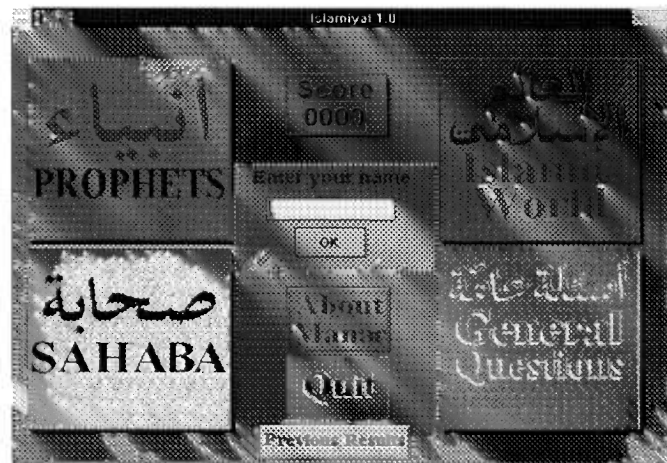
More information about women in Islam can be found on the Internet (for example, <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/humanrelations/womeninislam>; <http://www.cis.ohio-state.edu/hypertext/faq/usenet/islam-faq/part7/faq.html>; and <http://sol46.essex.ac.uk/users/rafiam/Sishome.html>), and in a recent book by Dr. Jamal Badawi on "*Gender Equality in Islam - Basic Principles*", published by the American Trust Publications, 2622 East Main Street, Plainfield, Indiana, 46168.

Islamic Software for children

With the Grace of Allah, several computer games for the IBM PC, which teach facts about the Qur'an, sirah of the Prophets, Sahaba, Islamic history have been developed. Four of these programs are described in this issue. The first program is *pciQ*. An Islamic quiz for the PC in the format of tic tac toe games. It was developed in 1992 by the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, U.K. and is distributed by **Sound Vision, 843 W. Van Buren, Suite 411, Chicago, IL. 60607, Tel. (312) 226-0205.**




The second program is *Islamyat*. It requires a minimum of 2MB of RAM and 1.5 MB of hard disk space, sound blaster, and MS Windows 3.1 or higher (with Arabic addition for the Arabic version). A set of questions on the Qur'an, the prophets, the Sahaba and Islamic world are presented, divided into three levels. The successful completion of these questions is rewarded by "Allahu Akbar". The program is available from **Manar Technologies Inc., P.O. Box 15951, Panama City, FL 32405, Tel./FAX (904) 769-1117.**



The third program is *Journey to Mecca 1.0*. It requires 4MB of RAM and 3MB of disk space, sound blaster, and MS Windows 3.1 or higher (with Arabic addition for the Arabic version). It draws randomly from a pool of more than 600 questions on the Sirah of the Prophets, Sahaba, Islamic history, and other Islamic subjects. Each game consists of

three levels. Passing one level allows the player to play additional game. After level 3, the player gets to color the Ka'aba and print a personalized award. The program is available from **SiraSoft Inc., 9229 S. Thomas Ave., Bridgeview, IL 60455, Tel/FAX (708) 430-9455.**



The fourth program is *Alphabet in space*. It is a computer game to teach the Arabic letters. It is near completion and will be distributed by **Manar Technologies Inc.** (address given on the left column). 



Free Information about Islam

Questions about Islam can be addressed to the following numbers:

1-800-662-ISLAM (voice, strictly for non-Muslims who need information about Islam).

1-800-95-FATWA (voice, for those who seek fatwa [religious ruling] - scholarly answers).

1-800-9998-IANA (FAX line for the above center - IANA).

A list of questions and their answers are available on the Internet.