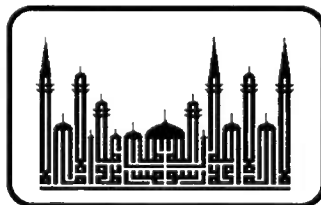




بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Perspectives



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Editorial

Ramadan, the ninth month in the Islamic calendar, is the month of spiritual excitement for Muslims. It brings two of the greatest gifts of Allah, namely the institution of annual fasting, with its benefits and rewards, and the commemoration of the revelation of the Qur'an. During this blessed month the gates of paradise are opened, the gates of hell are locked and the devils are chained.

The month of Ramadan provides us with a number of opportunities to repent from our sins, and to have them forgiven by Allah. Three of these opportunities are described in the following sayings of the prophet (PBUH):

من صام رمضان إيماناً واحتساباً ،
غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه .

Whoever observes the fast during the month of Ramadan, believing in Allah and seeking His rewards, will have his/her past sins forgiven.

من قام رمضان إيماناً واحتساباً ،
غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه .

Whoever establish prayers during the nights of Ramadan (taraweeh prayers), believing in Allah and seeking His rewards, will have his/her past sins forgiven.

من قام ليلة القدر إيماناً واحتساباً ،
غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه .

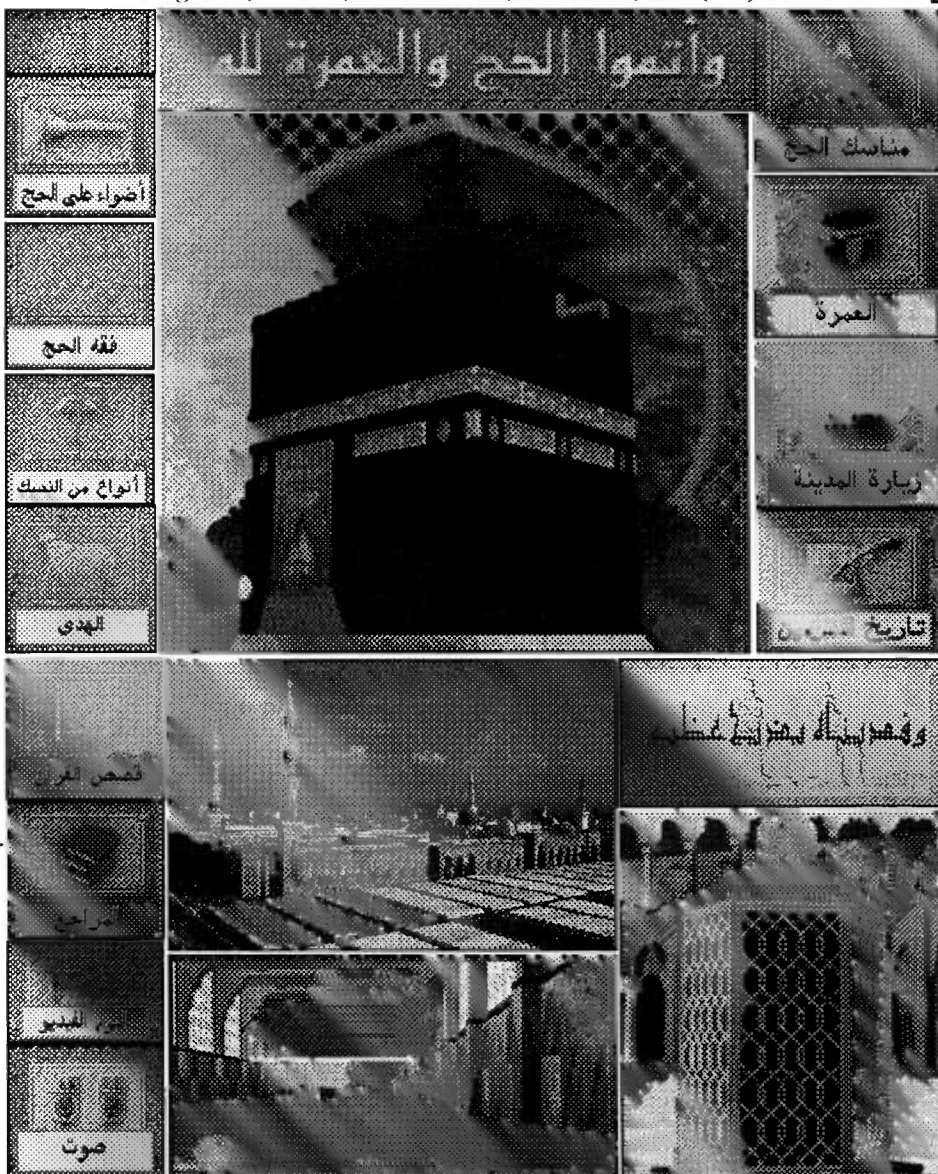
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A Multimedia Program on Hajj and Umrah to be Released Soon

An elaborate multimedia program on *Hajj* and *Umrah* is expected to be released soon. The program is for IBM PC and works with windows 3.1 or windows 95. The program is in Arabic and provides basic information on the types of *Hajj* (*Tamatu* , *Qi'ran*, and *Ifrad*); various components and rituals of *Hajj* according to the four schools of thought of *Imams* Abu Hanifa, Malek, Shafie, and Ibn Hanbal; *Umrah*; visiting Medina; the history of both the sacred mosque in Mecca and the mosque of the Prophet in Medina; and stories from the Qur'an pertaining to the holy places. It has an elaborate set of pictures, three-dimensional animations and video clips for different places to be visited during *Hajj* and *Umrah*. It provides quotations (with sound) from the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) about *Hajj*, *Umrah* and visiting Medina. The program can be obtained from **Digitek International Inc., 7631 Leesburg Pike, Suite B, Falls Church, VA 22043, Tel. (800) 33-SAKHR.**

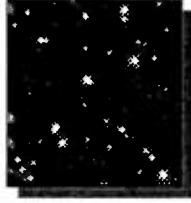


Reflections

Dr. Ahmed K. Noor

The Unseen

الغيب



Iman (faith) is belief in things unseen - i.e., in things which cannot be perceived by our senses, and do not come within our human experience and observation. The six articles of faith focus on the unseen : belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the day of judgment and *Al-Qadar* (Divine measures and destiny), good and bad (see Perspectives vol. 2, No. 6, page 2). Among the consequences of these beliefs are believing in the Divine revelations, life-after-death, paradise and hell, all of which are *Ghaib*. The word *Ghaib* (unseen, hidden and covered) is mentioned in the Qur'an 49 times and the word *Ghoyu'b* (hidden things) is mentioned four times (Qur'an 5:109, 5:116, 9:78 and 34:48). Some authentic sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) address the same subject. In this article, an attempt is made to define the word *Ghaib*, as used in the Qur'an, and to discuss the importance of believing in *Al-Ghaib*.

The Visible and Unseen Worlds

Our knowledge about the universe (cosmos) is very limited. The majority of things in the cosmos are *Ghaib* (unseen) for us. Allah (SWT) tells us about this fact in the Qur'an:

وَمَا أوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا.

(سورة الإسراء - من آية ٨٥)

"Of knowledge, it is only a little that is communicated to you (O people)."

(Qur'an 17:85)

In fact, our universe can be divided into two parts (see the top figure on page 3): the part which our senses can perceive - the visible (or known) part

العالم المشهود - الظاهر

(hidden) part

العالم الخفي عالم الملكوت

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الم . ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ .
(سورة البقرة - آيات ٢، ٢، ١)

"A.L.M. this is the book; in it is guidance sure without doubt to those who are conscious of the presence of Allah. Who believe in the unseen, are steadfast in prayer and spent out of what We have provided for them." (Qur'an 2:1,2,3)

which we cannot perceive. Both parts are known to Allah (SWT). The relationship between Divinity and the full knowledge of the visible and unseen parts of the universe is reflected in the Qur'anic words *عالم الغيب والشهادة* (the knower of the visible and the unseen), which are repeated nine times (Qur'an 6:73, 9:94, 9:105, 13:9, 23:92, 32:6, 39:46, 59:22, 62:8 and 64:18). Nothing is hidden from (or unknown to) Allah (SWT). Everything in the cosmos is known and evident to Him.



The unseen is only for Allah (to know)
(Qur'an 10:20)

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ
فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا
أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ
مُّبِينٍ . (سورة سبأ - من آية ٣)

"The one who knows the unseen, from whom is not hidden the least little atom in the Heavens or on earth: nor is there anything less than that, or greater, but is in the record perspicuous." (Qur'an 34:3)

Our inner thoughts, that we try to hide from others, are known to Allah

وَإِنْ تَجَهَّزْ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ
وَأَخْفَى . (سورة طه - آية ٧)

"If you pronounce the word aloud, (it is no matter): for verily He (Allah) knows what is secret and what is yet more hidden." (Qur'anic 20:7)

The full, comprehensive knowledge and the authority are two interdependent aspects of Godhood. Only Allah (SWT) can acquaint whomever He chooses with some of the mysteries of the unseen (hidden) world.

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا
إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ .
(سورة الجن - من آيات ٢٦، ٢٧)

"He (alone) knows the unseen. nor does He make any one acquainted with His secrets, except a messenger whom He has chosen." (Qur'an 72:26,27)
Allah (SWT) acquainted Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham -PBUH) with some of the mysteries of the unseen world, in order to strengthen his faith.

وَكَذَلِكَ نُرَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتِ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ
الْمُوقِنِينَ (سورة الأنعام - آية ٧٥)

"So did We show Abraham the power, mysteries and laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might with understanding have certitude."

(Qur'an 6:75)

Absolute and Relative Unseen

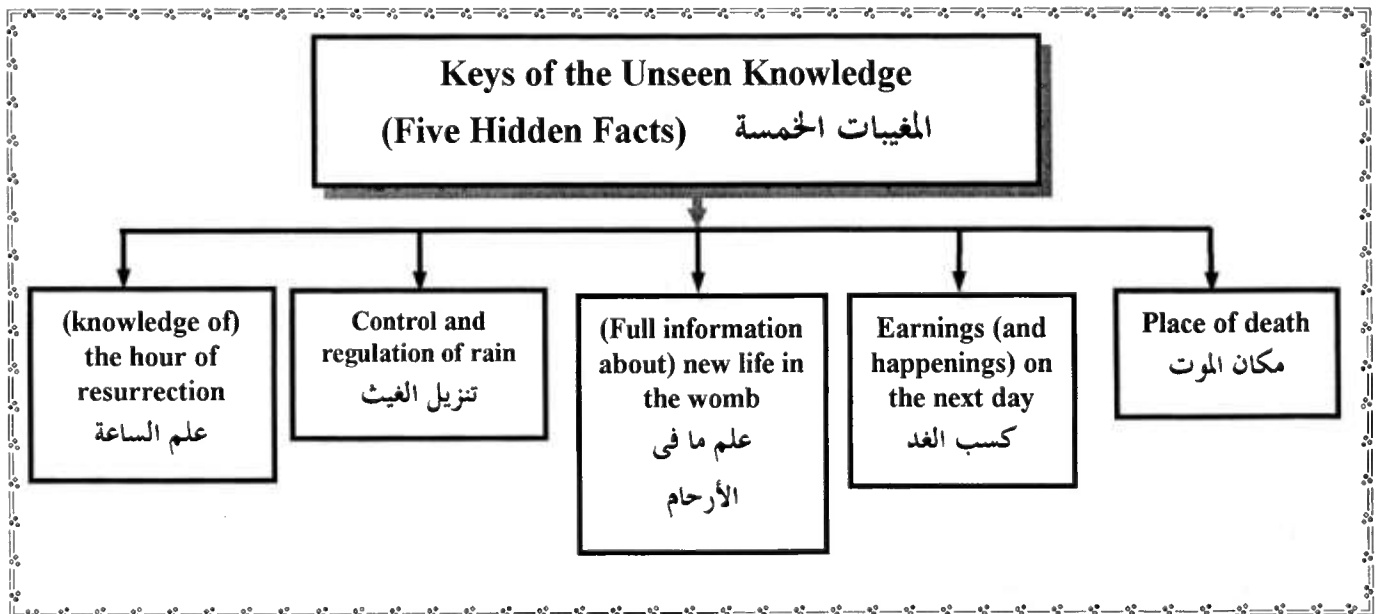
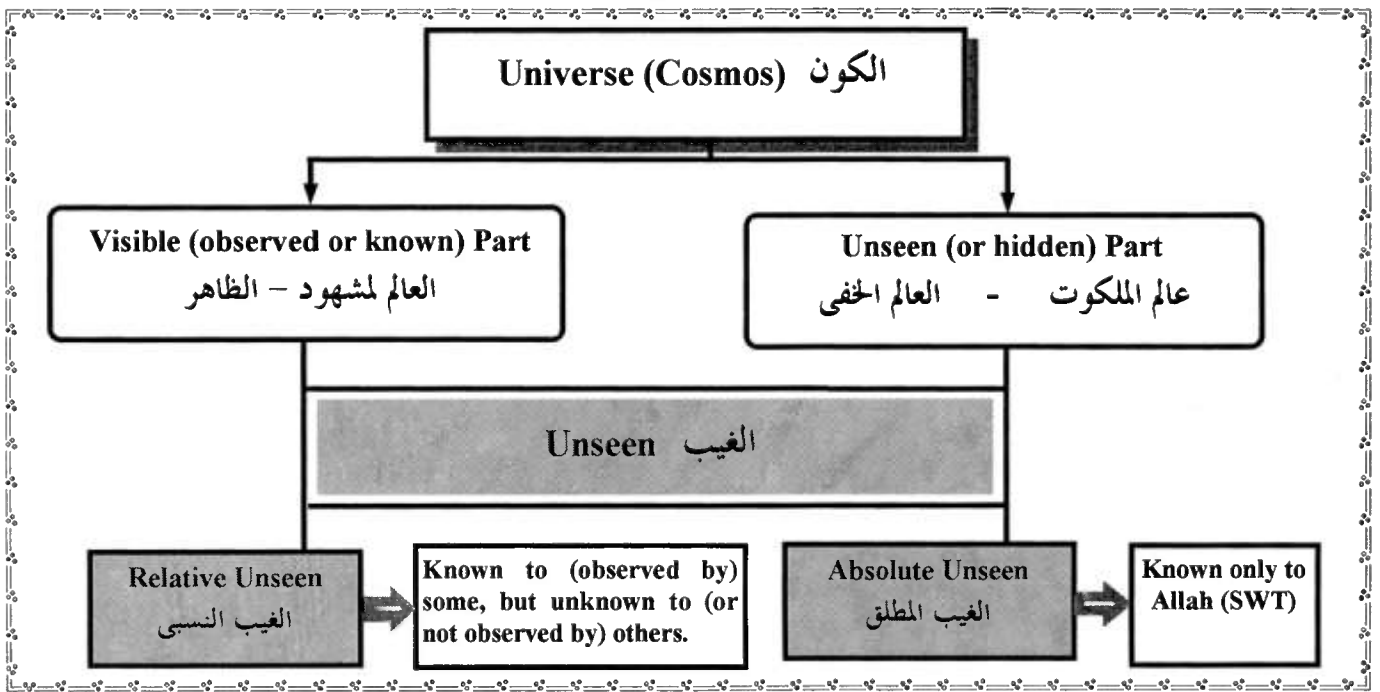
Two aspects of the unseen can be distinguished (see the top figure on page 3), namely :

The absolute unseen الغيب المطلق , and the relative unseen الغيب النسبي .

The absolute unseen is the absolute mystery which no creation, in earth or in heaven, can know or observe, except in so far as Allah reveals it to them.

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ .

(سورة النمل - من آية ٦٥)



"Say: none in the heavens or on earth, except Allah, knows what is hidden."

(Qur'an 27:65)

Examples of the absolute unseen are the five hidden facts, referred to in two Qur'anic verses and one prophetic saying (see the bottom figure on page 3). The knowledge of these facts has neither been given to anyone, nor can it be given.

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ
(سورة الأنعام - من آية ٥٩)

"With Him are the keys of the unseen, the treasures that none knows but He."

(Qur'an 6:59)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنزِلُ
الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا
تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مِمَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا وَمَا
تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ .

(سورة لقمان - من آية ٣٤)

"Verily the knowledge of the Hour is with Allah (alone). It is He who sends down rain, and He who knows what is in the wombs. Nor does any one know what it is that he/she will earn on the morrow: nor does any one know in

what land he/she is to die."

(Qur'an 31:34)

مفاتيح الغيب خمس لا يعلمها إلا الله تعالى : لا يعلم أحد ما يكون في غد إلا الله تعالى ، ولا يعلم أحد ما يكون في الأرحام إلا الله تعالى ، ولا يعلم متى تقوم الساعة إلا الله تعالى ، ولا تدري نفس بأى أرض تموت إلا الله تعالى ، ولا يدري أحد متى يجيء المطر إلا الله تعالى .

(حديث شريف)

Keys of the unseen knowledge are five which no body knows, but Allah. No body knows: what will happen tomorrow; what is in the wombs; when will the hour of resurrection come; at what place he/she will die; and when will it rain. (Prophetic saying)

The knowledge of the hour of resurrection belongs to Allah, and Allah alone. Allah (SWT) taught the Prophet (PBUH), by inspiration, only the major and minor signs for the approaching of the hour. The rain is entirely controlled and regulated by Allah. He sends down the rain whenever, wherever, and in whatever measure He pleases. He withholds the rain whenever He pleases. The wives conceive, but the full knowledge (including shape, form, good, and evil) of the new life in the womb is known only to Allah. What an individual is going to meet in next day, and where his/her life is going to end are known only to Allah.

The prophet (PBUH) was commanded by Allah to explicitly state that he does not possess the knowledge of the unseen:

قُلْ لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ .

(سورة الأنعام - من آية ٥٠)

“Say: I tell you not that with me are the treasures of Allah, Nor do I know what is hidden.” (Qur’an 6:50)

The angels and the jinns also do not possess the knowledge of the absolute unseen, as is clear from the following two verses of the Qur’an:

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا
(سورة البقرة - من آية ٣٢)

“They (the angels) said : (Glory to You: of knowledge we have none, save what You have taught us).”

(Qur’an 2:32)

فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَى
مَوْتِهِ إِلَّا دَابَّةُ الْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنسَأَتَهُ
فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ الْجِنَّ أَن لَوْ كَانُوا
يَعْلَمُونَ الْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا فِي الْعَذَابِ
الْمُهِينِ . (سورة سبأ - آية ١٤)

“Then, when We decreed (Solomon’s) death, nothing showed them his death except a little worm of the earth, which kept (slowly) gnawing away at his staff : so when he fell down, the jinns saw plainly that if they had known the unseen they would not have tarried in the humiliating chastisement (of their task).” (Qur’an 34:14)

The second aspect of the unseen is the relative unseen الغيب النسبي . It is unseen (or unknown) with reference to a particular person, because of the intervention of time, space, or particular circumstances. The relative unseen refers to things which some people know, but others do not.

Veils of the Worldly Unseen

There are three types of veils that hide the worldly unseen from us (see the figure at the bottom of the page) : veil of the unknown past, veil of the future, and veil of unknown events in other places. The Qur’an removed the veils from past and future events, as well as events happening in far away places.

Historians write about, and record, the past. But many times, they do not

Veils Which Hide the Worldly Unseen From Us

حواجز الغيب

Temporal زمنية

Spatial مكانية

3

Unknown Past

١ ماضى

Future

٢ مستقبل

Examples of Qur’anic verses removing these veils

Accurate information about *Mariam* (Qur’an 3:44), Prophet *Moussa* (Qur’an 28:44), and about other prophets

- Victory of the Roman Empire (Qur’an 30:2,3,4)
- Defeat of the pagan Qur’aish (Qur’an 54:45)
- The Prophet’s uncle *Abu Lahab* remaining as an unbeliever till his death (Qur’an 111:3)

Information about the treasures beneath the soil , and other creations of Allah on earth (e.g., Jinn)



give an objective, and accurate account of events. Allah (SWT) removed the veil of many of the past events by providing, in the Qur'an, accurate accounts of these events. The information given about *Mariam* and Prophet *Moussa* are examples of removing the veil of past events.

ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ
وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ
أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْثَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ
يَخْتَصِمُونَ .
(سورة آل عمران - آية ٤٤)

"This is part of the tidings of the things unseen, which We reveal unto you (O Prophet!) by inspiration: you were not with them when they cast lots with pens, as to which of them should be charged with the care of Mary : Nor were you with them when they disputed (the point)." (Qur'an 3:44)

وَمَا كُنْتَ بِجَانِبِ الْعُرْوَى إِذْ قَضَيْنَا إِلَى
مُوسَى الْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنْتَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ
(سورة القصص - آية ٤٤)

"You were not on the western side when We decreed the commission to Moses, nor were you a witness (of those events)." (Qur'an 28:44)

The information about the future victory of the Roman Empire (after their crushing defeat); the future defeat of the unbelievers of Mecca; and the fact that the Prophet's uncle Abu Lahab will die as an unbeliever are examples of removing the veil of the future.

غَلَبَتِ الرُّومُ . فِي أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ
مَنْ بَعْدَ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ . فِي بَضْعِ
سِنِينَ (سورة الروم - آيات ٢، ٣، ٤)

"The Romans have been defeated. in the lowest land (a land close by) : but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious. Within a few years."

سَيَهْرَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَ يُؤَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ .
(سورة القمر - آية ٤٥)

"Soon will their (the Pagan

Qur'aish's) multitude be put to flight, and they will show their backs." (Qur'an 54:45)

سَيَضَلِّي نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ .
(سورة المسد - آية ٣)

"Burnt soon will he (Abu Lahab-an uncle of the Prophet) be in a fire of blazing flame." (Qur'an 111:3)

The reference to the treasures under the soil, and the fact that the whole universe was a single mass of matter and then it was split into different parts (including the earth and other heavenly bodies) in the following two verses, are examples of removing the spatial veil:

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَى .

(سورة طه - آية ٦)
"To Him (Allah) belongs what is in the heavens and on earth and between them, and all beneath the soil." (Qur'an 20:6)



أَوْ لَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا .
(سورة الأنبياء - من آية ٣٠)

"Do not the unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before we clove them asunder?" (Qur'an 21:30)

Importance of Believing in the Unseen

It is significant that Allah made the first manifestation of *taqwah* (consciousness of the presence of Allah) is to believe in the unseen (Qur'an 2:2,3). It is a prerequisite for receiving the guidance. The utmost of the unseen is the belief in Allah. Believing in Allah makes us believe in the existence of everything that Allah tells us about, even when we can not perceive them

with our human senses. There are many things that we acknowledge their existence, but cannot perceive with our senses, such as our spirit (*rooh*). Belief in the unseen expands our horizon considerably, beyond what we can perceive with our senses; makes us appreciate the vastness of, and the harmony in, the kingdom of Allah; and provides us with the spiritual energy to carry out our duties as vicegerent of Allah on this earth. □

Prophetic Supplications

- At the time of the call to *Maghrib* Prayers عند آذان المغرب

اللهم إن هذا إقبال ليلك وإدبار
نهارك وأصوات دعائك فأغفر لي .

O Allah, this is the beginning of Your night and the end of Your day. I have supplicated to You so forgive me.

- At the beginning of each prayer - the opening supplication

دعاء الإستفتاح بعد تكبيرة

الإحرام و قبل القراءة

اللهم باعد بيني و بين خطاياي كما
باعدت بين المشرق والمغرب ، اللهم
نقني من خطاياي كما ينقى الثوب
الأبيض من الدنس ، اللهم إغسلني
من خطاياي بالثلج والماء والبرد .

O Allah, make the distance between me and my sins as far as you have made the distance between the East and West. O Allah, cleanse me of my sins as a white garment is cleansed of dirt. O Allah, purify me from my sins by snow, rain and hail. □

The Witr Prayer صلاة الوتر

1 Significance

- *Sunnah Mu'akkadah* (act always performed and recommended by the Prophet - PBUH).
- Observed in Ramadan, as well as in other months.

2 Time

- Starts from after *Isha* prayer and continues until *Fajr*.
- Preferable to delay it till the latter part of the night.

3 Nature and Number of Rak'at

- Total number of *rak'at* can be thirteen, eleven, nine, seven, five, three, or one.
- One may pray these *rak'at* one after another, without making any *tashahud*, except in the one before the last *rak'ah*, then stands to perform the last *rak'ah* wherein one makes another *tashahud* and end the prayer with *taslim*.
- If one is praying three *rak'at* it is permissible to pray two *rak'at*, conclude them and then pray one *rak'ah* with *tashahud* and *taslim*; or pray all the three *rak'at* with two *tashahud* and one *taslim*.

4 Recitation after Fatiha

- It is permissible to recite any *surah*.
- If one is praying three *rak'at* it is preferable to recite:
 - ⇒ *Al-A'la* (Quran:87) سورة الأعلى in the first
 - ⇒ *Al Kafirun* (Qur'an:109) سورة الكافرون in the second
 - ⇒ The last three *surahs* (Qur'an 112, 113, 114) سورة الإخلاص، الفلق، الناس in the third.

5 Al-Qunut (Special Supplication in the Last Rak'ah)

- To be made during the standing posture, before *s u j j u d* (prostration), or before *ruku* (bowing).

اللهم إهدني فيمن هديت،
وعافني فيمن عافيت، وتولني
فيمن توليت، وبارك لي
فيما أعطيت، وقني شر ما
قضيت، فإنك تقضي ولا يقضى
عليك، وإنه لا يذل من
واليت، ولا يعز من عاديت،
تباركت ربنا وتعاليت، وصلى
الله على النبي محمد

“O Allah, guide me among those whom You have guided. Grant me safety among those whom You granted safety. Take me into Your charge among those whom You have taken into Your Charge. Bless me in what You have given me. Protect me from the evil that You have decreed, for You decree and nothing is decreed for You. And there is no humiliation for whom You take as a ward and there is no honor for whom You take as an enemy. Blessed and exalted are You, our Lord.”

6 Supplication after Witr (after taslim)

سبحان الملك القدوس “Glory be to the Master, the Holy.” three times, saying after the third time رب الملائكة والروح “Lord of the angels and the spirits”. Then make the supplication

اللهم إني أعوذ برضاك من سخطك، وأعوذ بمعافاتك من عقوبتك، وأعوذ بك

منك، لا أحصي ثناء عليك، أنت كما أثنيت على نفسك

“O Allah, I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your anger. And I seek refuge in Your granting well-being from Your punishment. And I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot reckon Your praise You are as You have praised Yourself.

Continued from page 1

Editorial

Fasting orients the Muslim to the art of balancing the spiritual essentials with physical needs. It awakens the mind and rekindles clear thinking and consciousness of Allah. Fasting is the sobering of the mind and the reconstruction of our spiritual faculties.

To derive the full benefits and rewards from fasting we should abstain not only from food and drink but from all forms of disobedience to Allah. We should guard all our senses and our organs (*jawareh*) from unlawful things and direct each of them to their special state of worship (such as recitation of the Qur'an, prayers, Islamic studies, *tasbeeh*, and other virtuous acts). Specifically, guarding our senses includes the following:

- ♦ Lowering the gaze, and refraining from looking to anything blameworthy and disapproved.
- ♦ Banning the tongue from raving, lying, backbiting, tail-bearing, obscenity, abusive language, wrangling and hypocrisy.
- ♦ Closing the ears to every reprehensible thing, because everything which is unlawful to utter is also unlawful to hear.
- ♦ Constraining the rest of the senses-restraining the hand from reaching evil, curbing the feet from pursuing wickedness; and avoiding questionable foods at the break of fast.

In addition, we should help the people who are suffering from hunger and from insecurity. If we cannot help them materially, we should remember them in our supplications.

May Allah accept our fasting, forgive our sins and make us among those who, on the day of judgment, enter paradise from the *Rayyan* gate - the gate reserved for the fasting believers. Ameen ☐

عيد مبارك

May Allah shower you and your family with the blessings of Eid.

New Islamic Software

A new Arabic program on the *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) of business transactions on CD-ROM has been developed by **Sakhr Computer Company in Cairo**. The program is for the IBM PC and covers seventeen aspects of business transactions including loans, deposits, trust, endowments, transfers, minting, warranty, leasing, sharing, exchanges, pawning, sales, planting and reconciliation. The program is distributed by **Digitek International** (see address on page 1). ☐

**Important Dates**

Eid - ul - Fitr, 1 Shawwal, 1417.....February 9, 1997

Eid - ul - Adha, 10 Zul-Hijjah, 1417...April 18, 1997

New Islamic Year, 1 Muharram, 1418...May 8, 1997

Note: Please contact the National Organizations listed on the back page for confirmation of these dates.