

Al-Hewar

The Dialogue

ISBN# 1090 8382

Ramadan Mubarak (رمضان مبارك)



Spiritual Health

By Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi
Ex-Director at Islamic Center of Orange County, Garden Grove, California
Chairman of Fiqh Council of North America

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا (٧) فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (٨) قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا (٩) وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا (١٠)
y the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right;
truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it! (Quran, Surah Ash-Shams 91:7-10)



[But those will prosper who purify themselves.] (Quran, Surah Al-A`la 87:14) قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّى (١٤)

We human beings do not have only our body and mind; we also have a soul. The soul is sometimes described as spirit (*nufus*) or heart (*qalb*). We know that our heart has physical functions, but there is no scientific evidence to prove that it does not have any spiritual functions. The soul probably resides in the heart or is attached to it. The soul is the inner dimension of our being. It is related to the body and mind as well, but it has its own being and existence, most probably, in or near the heart.

Spiritual health is as important, if not more, as the physical and mental health. On the physical and mental health depend our meaningful life and success in this world, but on the spiritual health depends our success and salvation both in this world and in the hereafter. Imam Ghazali in his book *Ihya' 'ulum ad-din* says that every organ of our body has a function; when it fails to do its function, it means it is not well. The function of the soul or the spiritual heart is to know its Creator, to love Him, and to seek closeness to Him. If the heart fails in this function then we must know that it is sick.

It is important to know the ailments that make the heart weak and sick. In the language of the Qur'an, it is not only the eyes that get blind; the hearts also become blind.

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ (٤٦)

[Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts may thus learn wisdom and their ears may thus learn to hear? Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts that are in their breasts.] (Quran, Surah Al-Hajj 22:46)

The Qur'an has spoken in many places about the sickness of the hearts. Allah says in the Qur'an:

فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ يَمَّا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ (١٠)

[In their hearts is a disease; and Allah has increased their disease: and grievous is the penalty they (incur), because they are false (to themselves).] (Quran Surah Al-Baqarah 2:10)

When the heart gets sick, it loses its desire and ability to do right and good deeds. This affects the morals and manners of a person and his general behavior. What are the major diseases that affect the hearts? And how can we take precaution? And what are the cures in case one is affected with these ailments?

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Editorial

MET Celebrates 15 years of Successful Partnership
Happy 15th Anniversary, MET— 1993-2008

"Fifteen years ago, MET was founded with the dream to help create an open, empowering, and collaborative atmosphere within the Muslim community in the greater Portland area. Over the last fifteen years, MET has made significant strides in the development of Portland's Islamic based education. MET's focus on education through positive interaction with Muslims and non-Muslims and honest communication with the media and public officials has positively impacted not only the people of Portland, but well beyond our local area. The greatest impact has been on a core group of students who have spent their formative years at ISMET/OIA. These students have grown to be successful academically, but more importantly, become the embodiment of what it means to be a confident, active, believing and practicing young American Muslim. Inshallah, it will be these very same students who grow into leadership roles in the coming years and help lead our community to be in the vanguard of those who engage in bridge building dialogue, faith based community service, and stewardship of Earth and humanity."

Please join us in our commitment to raise \$400,000 this year. We can only achieve our goal with your generosity. How to send your gifts to MET:

- Donate online (<http://www.metpdx.com/supportus.html>)
- Donate stocks/mutual funds (please call us for details)
- Donate over the phone with your credit card
- Mail us a check to:
Muslim Educational Trust (MET)
P.O. Box 283 Portland, Oregon 97207, USA

*Jazakum Allahu Khayran!
May Allah swt reward you most generously
for your generosity! Ameen!*

Meet Al-Hewar's Editorial Board and Outreach Committee Members

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Karen Finkbeiner	Sahar Bassyouni	Katie Escobar
Lawrence DeBlock		

Al-Hewar is published three times a year (*inshaa'Allah*) by the Muslim Educational Trust. *The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of MET.*

If you are interested in publishing your article in *Al-Hewar*, please contact us at (503) 579 6621, and send us your article at MET, P. O. Box 283, Portland, OR 97207 or by email at metpdx@metpdx.org

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**Did you count your blessings today?
Did you make someone smile today?
Did you make someone's life better today?**

..... **Did you make a difference today?**

(Continued from page 1)

Following are some of the diseases of the hearts:

1. Arrogance and conceit (*al-kibr wa al-ghurur*)
2. Ostentation (*ar-riya*)
3. Jealousy or envy, hate and deceit (*al-hasad, al-hiqd, al-ghish*)
4. Suspicion (*su' az-zann*)
5. Anger (*al-ghadab*)
6. Stinginess (*al-bukh*)
7. Love of power, money, position, and fame (*jah*)

These are called “diseases of the heart” (*amrad al-qalb*), and they lead to major sins if they are not controlled and carefully treated. In the Qur’an and Sunnah and in the spiritual writings of Muslim scholars such as Al-Ghazali and Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyah, we find a lot of discussion for the treatment of these ailments.

Arrogance and conceit stem from egotism and overestimation of oneself and one’s abilities or merits. This leads sometimes to the denial of the Creator, as happened to Satan. The best treatment of this disease is to cultivate modesty. We have to remind ourselves always that we are the servants and slaves of Allah. We totally depend on Him for our being and existence.

Ostentation is called “hidden idolatry” (*ash-shirk al-khafiyy*). It is a desire to show off and seek praises from others. It takes away sincerity and seriousness to pursue one’s goals and objectives. When a person becomes too much involved with ostentation, he becomes shallow and superficial. It may also lead to hypocrisy. The best cure for it is to check the intention (*niyyah*) before any action. A believer must remind himself that his work is for the sake of Allah alone.

Jealousy, envy, hate, and deceit stem from the lack of respect, mercy, and love for others. A jealous person does not like to see others happy, successful, and prosperous. Very often jealousy and envy lead to hate, deceit, and violence. The best treatment is to have positive envy by competing with others in acts of goodness and use this as an incentive to achieve more and better.

Suspicion comes from lack of trust and confidence in others. Allah says in the Qur’an [Some suspicion is sin.] Suspicion creates cynicism and takes away hope and optimism. Suspicious persons or cynics are those who, when they see actions and hear some words that have the possibility of being positive or negative, they take the negative and evil. Suspicion sometimes also leads to violence. It is good to be cautious and careful, but we must

keep our attitude positive. If we want to be trusted, we must trust others as well.

Anger is given to human beings as a mechanism for self-defense, but if it is not properly controlled, it becomes very destructive. In the Hadith it is called “fire.” The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said that when you get angry change your environment, change your position, and drink some water. Imam Ghazali said, “Love of Allah extinguishes the fire of anger.”

Stinginess is a terrible disease. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) taught us to seek Allah’s refuge from stinginess. Stinginess stems from selfishness, materialism, and too much love of this world. It means lack of care and consideration for others. It holds people from fulfilling their duties and recognizing the rights of others. It leads sometimes to cheating and dishonesty. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, “Be aware of stinginess. It destroyed many nations before you. It made them to shed the blood of each other and misappropriate what was sacrosanct.” (Muslim, 2578)

Love of *jah* – that is, the extreme desire for money, power, position, and fame – is another major disease of the heart. This is also called in the Qur’an and Hadith as “love of this world” (*hubb ad-dunya*). In a hadith it is reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, “Two hungry wolves in a herd of sheep are not as destructive and harmful as the love of money and extravagance are for the religion of a person.” (At-Tirmidhi 2376)

The cure for this is to remind oneself always that this world is *fitnah* (a test and trial) and the real world is the Hereafter. Spiritual health comes with our sincere devotion to Allah with prayers, reading of the Qur’an, and being in the company of the good people. May Allah keep us all in good physical, mental, and spiritual health. Ameen. ☪

Imam Ghazali in his book *Ihya’ ‘ulum ad-din* says that every organ of our body has a function; when it fails to do its function, it means it is not well. The function of the soul or the spiritual heart is to know its Creator, to love Him, and to seek closeness to Him. If the heart fails in this function then we must know that it is sick.



The Islamic Social Services
of Oregon State

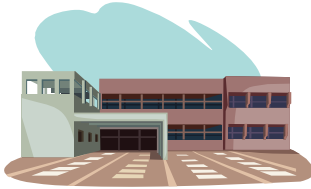
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MET Achievements

What's new at MET?

- 🌸 MET hosted its first Annual Book fair
- 🌸 MET launched its first Annual Career Day
- 🌸 MET participated in a Jewish/Christian/Muslim Interfaith group "Between Women"
- 🌸 MET held its second Annual ISMET/OIA Alumni Gathering at Blue Lake

MET-sponsored events:

Al-hamdo-lillah, the following events have been successfully sponsored by MET over the past few months:

- 🌸 MET hosts the annual Interfaith alliance potluck; the theme this year was community service
- 🌸 MET participates in the Annual Climate Vigil in recognition of Earth Day 2008.
- 🌸 MET participates in a week-long "World Market Place" event in Vancouver at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, July 21st-25th, 2008.
- 🌸 MET continues to offer support to the Institute of Christian Muslim Understanding (ICMU) and the Interfaith Council of Greater Portland.



Between Women — Interfaith Group, July 2008



Volunteer Appreciation, May 2008



1st Annual Book Fair, April 2008



2008 ISMET/OIA Alumni and current students at Blue Lake, August 2008

Support MET with your Zakah money



How to send your gifts to MET:

- Donate online <http://www.metpdx.com/supportus.html>
- Donate stocks/mutual funds (please call us for details) (503) 579-6621
- Donate over the phone with your credit card
- Mail us a check to: Muslim Educational Trust (MET) P.O. Box 283 Portland, Oregon 97207, USA

MET's Mission

To enrich the public's understanding of Islam and dispel common myths and stereotypes, while serving the Muslim community's educational, social, and spiritual needs in order to develop generations of proud and committed Muslims who lead our community to the fore front of bridge-building dialogue, faith-based community service, and stewardship of Earth and humanity.



ICMU's historic event "Come to a Common World", April 2008



ICMU's historic event "Come to a Common World", April 2008



Keynote Speaker, Tom Krattenmaker, Vice President of PR at Lewis & Clark College at MET's Annual Cultural Night, May 2008.



Annual Climate Vigil in recognition of Earth Day, April 2008



Islamic School of MET & Oregon Islamic Academy Achievements

Your Feedback...

A delegation from the Islamic School of Eugene visits MET in January 2008: (in the words of Susan)

I really appreciated your hospitality when we came to visit! Your sharing [information] about your school has helped us to see what our school could become inshaa'Allah. Many thanks!

Oregon Episcopal School 8th grade visits the Oregon Islamic Academy in May 2008:

To Julie Ahmed and the MET:

Thank you so much for the tour and all the presentations. We really enjoyed it all. Thank you from Oregon Episcopal School Staff and 8th Grade Students.

Allison Frost of OPB visits OIA in May 2008:

Dear Julie, Please tell your class thank you from me for being so interested and curious about the world. It's inspiring! Please keep it up! All the best!

Yasmine, one of the recipients of MET's Dr. Riyaz Ahmed scholarship writes:

I want to sincerely thank you all for aiding me financially throughout my college education. Without your help, school would have been much more of an obstacle. I will be grateful for eternity. May Allah continue to bless each and everyone of you!

ISMET/OIA Parents hold a surprise Teacher Appreciation Luncheon in May 2008



New playground



New Science Lab



9 new classrooms



New Computer Lab

ISMET/OIA Results on Oregon Benchmark Testing

The Muslim Educational Trust is proud to release overall school results of both the Islamic School of MET (ISMET) and the Oregon Islamic Academy (OIA) for the Oregon Statewide Assessment Tests for the 2007/2008 academic year. 3rd graders were tested in Mathematics and Reading/Literature, while 5th and 8th graders were tested in Mathematics, Reading/Literature, and Science. 4th and 7th graders were tested in Reading/Literature, Mathematics, and Writing.

Overall, ISMET/OIA students performed outstandingly well.

- 96% of all students met or exceeded state expectations in Reading & Literature (with 46% exceeding)
- 81% met or exceeded state expectations in Mathematics (with 35% exceeding)
- 74% met or exceeded expectations in Science
- 80% of all students tested met or exceeded expectations in Writing.

3rd, 5th, and 8th graders outperformed all Oregon Public School Districts as a whole in all subject areas as did the 4th and 7th graders in writing.

The 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, and 8th graders also outperformed many of the leading individual public school districts in many or all subject areas. These districts include the Beaverton Public School District, Lake Oswego Public School District, Portland Public Schools District, and the Tigard-Tualatin Public School District.

The 3rd graders and 5th graders were especially strong. As a group, 100% of them met or exceeded expectations in Reading and 97% met or exceeded in Mathematics; 60% exceeded expectations in Reading and Literature, and 40% exceeded expectations in Mathematics. Although it is difficult to compare district scores with a single school's performance, the 70% of 5th graders who exceeded expectations in Reading and Literature represents a remarkable number: no other grade in any district had as high of a percentage of its students exceed expectations in a single subject matter.

ISMET/OIA is extremely proud of its students, its teaching staff, and the community volunteers who have helped to make the school a success. We thank and praise Allah for His help and guidance and look forward to continued success in the future, Inshaa Allah.

Mark your calendars for upcoming MET Events.
Everyone is most welcome!
 Please check our website at www.metpdx.org



Youth Corner

Did you know that some animals fast?

These include some insects, ground squirrels, salmon, snails, the spiny anteater, the plover bird, silkworms and penguins. Yes, penguins! Check it out!

Fasting of Penguins

By Dr. `Abd Al-Hakam `Abd Al-Latif As-Sa`idi
Lecturer of Entomology – Faculty of Agriculture –
Al-Azhar University (www.islamonline.net)



Penguins are sea birds that live in the cold regions. In fact, there are 17 species of these birds in the entire world. Only one of these species inhabits the North Pole territories while the remaining species are distributed widely in the Southern Hemisphere, extending along south Australia, Africa and America.

These species differ totally in their way of laying and hatching eggs. As for those living in the Southern Hemisphere, they spend the winter therein. With the coming of spring, they return in groups to their native land in the North Pole, covering (a distance of) hundreds of miles until they reach their destination and proper location for reproduction. Upon arriving there, they start immediately building their nests out of stone pieces. Following three weeks from their arrival, they will have completed building these nests and the process of procreation. In the usual course of things, the female lays two white eggs mixed with blue color. The male penguin undertakes the task of brooding eggs instead of the female penguin, which is engrossed in seeking food in the deep-water seas. On the other hand, the male penguin goes on in a state of fasting for two weeks until the chicks (the young penguins) develop. When this happens, the male penguin rushes at maximum speed into the sea to drink some of the seawater and to eat from Allah's provisions. It eats this food in a state of merriment whereas the female penguin (the mother) comes back in order to feed the flourishing young penguins.

Unlike all species of penguins, there is another kind called "the Emperor" which does not build nests for the young. Actually, it spends winter in the North Frozen Zone wherein it lays its eggs; the mother lays the eggs, not on snow, but on its hind feet. Sometimes, the male penguin (the father) may relieve her and they remain in a state of fasting throughout the winter season.



With the advent of spring, the ice melts and the eggs are incubated reproducing those young penguins. The secret behind this strict kind of fasting is that the penguin's eggs require this specific degree of coldness. Practically, when the young penguins grow up, they start observing fasting through abstaining from food until their down falls out and their bodies are covered with feathers. At this very moment, they rush into water declaring the end of this fasting through having food and drink.

As for the old penguins, they also observe fasting for another period that is sufficient to replace their old feathers with another which is more glowing and flourishing. They throw themselves into the sea merrily as if they imitate the human beings when they wear new clothes on the coming of the `Eid that comes after fasting in Ramadan or as if the human beings imitate these wondrous creatures. More accurately, we can say, "It is a recurring Sunnah in Allah's creation."

Allah, Most High, says,

[...That is the decree of (Him), the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing] ﴿

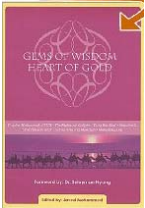


Did you know that.....

- Prophet Dawood (pbuh) fasted every other day
- Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) fasted every Monday and Thursday
- Prophet Muhammad fasted the middle 3 days of each lunar month (13th, 14th, and 15th)
- The Quran was 1st revealed to Prophet Muhammad in the month of Ramadan on the night of power (laylatul-qadr) in the cave of Hira'
- There is a special entrance to Jannah that is solely dedicated to those who fasted, namely Rayyan
- Good deeds are multiplied 70 times in Ramadan
- Lying/cheating/being hurtful to others during Ramadan nullifies the person's fast
- Ramadan is the month of patience and immense reward
- Taraweeh prayers is a beautiful sunnah during Ramadan



Book Reviews



Gems of Wisdom Heart of Gold

Edited by Javed Mohammed

2000, Pyramid Connections, ISBN: 0970126107

From the Publisher

This is not just another feel-good book, or a book of quotes, or speeches. The author took a long six years to collect, refine, and compose, these precious gems of wisdom. This is a piece of literary work, the words are few, the message is clear, the meaning is deep, and all strike a chord in the heart, the heart of gold. The topics are varied including knowledge, wealth, technology, social issues, spirituality, and leadership. As a publisher we've gone to great pains not only to have great content but also great appeal along with a quality product. This book has been produced using some of the best talent not only in Silicon Valley but also across the United States. Both the youth and adults have participated in this project, producing an outstanding mix of simple but attractive appeal as well as a depth which gives the reader much to ponder on.



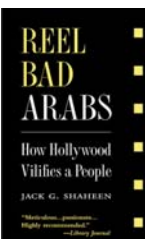
The Road to Mecca

By Muhammad Asad

2000, Fons Vitae, ISBN: 1887752374

Muhammad Asad, born Leopold Weiss in the Polish city of Lvov in 1900, was the grandson of an orthodox Rabbi. By his early twenties he could write and read German, French and Polish languages. He took to

journalism and travelled Middle East as the correspondent of 'Frankfurter Zeitung' of Germany. After his conversion to Islam, he again travelled and worked throughout the Muslim world, including Arabia, Iran, Jordan, North Africa and Pakistan. In 1953 he was appointed as Pakistan's plenipotentiary to the United Nations. He moved to Morocco where he completed his magnum opus, the 'Message of the Qur'an.' He later settled in Lisbon where he died on 20th February 1992.



Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People

By Jack G. Shaheen

2001, Interlink Publishing Group, ISBN: 1566563887

Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People is a groundbreaking book that dissects a slanderous history dating from cinema's earliest days to contemporary

Hollywood blockbusters that feature machine-gun wielding and bomb-blowing "evil" Arabs.

Award-winning film authority Jack G. Shaheen, noting that only Native Americans have been more relentlessly smeared on the silver screen, painstakingly makes his case that "Arab" has remained Hollywood's shameless shorthand for "bad guy," long after the movie industry has shifted its portrayal of other minority groups. In this comprehensive study of nearly one thousand films, arranged alphabetically in such chapters as "Villains," "Sheikhs," "Cameos," and "Cliffhangers," Shaheen documents the tendency to portray Muslim Arabs as Public Enemy #1-brutal, heartless, uncivilized Others bent on terrorizing civilized Westerners.

Shaheen examines how and why such a stereotype has grown and spread in the film industry and what may be done to change Hollywood's defamation of Arabs.

Highlights from a sermon delivered by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) shortly before the beginning of Ramadan

Adopted from www.themodernreligion.com
and www.beautifulislam.net

Ibn Khuzaima reported on the authority of Salman al-Farisi that the Prophet (pbuh) delivered a Khutbah on the last day of Sh'aban saying: "O people: You are about to enter the shadow of a great blessed month. A night therein is better than a thousand months. Allah (swt) made fasting during this month an obligation and encouraged people to perform extra prayers during its nights. Seeking nearness to Allah (swt) through a good deed would be considered like performing an obligatory act of worship. In turn, performance of an obligatory act of worship during this month would be rewarded seventy times more than during any other month. It is the month of patience, and the reward for patience is Heaven (Jannah). It is the month of comforting others, and the month during which believers would enjoy plentifulness and increased sustenance. The Prophet (pbuh) went on to say: "Make sure you frequently do four things, two of which would please your Lord and the other two are indispensable for your salvation in the Hereafter. As for the two things that would please your Lord, they are: testifying to the oneness of Allah (swt) and seeking repentance. And the other two are: asking Allah the favor of entering Jannah and seeking refuge in Him from the Hellfire."

And here are more blessed sayings of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that we need to live by during this holy month of Ramadan inshaa'Allah:

The Prophet said, "Whoever does not give up false statements (i.e. telling lies), and evil deeds, and speaking bad words to others, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink (fasting)." Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith 8.83, Narrated by Abu Huraira.

"Whoever gives food to a fasting person to break his fast, shall have his sins forgiven, and he will be saved from the Fire of Hell, and he shall have the same reward as the fasting person, without the latter's reward being diminished at all." [Narrated by Ibn Khuzaymah]

Join our team

Are you interested in making the best of your talents and shaping the future of our children and our community?
If so, then let's make a difference together!
Contact MET at (503) 579 6621

Weekend Community Activities

Friday

Salatul Jumaa

- 1:30 pm ♦ MET Center, 10330 SW Scholls Ferry Road, ph. (503) 579-6621
 12:30 pm ♦ Portland State University, Campus Ministry (633 SW Montgomery)
 1:30 pm ♦ Muslim Community Center 3801 NE MLK Blvd, ph. (503) 281-7691
 1:30 pm ♦ Masjid AsSaber 10323 SW 43rd Avenue, ph. (503) 293-6554
 1:30 pm ♦ Bilal Masjid Association 4115 SW 160th, Beaverton, ph. (503) 591-7233
 1:30 pm ♦ ISSWW 7311 NE 43rd, Vancouver, Washington, ph. (360) 694-7799

Saturday

2nd Saturday of each Month: Potluck/Forum @PSU Smith Center Cafeteria

Sunday

- 8:00-8:30 am ♦ Radio program: "Islamic Point of View" on KBOO FM 90.7
 8:00-9:00 am ♦ TV program: "Imam W. Dean Mohammed" on Portland Community Media,
 Channel 11 on Comcast cable



MET INFORMATION

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