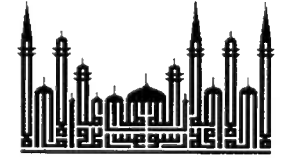


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Perspectives



A bimonthly newsletter published by Foundation for Islamic Knowledge *August/Sept. 1996, Rabi'I thru Jamada'I 1417 * Vol. 2, No.4

Editorial

With the national election campaigns heating up, it is useful to reflect on the role and method of selecting the leaders in Islam. Many of the problems encountered by Muslim communities stem from their lack of understanding of the importance of selecting the right leaders, the necessary qualifications for these leaders, and the relations between the members of the community and their leaders.

To begin with, the basis of the religious, cultural, and political systems of Islam is contained in the verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ
فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

(سورة النساء - من آية ٥٩)

"O ye who believe! obey Allah, and obey the messenger and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah, and His messenger, if you do believe in Allah and the last day." (Qur'an 4:59)

In Islam, the ultimate authority rests with Allah. Allah must be obeyed without any qualifications, or

see Editorial / page 7

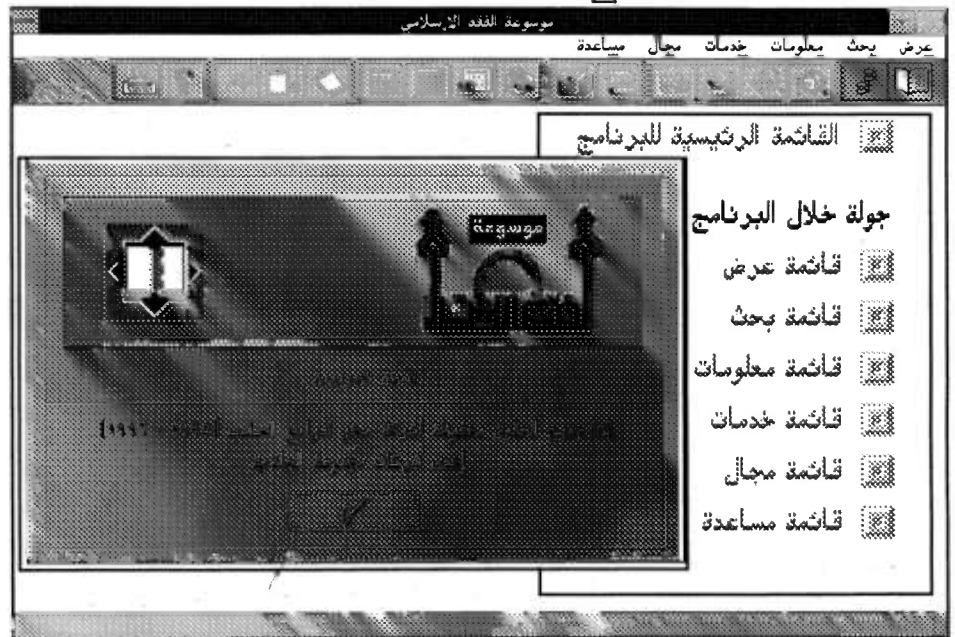
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Encyclopedia of *Fiqh* to be released soon

An Arabic Encyclopedia of *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) on CD-ROM is expected to be released soon. The program is for the IBM PC. It provides basic information, with some charts, on the science of *Fiqh*, the Muslim jurists, the basic and contemporary *Fiqh* terminology. It presents the views of the different schools of thought. It has indices, search facility by words and themes, and help menu.

The program is developed by Sakhr Software Company, Cairo, Egypt and is distributed by Digitek International Inc., 7631 Leesburg Pike, Suite B, Falls Church, VA 22043-2520, Tel (703) 883-0137 .



Reflections

Dr. Ahmed K. Noor

Surat Al-Kahf

سورة الكهف



Surat Al-Kahf, the 18th chapter of the Qur'an, consists of 110 verses, most of which were revealed in Mecca - from the fifth to the tenth year of Prophethood. According to Muslim scholars, verse 28 and verses 83-110 were revealed in Medina. The *Surah* takes its name from verse 9 in which the word *Al-Kahf* occurs. It is full of meaning, wisdom, and lessons which can only be appreciated through deep thinking. In this article an attempt is made to shed some light on these lessons.

To begin with, the Prophet (PBUH) has a number of sayings pertaining to the rewards for reading this *surah* (particularly on Fridays) and memorizing verses from it:

من قرأ سورة الكهف في يوم الجمعة ،

أضاء له من النور ما بين الجمعتين .

If a person reads *Surat al-Kahf* on Friday, Allah (SWT) will light his way till the following Friday.

من حفظ عشر آيات من أول سورة

الكهف ، عصم من فتنة الدجال .

If a person memorizes the first ten verses of *Surat Al-Kahf*, he will be protected from the Anti-Christ (*Dajjal*).

Reason of Revelation

The *Surah* was revealed in answer to three questions which the *Mushriks* of Mecca, in consultation with the people of the book, had put to the Prophet (PBUH) in order to test him. The three questions pertain to:

- Young men in old times for whom mysterious thing happened.
- Story of the mysterious teacher of Prophet *Moussa*.
- Powerful ruler who traveled far, East and West.

The three questions and their related stories concerned the history of the Christians and the Jews, and were

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَا هُدًى
(سورة الكهف - آية ١٣)

"We relate to you their story in truth: they were youth who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance." (Qur'an 18:13)

unknown in Arabia. They were posed to test the truthfulness of the Prophet (PBUH). Allah (SWT) not only provided the answer to the questions in the *Surah*, but also employed the *Surah* to teach the *Mushriks* the necessity of: accepting the doctrine of *Tawhid* (Oneness of Allah), mending their ways in accordance with this doctrine; and the grave consequences of not adhering to the doctrine.

Subject and Topics

An examination of the *Surah* reveals the following:

- The beginning and end of the *Surah* deal with the pure Islamic



And give good tidings to those who believe. (Qur'an 2:223)

ideology, its effects on our attitudes and our measures. Everything in this universe is used for testing our *iman* (faith). At the end, everything that we collect on this earth will wither and disappear.

- The parables in this *Surah* refer to the brevity, uncertainty, and vanity of this life. There are too many paradoxes in life which can only be understood by patience and complete knowledge. There is a need to guard against incursions of evil.
- In verses 28, and 29, the Prophet (PBUH) is instructed to:

a) Keep himself whole-heartedly content with the sincere, but poor people who pray to their Lord morning

and evening in order to win His approval, and not to turn his attention away from them, and

b) not to make any compromise in regard to the truth and the ideology.

- In the *Surah*, 71 out of 110 verses deal with five stories (see the figure on page 3).

- The Companions of the cave.

- Man provided with two gardens, but was ungrateful to Allah.

- Glimpse of the story of Adam and *Iblis*.

- The mysterious teacher of Prophet *Moussa*.

- The "two-horned" powerful ruler (*Zul-Qarnain*).

The five stories are discussed subsequently.

The Companions of the Cave

There are differences among historians as to who they really were : sons of dignitaries and kings of Byzantine empire, Christians, or others. What is significant about them is what is related to us in the Qur'an:

- They were young. Also, most of the people who responded to the call of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) were young.
- They were guided to the right path in the midst of impure religious traditions. They elected to shun their own people rather than take part in those impure traditions. Their *iman* was much stronger than their attachment to the traditions of their people.
- They opened their hearts to the call of Allah. So, Allah increased their *iman* (Qur'an 18:13) Allah promises to do that for His sincere servants.

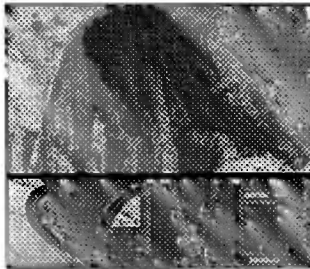
وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ . (سورة محمد - آية ١٧)

"To those who receive guidance, He increases their guidance, and bestows

Five Stories Covered in 71 Verses

1 The Companions of the Cave
أصحاب الكهف

- Young men whose identity and exact number is not known.
- They believed sincerely in the doctrine of *Tawhid*. Allah increased their faith and enabled them to become firm and steadfast on the way of truth, even at the risk of their own lives.
- Did not bow down before falsehood, but immigrated (to the cave) to protect their ideology.
- Spent 300 solar (309 lunar) years in the cave.



2 Man Provided with Two Gardens
صاحب الجنتين

- He considered his wealth and his grandeur to be the fruits of his own power and capability, and not favors of Allah
- Although he did not deny the existence of ALLAH, but through arrogance, pride and vanity he denied the hereafter
- his neighbor charged him with *Kufr*
- Because of his ingratitude, Allah took away the bounties from him.



3 Glimpse of the Story of Adam and Iblis
لحظة عن آدم وإبليس

- *Iblis* who is one of the *Jinn* was jealous of Adam, and is an avowed enemy to all his descendants
- If people follow Satans, they are guilty of setting up Satans as partners

5 The Two-Horned Powerful Ruler
ذو القرنين

- He was a powerful ruler and owner of great resources, yet he always surrendered to Allah.
- He helped the weak people to build one of the strongest walls for protecting them from Gog and Magog, yet his real trust was in Allah and not in the wall.

4 Prophet Moussa and his Mysterious Teacher
موسى والعبء الصالح

- Allah provided the teacher with special knowledge.
- Acquiring knowledge requires *Sabr*
- Our knowledge is limited and our worldly measures of good and bad may be deficient.
- Allah (SWT) send Prophet *Moussa* and his teacher to protect the treasure of two orphans because their father was a righteous man.



on them their piety and restraint (from evil)." (Qur'an 47:17)

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ
(سورة الفتح - من آية ٤)

"It is He who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers, that

they may add faith to their faith." (Qur'an 48:4)

- They spent 300 solar years (309 lunar years) in the cave.

There are many lessons to be learned from this story including:

- A believer must not take part in the customs and traditions which are alien to the Islamic principles laid down in the Qur'an and in the traditions of

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

- If a believer is persecuted by a cruel society, he/she should not bow down before falsehood, but should put his/her trust in Allah and emigrate from that society.

- Allah who created "the laws of nature" is certainly able to suspend them whenever and wherever He wills. So much so that He can raise up anyone

who might have been asleep for three hundred years, as if he/she had only slept for few hours, without letting any change take place in his/her appearance, dress, and health.

Man Provided with Two Gardens

The second story shows the contrast between two men. Allah provided one of them with two gardens of grape-vines, date palms and river. He considered his wealth and his grandeur to be a clear proof that he is a favorite of Allah, and although he did not deny the existence of Allah, he denied the hereafter.

The other man boasted of nothing : his trust was in Allah. He charged the first person with *kufir* for denying the hereafter.

The worldly wealth of the first man was destroyed, and he had nothing left. The second man was the happier in the end

The lessons to be learned from this story are:

- Mean persons, when Allah grants them wealth and/or power, forget that the real source of these bounties is Allah.

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّا
اِسْتَعْتَى .

(سورة العلق - آية ٦،٧)

"Nay, but the human being does transgress all bounds, in that he looks upon himself as self-sufficient." (Qur'an 96:6,7)

وَإِذَا أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَأَى
بِجَانِبِهِ .

(سورة الإسراء - من آية ٨٣)

"Yet when We bestow our favors on the human, he turns away and becomes remote on his side (instead of coming to us)" (Qur'an 17:83)

- Allah has the power to take away His bounties from the ungrateful.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ .
(سورة الذاريات - آية ٥٨)

"For Allah is He who gives (all) sustenance, Lord of Power - Steadfast (forever)." (Qur'an 51:58)

Adam and Iblis

Iblis who is one of the *jinn*, deliberately chose to disobey Allah and not bow before Adam. He has been jealous of Adam and an avowed enemy to his descendents. It is an obvious folly for people to discard the teachings of the Prophets, who were their well-wishers, and get entangled in the snare set by Iblis.

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا
(سورة فاطر - من آية ٦)

"Verily Satan is an enemy to you: so treat him as an enemy." (Qur'an 35:6)

It is an act of *shirk* to discard the commandments and the guidance of Allah and to follow Satans.

Prophet Moussa and his Teacher

Muslim historians call the teacher of prophet *Moussa Al-Khidr*. He had two special gifts from Allah : mercy and special knowledge. The first freed him from the ordinary incidents of daily human life; and the second entitled him to interpret the inner meaning and mystery of events.

Because the reality and wisdom of the actions of the teacher were not known to prophet *Moussa*: rendering the boat, which belonged to indiginous people, unserviceable to protect it from the unjust king who would have seized it; killing the youth who was a danger to the public and a particular source of grief to his righteous parents; and setting up straight the wall that was in a ruinous state in order to protect the buried treasure which a pious man left to his two sons under it, from being looted by the greedy inhabitants of the town.

If the curtain is removed from the unseen, we would come to know that what is happening is for the best. Even if sometimes it appears that something is going against you, you will see that in the end, it also produces good results for you.

وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ
وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ .
(سورة البقرة - من آية ٢١٦)

"It is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you, and that you love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knows, and you know not." (Qur'an 2:216)

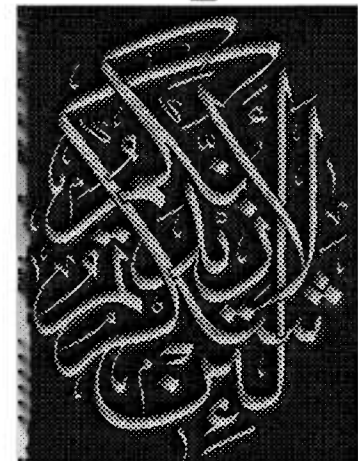
The Two-Horned Powerful Ruler

Zul-Qarnain had great power and a great opportunity, yet he always surrendered to Allah. He got authority over a turbulent and unruly people. He chose to protect the weak and the innocent. He punished the guilty and the headstrong, but he always remembered that the true punishment would come in the hereafter.

Zul-Qarnain helped the weak people in buliding one of the strongest walls to protect them from the mischievous Gog and Magog, yet his real trust was in Allah and not in the wall.

Epilogue

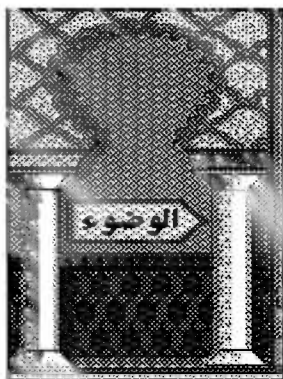
Several lessons are taught to us in the *Surah* including: having full faith in the wisdom of what is happening in the Divine factory in accordance with the will of Allah; not bowing down before falsehood but putting our trust in Allah, and emigrating from the place of persecution; using the bounties of Allah, including wealth and power in accordance with His guidance; and working deeds of righteousness for the sake of Allah, expecting the rewards from Him alone.



If you are grateful, I will add more favors unto you .
(Qur'an 14:7)

Obligatory Acts and *Sunan* of *Wudu* with Illustrations

فرائض و سنن الوضوء



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ
وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا .
(سورة المائدة - من آية ٧)

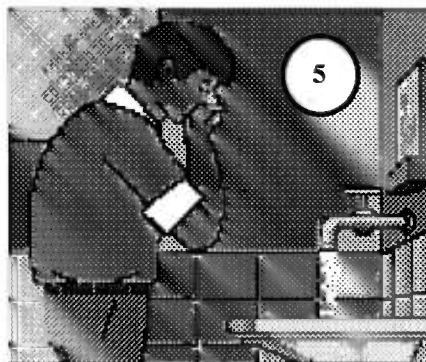
O you who believe, When you rise up for prayer, Wash your faces and your arms up to the elbows: and lightly rub your heads, and wash your feet up to the ankle. If ye are in a state of ceremonial impurity, bathe your whole body” (Qur’an 5:7)

Wudu (ablution) has certain obligatory acts, or components which, if not fulfilled according to the correct Islamic procedures, make one’s *wudu* void. It has other acts, *sunan*, which are not obligatory, but their fulfillment is highly preferred and entails reward for the one who performs them. All the acts of *Wudu* are listed subsequently. **Bold face and italic fonts** are used for the obligatory acts and the *sunan*, respectively

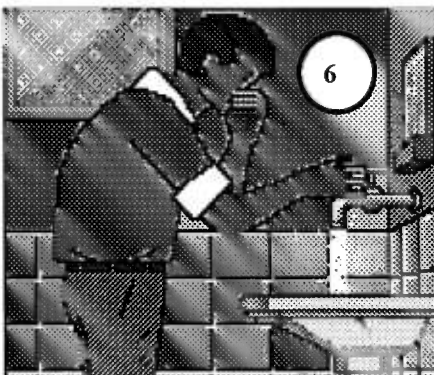
- 1 **Intention** النية
- 2 *Mentioning the name of Allah* التسمية في أوله
- 3 *Dental Hygiene (Miswak).* السواك
- 4 *Washing the hands up to the wrists three times, commencing with the right first, and running water through one’s fingers* غسل الكفين



- 5 *Rinsing the mouth three times* المضمضة ثلاثا



- 6 *Sniffing up and blowing water three times* الإستنشاق والإستنثار ثلاثا



- 7 *Washing the face from the forehead to the chin, and from one*



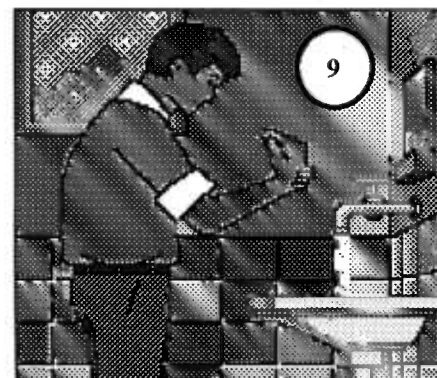
ear to the other (one time)

غسل الوجه

- 8 *Running one’s fingers through the beard (for men)* تخليل اللحية للرجال

- 9 *Washing the arms to the elbow, beginning with the right arm*

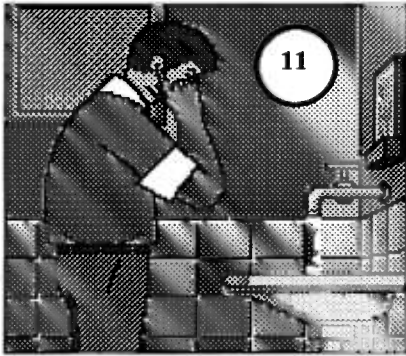
غسل اليدين إلى المرفقين



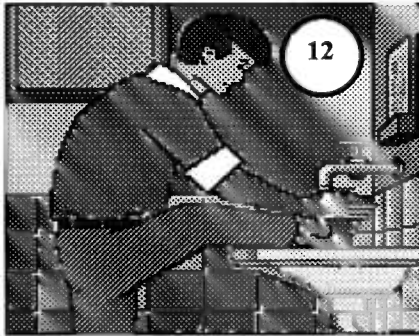
- 10 *Wiping the upper portion of the head* مسح الرأس



11 Wiping the ears مسح الأذنين



12 Washing the feet and the heels up to the ankles, beginning with the right foot, and running the water through the toes غسل الرجلين مع الكعبين



Notes:

- The Arabic word *wudu* comes from the word *wada'a* which means cleanliness. It refers to using clean water to wash the face, hands, head and feet.
- It is obligatory to follow the prescribed sequence in performing *wudu*.
- It is *sunnah* to repeat each washing three times, and to begin each action with the right side.

Important Dates

Ramadan 1, 1417
January 10, 1997

Eid-ul-Fitr
February 9, 1997

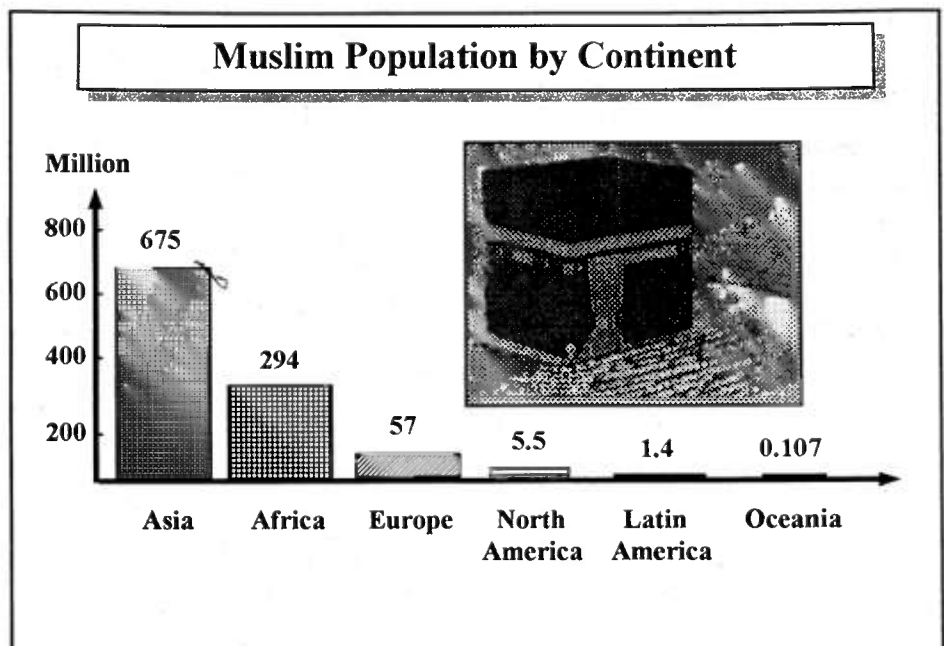
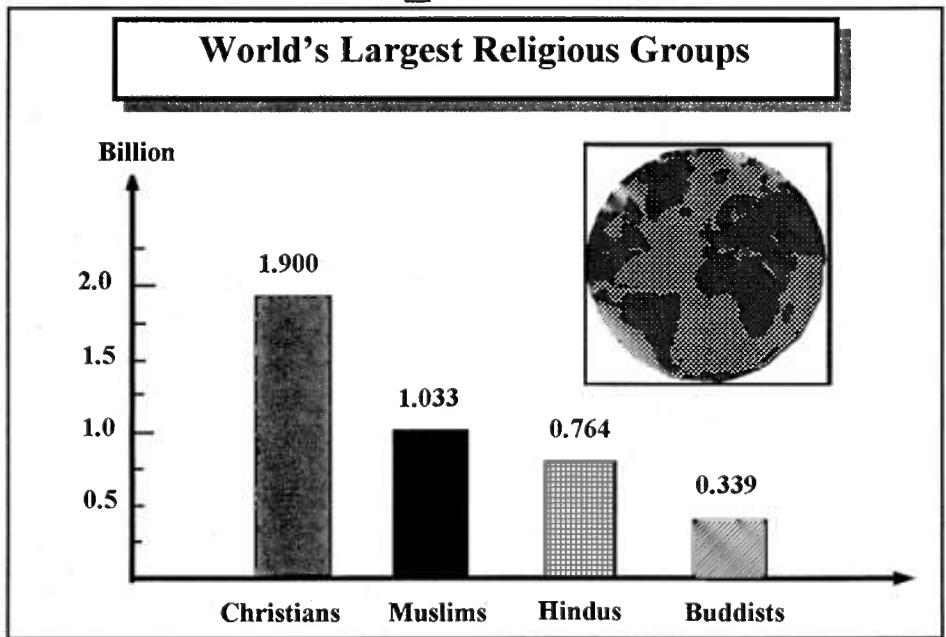
Eid-ul-Adha
April 18, 1997

Note: Please contact the National organizations listed on the back page for confirmation about these dates.

Muslim Population

The available statistics about the followers of different religions, including Muslims, provide only very rough approximations. The statistics presented herein is obtained from the 1996 ALMANAC, published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York. The five largest religions in the world (in terms of followers) are : Christianity (1,900,174,000); Islam (1,033,453,000); Hinduism (764,000,000); Buddhism (338,621,000) - see the figure below. The Christian population includes 1,058,069,000 Roman Catholics, 391,143,000 Protestants, and 174,184,000 Orthodox. The Jewish population in the world is estimated to be 13,451,000, with the majority being in North America (5,907,000).

The majority of the Muslims population is in Asia (675,2997,000), followed by Africa (293,993,000), Europe (57,161,000) North America (5,500,000), Latin America (1,395,000), and Oceania (the Atlantic, Pacific, Indian, Arctic and Antarctic Oceans-107,000).



From the Guidance of the Prophet (PBUH)

On the occasion of Rabi' I, the month in which Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) was born, it is useful to remember the emphasis he placed on adopting Islamic manners. The Prophet (PBUH) defined his mission as primarily that of perfecting the manners.

إنما بعثت لأتمم صالح الأخلاق

Indeed I have been sent to complete the moral standards of good behavior.

He taught us the obligations towards the elderly, the young, and the scholars.

ليس منا من لم يجل كبيرنا ، ورحم صغيرنا ، ويعرف لعالمنا حقه .

He is not one of us who does not: respect our elders, show kindness towards our young, and give respect and courtesy to our scholar.

He reminded us that nothing will be heavier in the balance of Allah (SWT) than good manners.

ما من شيء في الميزان أثقل من حسن الخلق

We pray to Almighty Allah to grant us the strength to adopt the Islamic manners. ■ Ameen



Mohammad the messenger of Allah

Continued from page 1
Editorial

reservations. A practical consequence of obeying Allah is to obey His messenger, who derives his authority

from Allah. Again, obedience of the Prophet should be with no qualifications or reservations.

مَنْ يَطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ
(سورة النساء - من آية ٨٠)

"Anyone who obeys the messenger, obeys Allah." (Qur'an 4:80)

Therefore, a Muslim as an individual and the Muslims as a community owe their loyalty, and give their allegiance, to Allah, and then to the Prophet (PBUH). After the first and second allegiance, and subordinate to them, the Muslims owe their allegiance to those invested with authority or responsibility from among them. In an Islamic state, and in Muslim communities obedience to those in authority is conditional on their being obedient to Allah and His messenger.

Leaders of Muslim communities should be knowledgeable in religion, and should practice this knowledge in their daily lives. They should not only offer *Salah* (prayers) regularly, but should establish and facilitate the performance of *salah* in their communities. They should be role models for their communities, possess sound judgment and exhibit the Islamic manners in dealing with others. They should not be desirous of leadership. The Prophet (PBUH) is reported to have said:

إننا والله لا نولي على هذا العمل
أحدا سألته ولا أحدا حرص عليه

By Allah, we do not appoint to a position of authority anyone who asked for it, or is keenly interested in it.

The selection of *Abu Bakr*, may Allah bless his soul, as the leader of the state was not based on his tribe or lineage. Rather, it was based on the fact that the Prophet (PBUH), before his death, entrusted him with the most important function in the community, namely, leading the congregational prayers.

For those who select their leaders on the basis of selfish worldly gain, it is important to remember the following saying of the Prophet

(PBUH):

ثلاثة لا يكلمهم الله يوم القيامة ولا يزكهم ولهم عذاب أليم : رجل على فضل ماء بالطريق يمنع منه ابن السبيل ورجل بايع إماما لا يبايعه إلا لدنياه إن أعطاه ما يريد وفي له وإلا لم يف له ورجل يبايع رجلا بسلة بعد العصر فحلف بالله لقد أعطى بها كذا وكذا فصدقه فأخذها ولم يعط بها .

Three persons Allah will neither talk to them on the day of judgment nor purify them, and will have severe punishment: A man who had water and denied it to the wayfarer, a man making Ba'ia (support) to a leader on the basis of worldly benefit, and a man swearing by Allah falsely to sell another person an item, at the end of the day.

We pray to Almighty Allah to give us the guidance and the strength to select the righteous leaders for our Muslim communities. ■ Ameen

Calender of Events

33rd Annual ISNA Convention
Theme : Muslims for Peace and Justice

Location: Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, OH

Dates : Friday Aug. 30 - Monday Sept. 2, 1996

ICNA Summer Youth Camps for Brothers and Sisters

Location: Brothers - Foundation for Islamic Education Villanova, PA
Tel. (516) 371-5058

Sisters - New Brunswick, NJ.
Tel. (718) 390-7244

Dates: Aug. 18 - Aug. 24, 1996

ICNA Second Southern Convention

Location : Atlanta

Dates: Nov. 29 - Dec. 1, 1996