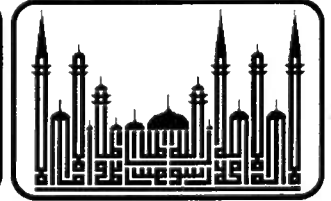


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Perspectives



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Editorial

The birth of the McCaughey family's septuplets on November 19 of last year dominated the news during that time and stimulated discussion regarding ethical issues involved in assisted reproduction and multiple fetal birth. A new web page was established on the internet for them (URL address : [http:// www.ld.net /~kmannist/septs.htm](http://www.ld.net/~kmannist/septs.htm)). The family had one daughter and disparately wanted another child, and through the help of the fertility clinic, Allah granted them the seven children. Less publicized were the news of two Saudi women, each giving birth to septuplets, the first in September 97, and the second in January 98.

The issues raised include how far can doctors, go in providing assisted reproduction, and in case of multiple fetuses, can they do selective reduction (abortion) of some, so that the others have a better chance to survive in a healthy state. Multiple births originate from the release and fertilization of more than one egg or the division of one egg very early in its development. The use of fertility drugs and in-vitro fertilization increases the incidence of multiple births.

The success of in-vitro fertilization, and of multiple fetal birth should serve as an eye opener to show us the power

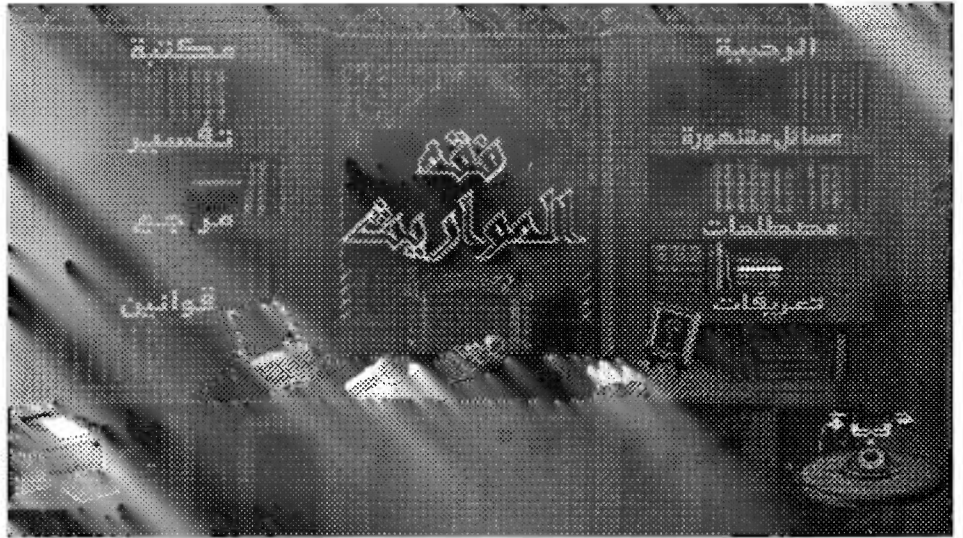
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New Islamic Software on Inheritance

A new version of the Arabic Program "Al-Mawareeth" has been released by Sakhr Computer Company in Egypt. The new program is interactive and provides a simple way for writing an Islamic will according to any of the schools of thought (including Hanafi, Malki, Hanbali, and Shafie). The program has elaborate charts and graphics and provides descriptions of the rulings of the different Muslim jurists concerning inheritance. The Program is on a CD-ROM, works on windows 3.1 and 95, and 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

Jihad in Islam

الجهاد في الإسلام

Jihad, which is an important aspect of Islam, is often referred to by the mass media as "holy war" and used to portray acts of violence, terrorism, and indiscriminate killing. In this article an attempt is made to remove some of the misconceptions and to present facts about *Jihad*, based on the Qur'an and the authentic traditions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Meaning of the word *Jihad*

The Arabic word *jihad* is repeated in the Qur'an 35 times. It literally means to strive hard, or to do one's utmost, for a certain set goal or to achieve a certain objective. The word implies the presence of opposing forces or opposition, against which struggle is needed. When we add to the word *jihad* the words *fi-sabeel Allah* في سبيل الله

(in the way of Allah), then the opposing forces are those which prevent us, or keep us back, from serving and worshipping Allah, from seeking His pleasure, and from marching on the straight path. Note that the word *jihad* is much more comprehensive than the Arabic word *Qital* which means fighting (in the battle).

Jihad includes all possible efforts: by body or by spirit; by sword or by pen; by hand or by tongue; by spending money and energies. The term "holy war" was invented by the crusaders in their misuse of Christianity to fight the Muslims.

Importance of *Jihad*

Jihad is considered as one of the best deeds that a Muslim can offer voluntarily. There are several verses in the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) which describe the importance of *jihad*. The following can be cited:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ .
(سورة العنكبوت - آية ٦٩)

"And those who strive in Our cause, We will certainly guide them to Our paths:
For verily Allah is with those who do right."
(Qur'an 29:69)

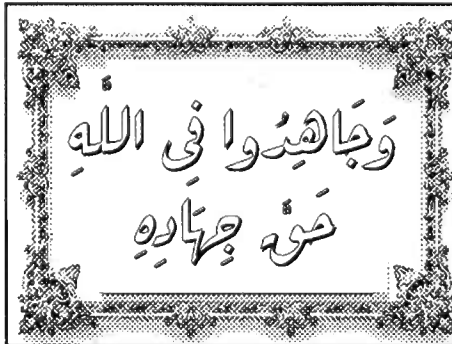
بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ .
(سورة الصف - آيات ١٠ ، ١١)

"O ye who believe! Shall I lead you to a bargain that will save you from a grievous chastisement? That ye believe in Allah and His messenger, and that ye strive (your utmost) in the cause of Allah, with your wealth and your persons: that will be best for you if ye but know."
(Qur'an 61:10,11)

"Not equal are those believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled, and those who strive in the cause of Allah with their goods and their persons. Allah has granted a grade higher to those who strive with their goods and persons than those who sit (at home). Unto all (in faith) has Allah promised good: but those who strive has He distinguished above those who sit (at home) by a great reward."
(Qur'an 4:95)

سئل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أى العمل أفضل قال إيمان بالله ورسوله ثم الجهاد ثم حج مبرور .

The Prophet (PBUH) was asked about the best of the deeds, he replied: *belief in Allah and His messenger, then striving hard, then properly performed Pilgrimage.*



"And strive in His (Allah's) cause as you ought to strive (with sincerity and under discipline)".
(Qur'an 22:78)

إن في الجنة مائة درجة أعدها الله للمجاهدين في سبيله كل درجتين ما بينهما كما بين السماء والأرض . (حديث شريف)

In Paradise there are hundred levels (grades) prepared for those who strive hard in the way of Allah, the distance between each two levels is like that between the heaven and the earth. (Prophetic Wisdom)

Three Spheres for *Jihad*

There are three spheres for (or three aspects of) *jihad* or striving hard (see figure on page 3); striving hard against: a) the evil within one's own self, b) the evil in society, and c) injustices in general. The article focuses on the first aspect of *jihad*. However a brief discussion is given subsequently on the

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ . تُوْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

other two aspects of *jihad*.

Jihad against Evil in Society

The Islamic terminology for *Jihad* against the evil in society is *Amr bil Ma'arof wa nahy an al-monkar*

(enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong). This type of *Jihad* which must be performed in an organized and disciplined manner, is needed to eradicate the problems of society (e.g., crime, drugs, and immorality).

The importance of carrying out this type of *jihad* is described in the Qur'an and in Prophetic traditions.

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى
الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ
(سورة آل عمران - آية ١٠٤)

"Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity." (Qur'an 3:104)

من رأى منكم منكراً فليغيره
بيده ، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه ،
فإن لم يستطع فبقلبه ، وذلك
أضعف الإيمان . (حديث شريف)

Anyone who sees a wrong should attempt to change it with his/her hand (or action); if he/she is powerless to do that then he/she should attempt to change it with his/her tongue; and if he/she is powerless to do that, then he/she should hate it from the bottom of his/her heart, and that shows the weakest faith. (Prophetic Wisdom)

إن الناس إذا رأوا المنكر ولا
يغيرونه ، أو شك أن يعمهم الله
بعقابه . (حديث شريف)

When the people see the wrong and do not attempt to change it, Allah would overwhelm them with His punishment. (Prophetic Wisdom)

Qital (Fighting)

Jihad against injustices in general may include *qital* (fighting in the battlefield). Despite the strong opposition and persecution the Muslims have received at the hands of the unbelievers, they were not permitted to fight until the second year after *Hijra* (migration of the Prophet (PBUH) from Mecca to Medina). The Islamic code of fighting is described in the Qur'an and in the authentic traditions of the Prophet (PBUH). Islamic fighting is a last resort corrective measure which must be limited to the combatants.

Muslims are allowed to fight in self defense and under well-defined limits, but are not permitted to wage a war of aggression.

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ
يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ .

(سورة البقرة - آية ١٩٠)

"Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress limits; for Allah loves not transgressors."

(Qur'an 2:190)

The Prophet (PBUH) instructed the Muslims not to kill the elderly, the women and the children, the saints and priests, the wounded from among the combatants, and even the animals. The Muslims should not destroy plants and water resources. When the enemy calls for peace, the Muslims must stop fighting, put their trust in Allah (SWT), and give peace a chance.

وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا
وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ .

(سورة الأنفال - آية ٦١)

"But if the enemy inclines towards peace, do you (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah: for He is the

Three Spheres for (Aspects of) Jihad

مجالات الجهاد الثلاثة

**Jihad against the
evil within one's
own self**

جهاد النفس

**Jihad against evil in society (enjoining
what is good and forbidding what is
wrong)**

الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر

**Jihad against injustices in
general (including fighting
in the battlefield)**

جهاد الظلم والبغي

(يشمل القتال)

Jihad means striving hard or exerting one's utmost

one that hears and knows (all things).”
(Qur'an 8:61)

Jihad Al-Nafs

Jihad against the evil within one's own self is referred to in Islam as *jihad al-nafs* جهاد النفس. It is the most difficult type of *jihad*. Without *Jihad al-nafs* a Muslim cannot proceed further on the road of *jihad*. Unless a Muslim performs *jihad al-nafs* and gets control over his/her own *nafs*; subdues his/her own evil desires and appetites, he/she cannot carry out his/her obligations to Allah (SWT). That is why the Prophet (PBUH) said:

أفضل الجهاد أن يجاهد الرجل
نفسه وهواه .

The best of *jihad* is for a person to make *jihad* against his/her own *nafs*, and his/her own whims and wishes.

المجاهد من جاهد نفسه في الله

The real *Mujahid* is the one who performs *jihad* against his/her own *nafs* for the sake of Allah.

Jihad al-nafs is more important and more difficult than even fighting in the battlefield. Moreover, while *Jihad* in the battlefield is needed only occasionally, or once in a while, sometimes probably never in one's life, *jihad al-nafs* is of perpetual nature. It is a life-long struggle which has to be carried out ceaselessly from the age of consciousness right up to the last breath of our life.

The question arises: why is *jihad al-nafs* so important in Islam? The answer is: our *nafs* (soul) is all the time trying to rebel against Allah (SWT), and take us away from the straight path; the path of faith and obedience. *Jihad al-nafs* means that we should curb and subdue all those passions and desires, thoughts and ideas, inclinations, tendencies, sentiments, and emotions which tend to take us away from Allah (SWT). At all times and at all places, we are at crossroads and we have to make decisions between the permitted and the prohibited, between the path of Islam and un-Islam, and between the legal and illegal use of all our faculties,

possessions and belongings.

At all the crossroads, a sincere *Mujahid* in the way of Allah has only one consideration, only one motivation, only one objective, and that is to achieve the pleasure of Allah (SWT). To achieve this goal by following the right road at every crossroad, the *Mujahid* has to control his/her own *nafs*, to fight against the persuasions and temptations of the self. The road to evil and un-Islam is apparently easier, attractive, and alluring. It is like going downhill which does not need much effort. On the other hand, the path of faith and obedience to Allah (SWT) is beset with hardships, troubles, and difficulties. It is like going uphill, requiring lots of moral and spiritual energy and strength. *Jihad al-nafs* is really a hard job!



Now, two questions arise: how can we carry out *jihad al-nafs* in our practical life? and what are the basic requirements for successfully accomplishing this task? The answer to the first question is: we should always try to identify the straight path with certainty, and do our utmost to remain on the straight path. A small deviation from the straight path can lead to bigger and more serious deviations.

The basic requirements for successfully carrying out *jihad al-nafs* are:

a) to equip ourselves with the authentic knowledge from the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) about Allah (SWT), the universe and our role in it, and b) to have a firm determination, not only a strong desire, to follow the straight path. Allah (SWT) promises to grant guidance to those who strive hard in His way (Qur'an 29:69)

I pray to Almighty Allah to help us in performing the difficult task of *jihad al-nafs*; grant us the guidance to His straight path; and give us the strength to remain on that path.

Ameen ☐

Prophetic Supplications

أدعية نبوية

- Anyone who says this supplication in the morning, or in the evening :

من قال حين يصبح أو يمسي : اللهم أنت ربى لا إله إلا أنت خلقتنى ، وأنا عبدك ، وأنا على عهدك ووعدك ما استطعت ، أعوذ بك من شر ما صنعت ، أبوء لك بنعمتك على ، وأبوء بذنبي ، فأغفر لى ، فإنه لا يغفر الذنوب إلا أنت ، فمات من يومه ، أوليته دخل الجنة .

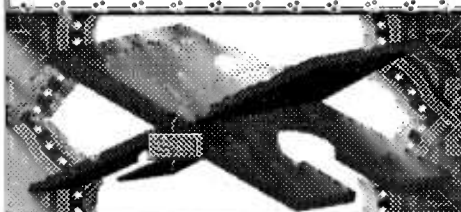
“O Allah! You are my Lord, none has the right to be worshipped except You, You created me and I am your servant and I abide to Your covenant and promise as best I can, I take refuge in You from the evil of which I have committed. I acknowledge Your favor upon me and I acknowledge my sin, so forgive me, for verily none can forgive sin except You”.

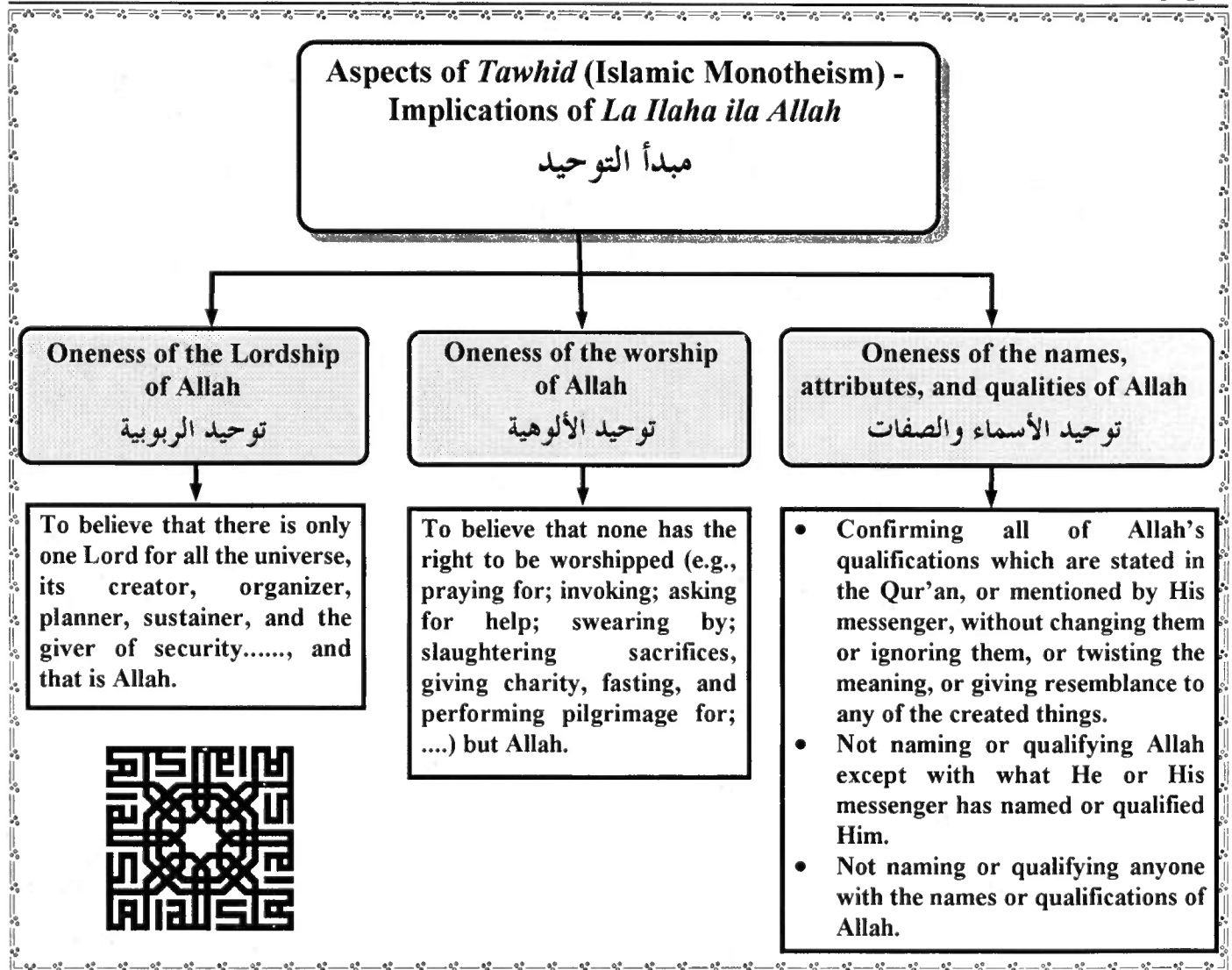
And dies on that day or night, he/she will enter paradise.

- Supplication for one in distress:

دعوات المكروب : اللهم رحمتك أرجو ، فلا تكلنى إلى نفسى طرفة عين ، وأصلح لى شأنى كله ، لا إله إلا أنت .

O Allah! it is Your mercy that I hope for, so do not leave me in charge of my affairs even for a blink of an eye and rectify for me all of my affairs. None has the right to be worshipped except You.





Effect of Belief in *Tawhid* on the individual's Behavior and Outlook

Sincere belief in *La Ilaha ila Allah* has the following effects on the behavior and outlook of the individual (the reasons are listed in ***bold italic font***)

- Enlarging the vision, widening the intellectual horizon, broadening the mind, and liberalizing the outlook. (***Allah is the creator of, and has the dominion over, Earth, heavens, and the entire universe - Qur'an 3:189, 5:120, 24:42, 57:5.***)
- Producing the highest degree of self-respect, and self esteem, and generating a sense of modesty and humbleness. (***Allah is the possessor of All power and none besides Him can benefit or harm us - Qur'an 3:26.***)
- Making the individual virtuous and upright. (***Success and salvation are achieved through purity of soul and righteousness of behavior - Qur'an 2:277, 13:29.***)
- Producing a strong degree of determination, patient perseverance, and trust in Allah. (***By fulfilling the Divine commands one is assured of Allah's support and of success - Qur'an 24:52, 41:30,31***).
- Inspiring bravery. (***Life, property and everything else belong to Allah - Qur'an 3:145***).
- Creating an attitude of peace and contentment , and purging the mind of jealousy, envy, and greed. (***Rizk (sustenance) is a creation of Allah and follows His Commands - Qur'an 51:22***).
- Keeping away the temptations of resorting to base and unfair means for achieving success. (***Honor, power, authority - everything - is under command of Allah - Qur'an 10:65, 35:10.***)
- Making the individual observe Allah's laws. (***Allah knows what we reveal and what we conceal - Qur'an 20:7, 40:19.***)

أحب الأعمال إلى الله الصلاة لوقتها ، ثم
بر الوالدين ، ثم الجهاد في سبيل الله .

*The best of the deeds to Allah are: performing
prayers on time, kindness to the parents, then
striving hard in the way of Allah*

(Prophetic wisdom)

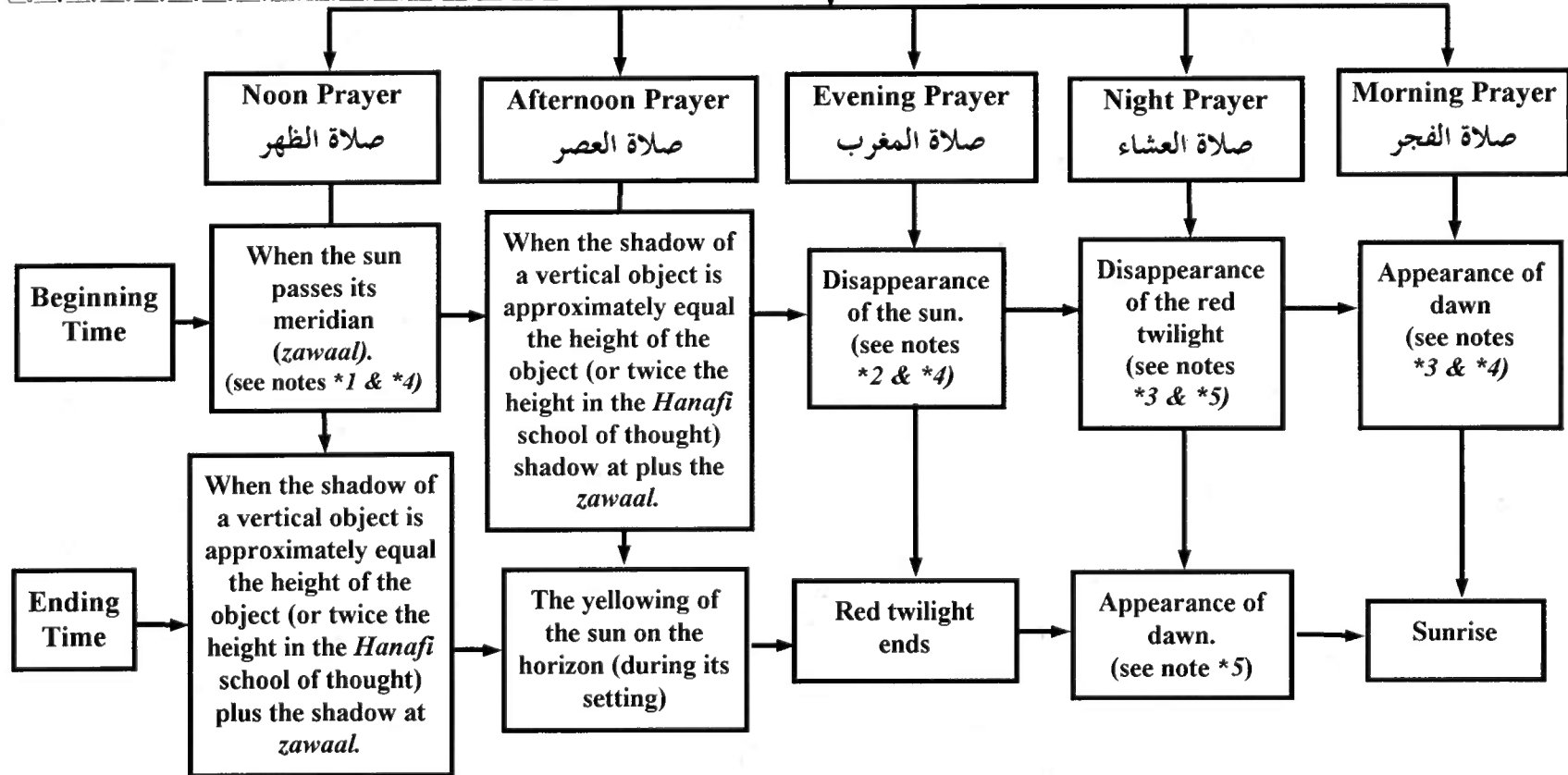
Times of the Daily Prayers

مواقيت الصلاة

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا .

(سورة النساء - من آية ١٠٣)

*Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the
believers at fixed times. (Qur'an 4:103)*



Notes:

*1. about five minutes past *zawaal*, *2. about three to five minutes after sunset, *3. when the sun is 15 to 18 degrees below horizon, *4. It is preferable to pray the afternoon, evening, and morning prayers early in their times; the same applies to noon prayer (unless it is extremely hot), *5. It is preferable to delay the night prayer until half the night. It is not recommended to delay it past the middle of the night.

Times in Which Prayers are Prohibited

الأوقات المنهى عن الصلاة فيها

After *Fajr* (morning) Prayer until the Sun has Risen to the Length of a Spear above the Horizon

When the Sun is at its Meridian (*zawaal*) Until it Moves Slightly to the west

After the *Asr* (afternoon) Prayer until the Sun Sets

Most Muslim religious scholars agree that one can make up missed prayers after the *Fajr* and *Asr*.

Continued from page 1

Editorial

of Allah. For example, compare the efforts made by the fertility clinics, and by the McCaughey family, with the effortless conception of the barren old wife of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham), when Allah (SWT) decided to grant her and her old husband a son. His command was "be" and the conception immediately happened.

إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ .
(سورة مريم - من آية ٣٥)

"When He (Allah) determines a matter, He only says to it, "Be" and it is."
(Qur'an 19:35)

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ .
(سورة النحل - آية ٤٠)

"For to anything which We have willed, We but say "Be" and it is."
(Qur'an 16:40)

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ .
(سورة يس - آية ٨٢)

"Verily, when He (Allah) intends a thing, His command is, "Be", and it is!"
(Qur'an 36:82)

Prophet Ibrahim's wife was very surprised when the angels, who came to visit Prophet Ibrahim in human form, gave her the good news that a son Ishaq (Isaac) will be born to her, and through him she will have a grandson Ya'qub (Jacob). The Qur'an describes her surprise as follows:

فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ .
(سورة الذاريات - من آية ٢٩)

She smote her forehead and said: "A barren old Woman". (Qur'an 51:29)

قَالَتْ يَا وَيْلَتَىٰ أَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ .
(سورة هود - آية ٧٢)

She said: "Alas for me! shall I bear a child, seeing I am an old woman, and my husband is an old man? That would indeed be a wonderful thing".
(Qur'an 11:72)

The response of the angels was:

أَتَعْجَبِينَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ .
(سورة هود - من آية ٧٣)

"Do you wonder at Allah's decree."

(Qur'an 11:73)

This was to remind her that though old people do not bear, it is not beyond Allah's power to bring this about.

As to the ethical issues in multiple fetal birth, Muslim scholars need to study them, with fertility experts, and come up with clear rulings in the spirit of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH).

I pray to almighty Allah to give us the guidance and the wisdom to benefit from His many signs around us.

Ameen



Important Dates

Eid-ul-Adha..... April 7, 1998

Muharram 1, 1419... April 28, 1998

Ramadan 1 December 20, 1998

Eid-ul-Fitr January 19, 1999

Eid-ul-Adha March 28, 1999

Muharram 1,1420 April 17, 1999

Ramadan 1 December 10, 1999

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