



# THE BISMILLAH VISION

Birmingham Islamic Society's Newsletter

*Our Vision: To become the platform for developing and sustaining a vibrant Islamic community in the Greater Birmingham area. This shall be done in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah, in order to help improve the quality of life for all.*

August 2008  Rajab/Shab'an 1429

## The Quiet Revolution

by Aiman Fatima

This has been a quiet revolution. Although it is vivid and conspicuous, so much so that it stares you in the face sometimes, you usually do not realize it. However, you walk ahead ignoring it, thinking about how the things around us are precisely the way they should be. It is 'quiet' because it has just been happening without any announcements or admonitions. It is the revolutionary way in which Islam is being followed

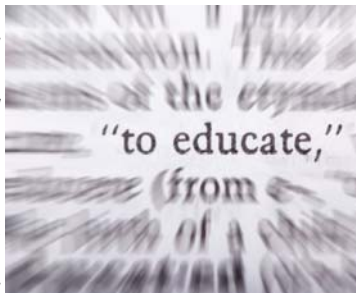
I had never heard of Bayyinah Institute. One fateful weekend evening I accompanied my husband to Homewood Masjid. We had heard about some talk that was going to take place. I came to know that some people had even traveled all the way from Tuscaloosa to attend it. I was surprised. Moments later I saw a young bearded man standing in front of us with the mike and a smile. This was Nouman Ali Khan. As I heard

fusing it with a classic humor while pulling off a talk as serious as the heavens!

I had never ever thought about learning Arabic. I have been a quasi strange Muslim! I have been reciting the Quran meticulously in my salaah and otherwise all these years. However, I never understood what I read or heard. Just reading the Quran with the English translation has been a

We were going to be a wonderful class comprising of men and women of different ages and nationalities. We had one goal – to learn Arabic and understand the direct quote of Allah (The Quran).

in the Western world, especially in North America. There is a collective and constant effort by Muslims to actually incorporate Islam in their daily lives. In spite of their busy schedules, you see Muslims in a constant phase of improving themselves at their religion. It could actually put some people in the so called Islamic countries to shame. So how do you feel when the person giving the khutba, for example, is a doctor and is also well-versed in the Quran? You could marvel at the fine balance that exists between worldly achievements and Islamic learning. However, the mass majority rarely reach that point of realization because these things are taken for granted here. But it could be a trendsetter for people elsewhere.



Brother Nouman speak I realized that he was not only capable of mesmerizing the audience but he could also actively pull you into the center of the ongoing discussion. So you weren't left with any option other than to dive into the pool of his queries and counter queries. Further, he wasn't the sort of man who could see long faces or serious expressions in his audience. So you could actually see him jumping a little bit, giggling in between, and

great feat for me. Learning Arabic or even venturing anywhere close to that area appeared to be an even more daunting task. But here was a man trying to convince me that he could actually turn the whole stuff into a piece of cake for me. Amazing! Also he could do it in 10 straight days. Really?

Quran is the direct quote of Allah. Since it is from the ultimate source, every word has divine wisdom. The Quran has been translated into different languages including English. However, there is always a loss in translation. And this loss is not ordinary since it is something divine which is being lost. For example, in the Quran Allah uses two different

> See **Revolution** Pg 3

## WEEKLY PROGRAM

### Friday

Homewood Jumu'ah - 1:15

Hoover Crescent Jumu'ah\* - 1:00

### Saturday

New Muslim Class - Suspended until further notice.

### Sunday

Aqeeda Class for all ages- 12 PM

### Monday

Qur'an Class - 12 PM - 2 PM

### Tuesday

Sisters Quran Tafseer Class in Urdu - 11 AM

Qur'an Class - 12 PM - 2 PM

### Wednesday

Qur'an Class - 12 PM - 2 PM

Qur'an Tafseer Class - 7:15 PM - 8:15 PM

### Thursday

Qur'an Class - 12 PM - 2 PM

**All events in the Weekly Program are held at the Hoover Crescent, except Homewood Jumu'ah.**

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Continuing Series

## Morals and Ethics

by Muhammad Shareef Ashraf

**mor- als and eth- ics**  
-adjectives

### Main entry

Morals and ethics refer to a discipline dealing with a set of doctrines and principles relating to right and wrong and conforming to a standard of right behavior. They form an extensive and comprehensive subject of human civilization

...

*We last discussed Islamic morals and ethics in regards to our society. This specifically included how we should interact with orphans and neighbors. We will now further evaluate the character needed whilst interacting with our Muslim brothers and sisters.*

### Salutation of Peace, Mercy and Blessing

When someone pays his salutation with peace, pay him a better salutation than that or at least return the same. Indeed Allah takes account of every thing. (4/86) The wording of a better salutation is:

If the salutation offered is

*Assalaamu Alaikum* return it with *Wa'alaikum assalaam wa Rahmatullah*

If the salutation offered is

*Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah*, return it with *Wa'alaikum assalaam wa Rahmatullah wa barakaatuhu*

When you enter the house you should salute each other because the greeting in the sight of Allah is blessed and pure. (24/61) O believers! Do not enter houses other than your own until you have asked permission and saluted the family members. It is the best for you so that you may receive admonition. (24/27)

### Conversation / Speech

It has been ordained in the holy Qur'an: Speak to the people right and kind words in beautiful terms (4/9; 2/83) and only say that which is the best of all. (17/53) Fear Allah and say what is right. (33/70) Whatever you speak; speak justly, even if it is concerning a close relative. (6/152) The true believers avoid vain (23/3) and refrain from false talk. (22/30) Don't cover the truth with falsehood nor conceal when you know it. (2/42) Curse of Allah is on those who tell lie. (3/61) Do not swell your cheeks to the people. (31/18) Lower your voice; the harshest sound is the braying of an ass. (31/19) Why do you say

that which you do not do? Most hateful with Allah is that what you say but you do not do it. (61/2, 3) If you have nothing to give to the needy speak to him with tenderness. (17/28) Kind words and forgiveness are better than charity followed by hurt. (2/263) Invite people with wisdom and excellent preaching and argue with them in the best possible manner. (16/125) Repel evil with that which is best. 23/96; 41/34)

### Thanksgiving

To say "thanks" is a basic courtesy and part of etiquette and refinement of good manners. Mankind must be grateful for the innumerable bounties of Allah, it is a way to ensure their continuity. One should remain thankful to Allah so that He may not take back the bounties bestowed by Him as a result of ungratefulness. When someone gets a gift or receives a letter / email or a phone call or recorded message the normal courtesy is to say thanks and to acknowledge its receipt. But most of the people seldom care about it. ■

*InshaAllah, next time we will cover the importance of visiting each other and etiquettes of Muslim hospitality.*

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On that last day as I saw Brother Nouman walking away, I realized that the future of Islam lay in the hands of young revolutionizing men like him.



## Revolution

>Cont'd from Pg 1

words 'nafs' and 'ruh' in different contexts to convey different meanings. However the English translation treats both the words as same and uses the word 'soul'. It therefore becomes imperative to learn Arabic. Secondly knowing Arabic (especially the basic grammar) prevents you from making mistakes while recitation of the Quran during salat. A small difference of an 'u' or 'ee' could make a huge difference in the meaning. Moreover, a lot of Muslims fail to understand the artistic beauty of the Quran since they cannot understand Arabic. Brother Nouman went on, infusing his conversation with some really good examples. I was convinced and I decided to take the plunge.

In mid-August began one of the most memorable and beautiful journeys of my life. The classes were to begin on a Friday and would go on until the next Sunday. Each day the class would be from 7:00 p.m to 10:00 p.m. Even if it was going to be a piece of cake (as Brother Nouman had said) I somehow felt it would be a huge cake and I would take my time to eat it slowly and bit by bit.

The Hoover Crescent was buzzing with activity on that first Friday and it would be so for the next few days to come. There was a lot of enthusiasm and everybody seemed to be in an upbeat mood. We were going to be a wonderful class comprising of men and women of different ages and nationalities. We had one goal – to learn Arabic and understand the direct quote of Allah (The Quran).

Our teacher, Brother Nouman believed in the idea of simplification and getting rid of jargons in the process. I was actually quite relieved to see that he started out by teaching Arabic in English. So the whole Arabic grammar was changed to examples and terms from English. The terms in English grammar like 'noun', 'verb', 'adjective' etc were used instead of the more difficult terms in Arabic (it is another thing though that most of us had forgotten how many parts of speech there were in the English language – much to Brother Nouman's amusement). However, I was actually beginning to understand Arabic. Phew!

So he taught and we were all hooked. The breaks were only for salaah. And we would be back. Each day was becoming a little more difficult, a little more informative from the last and each day there was more to memorize. So I would actually sit and memorize all the pronouns that he had taught the previous day, during lunch at my work place. Brother Nouman's ability to fuse the eastern and the western ways of teaching was amazing. We actually ended up memorizing all the pronouns, half of jarr, half of nasb etc aloud in class along with him. To emphasize the seriousness of memorizing these terms, Brother Nouman told us that even if he met any one of us in a gathering outside class, the first thing he would ask about would be the pronouns (scary!).

At the end of class each day we would be given one example from the Quran to signify its beauty. For example, it is amazing how there is a systematic rhyming fashion in the Quran. So in a particular surah for example if there is a sudden change in rhyming you know that the context has changed and if it is back to the previous rhyming the earlier context has again begun.

It was exciting to raise hands and answer the questions in the class. I would dread the part where he would ask one individual from each row to recite the oral stuff he had taught the previous day. However, it really made me learn and learn hard. The midterm and finals were soon posted and the whole weekend was blissfully spent in doing the exam and preparing for the oral exam (which wasn't that easy).

I still remember the last day when Brother Nouman gave a mesmerizing talk which left a lot of us very emotional. His words had the ability to take your soul out from your body and bring it towards Islam. As I walked back towards the car I thought about each day, from evening until night which I had spent in the masjid learning Arabic. I would miss being in the class and learning the pronouns aloud with everybody. I would miss everything. I knew I had made headway. I could now identify the words in the Quran. I could identify the mudaaf and mudaaf ilaihi. I knew who was the doer of the action in a sentence and what was the detail of the act. In just a few days I had learned a lot. It wasn't easy but it wasn't too difficult either. I also knew that I had to keep revising and I had to make efforts to move to the next phase of Arabic learning which dealt more with the vocabulary.

I now know what Bayyinah is. It is the Arabic Studies Institute in US and Canada which focuses on teaching Quranic Arabic and Tajweed across the nation. On that last day as I saw Brother Nouman walking away, I realized that the future of Islam lay in the hands of young revolutionizing men like him. I knew he was part of that quiet revolution taking place in North America- the revolution of Muslims making attempts at becoming better at their religion. How else could I have sat in a masjid in America after eight hours of work and learned Arabic from a brilliant man!■

>For more on the class see **Arabic 101**, pg 6.



Bayyinah seeks to lead the way in offering the highest quality of Arabic education to communities across the United States while keeping the cost of education minimal and the schedules of classes feasible for people with varying full-time commitments. We are a grass roots level educational organization which believes that understanding Islam necessitates direct access to its primary & secondary sources without the filter of translation. In particular, we hold that the Qur'an's literary & aesthetic beauty cannot be appreciated in a genuine sense in any rendition other than the original Arabic in which it was meant to be appreciated. We also believe that Arabic is an accessible and systematic language, a sound understanding of which can be acquired without having to travel to Arabic speaking regions of the world. Based on these beliefs, we have designed a variety of intensive weekend, evening and online educational programs. Our on-site programs travel across the country, serving at least one new community virtually every month with the exception of Ramadhan.



# COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

## Births

Brother Khalid Saedi and his wife were blessed with a baby boy whom they have named Mohammad.



*May these children be a blessing for their families.*

## Sicknesses

Brother Lucas Gambino's mother has been battling Parkinson Disease for the past 4 years. The disease now seems to be progressing fairly rapidly.

Brother Naser Naser is sick and is in the ICU.

Dr. Ismail Mustafa recently underwent shoulder surgery/

Brother Mohammad Yousaf is seriously ill.

*Please make dua for a complete and speedy recovery of all these individuals. May Allah give them all shifaa'.*

## Deaths

Brother Aslam's father-in-law died in tragic accident in Hyderabad, India. His mother-in-law and brother-in-law were also injured in the accident. Please make du'aa for the deceased and the full recovery of others.

Brother Kenneth Rashad, Sister Sumayah's husband, passed away after battling leukemia for the past couple years. Brother Kenneth was an integral part of the community and his presence will be sorely missed. May Allah forgive him and have mercy on his soul.

*Please make dua for the maghfirah (forgiveness) of these individuals and patience for the family.*

## Job Line

BIS is currently accepting resumes for the position of IMAM. Please mail or email your resume to the BIS Office at [bisoffice@bisweb.org](mailto:bisoffice@bisweb.org)

IAA is looking for certified teachers. Applications are available

## Mark Your Calendars!



**Sunday, August 10<sup>th</sup>** – WIS Registration

**Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup>** – Community Bowling at Vestavia Bowl, 9 am to 12 pm

**Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup>** – No School (WIS)

**Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>** – Labor Day No School (WIS)

\*Please note that Ramadan is expected to begin on **Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup>**. This date will be confirmed upon moon sighting.



## PROJECT DOWNTOWN

BIS is fully supporting a Muslim Youth Program called PROJECT DOWNTOWN, which feeds the homeless every Sunday. This group is asking for financial support from the community. Food costs are \$100 per week; this feeds approximately 100 people. If you would like to help, please contact Bilal Ahmad at [bgahmad@gmail.com](mailto:bgahmad@gmail.com).

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Community Members:

Please be aware that the above is mandated by the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) in order for the Islamic Academy of Alabama to gain tax exempt status as a section 501(c)(3) entity. The IRS requires this language to be stated in IAA's general circular so the public can be aware of this policy.



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## Community Watch

Local People Examining Local Events

### Arabic 101

by Mayyda Qureshi

For ten days, approximately 90 Muslim men and women gathered to take part in a three hour intensive course on Arabic grammar taught by Br Nouman Ali Khan. Nouman Ali Khan is the founder and CEO of Bayyinah, an institute designed specifically to teach the

The structure of his class went as follows: the first hour before the Maghrib salat was spent learning new material and the second hour after spent reviewing the material. After the Isha salat, my favorite part of the class, Br. Nouman gave the students an example from the Qur'an.

The first five days were basically a crash course in the basics of Arabic grammar, fo-

the usage of ism and fi'l and recognizing them within an ayah.

During the part of the class when he would give examples from the Qur'an, he would often take an ayah, sometimes a whole surah, and go into the depth of the grammar of it, exemplifying the beauty of the manner of Allah's speech to mankind.

He would often take an ayah, sometimes a whole surah, and go into the depth of the grammar of it, exemplifying the beauty of the manner of Allah's speech to mankind.

Muslim population the structure of Classical Arabic, in order to give their students a better understanding of the Qur'an. Br. Nouman has spent most of his life studying Arabic, starting with elementary school in Riyadh, continuing after with the study of Arabic grammar in Pakistan. His more serious training started much later, in the United States, under Dr. Abdus-Samie, the founder and formal principal of Quran College in Faisalabad, Pakistan.

cused mainly on *isms*, which, in the simplest form, are defined in Arabic as the "doer" of an action. The following days were spent discussing fi'ls, the simplest definition in Arabic being any word stuck in time, similar to a verb in English. Most of the time dedicated to fi'l involved memorizing the endings for the past and present forms. The last two days were mainly spent going over the midterm and final exams, which were basically an overview of

Every day of the class, he reminded his students of the necessity to read and study the Qur'an. He mentioned frequently the problems of translating it word-for-word, because an ayah would have a different meaning if it was taken literally rather than figuratively. Therefore, in order to read the Qur'an and truly understand the message which is trying to be given to us, we have to have knowledge of the Arabic language. ■

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# Take It From Me

Practical Advice from an Average Muslim



Sometimes we just have to hear it from the people around us to finally take heed of a deteriorating situation!

To this end, each month this column will feature a real-life experience from a different Muslim (young or old) in the community along with a practical lesson learned and advice to be given from that experience. The easiest lessons learned are through the eyes of others, and we hope that this feature will provide that benefit for the rest of the community.

If you have had an experience you think others can learn from, please write to [bismillahvision@yahoo.com](mailto:bismillahvision@yahoo.com). Send us your article in about 500-700 words. If you write about a problem you experienced, you must offer a solution. If you wish, you may request that your submission remain anonymous if we include it in the newsletter. We are looking forward to hearing your naseeha!

## That Book on the Top Shelf

by Anum Muzaffar

One of the greatest problems in the Muslim community is the lack of motivation to study, memorize, and analyze the greatest miracle given to mankind, the Holy Quran. Although Br. Nouman Ali Khan's primary purpose was to teach the intense 10 day Arabic class, which was already a huge hit, he was willing to provide in addition, two halaqa events exclusively for the youth. This specific halaqa was focused on the Miracles of the Quran.

A little over forty of Birmingham's interested youth gathered on August 21 to enjoy this enlightening halaqa. The crowd definitely grew more appreciative of the physical miracle of the Quran as Br. Nouman reminded us how blessed we were to have such a miracle before us.

The Quran, SubhanAllah, is unique from the miracles of the past. To begin with, the messengers before Muhammad (S) were given both messages and various miracles. They were given messages to spread to their people and miracles to reinforce the messages. The Quran, however, is one in the same. It serves as both a message and miracle. Also, unlike the past miracles, the Quran is a miracle that does not lose its sense of power through the generations. For example, Prophet Isa (A)'s miraculous ability of curing the blind fit the conditions of being a miracle and was defiantly a sign from Allah (swt) used to convince more people of the

Truth. However, this miracle, among the countless others, served as a miracle for the eyes only. After such a miracle is witnessed, it turns into a story for the next generation; once the story is passed down a couple generations, it is no longer as special as it once had been. The Quran, on the other hand, is a miracle not for the eyes but essentially for the ears. It therefore outlasts the Messenger (saw), and continues to serve as a miracle for every generation after. Not only was the message a miracle, but the revolution the message inspired was unbelievable. In the short span of the twenty-three years it was revealed to the Prophet (S), the Quran changed entire lifestyles, shaping and molding character, affecting everything about an individual from hygiene issues to business affairs.

The Quran is a seamlessly tied together and beautifully woven miracle, and it cannot be truly appreciated without the effort to get to know it. It is an honor to even have this miracle from Allah (S), nonetheless our duty to utilize it. Sadly, the Quran has been turned into a beautifully decorated book that is designated for the top shelf at many homes and plays no further purpose in many people's lives.

Uthman (r) once commented, "If the hearts are pure they would never satisfy their thirst from the Book of Allah."

Aside from either completely avoiding the

Quran, it is common practice, for youth especially, to expend a great effort on the Quran for a short period of time. Meaning, some may practice reading the Quran a great deal during the summer, and completely forget to continue doing so after school starts again. The word 'Quran' literally means 'that which is read excessively,' so we all must remember that no one can read Quran 'enough times.' Every time we read the Quran, it should serve as a different, beneficial experience.

So what exactly is stopping us from studying the Quran? It seems like such a simple concept. If someone were to offer you a million dollars for exchanging the time you waste for something productive that only benefits you, the answer would seem so simple. The only difference is the fact that the reward for our efforts may not seem visible at the time being. Yes, we have work or school and other responsibilities to fulfill as well. But we all know we can sacrifice that movie, or that important football game on TV, or the hours we spend chatting on the phone or the computer, or whatever it is that keeps us from focusing our attention on what truly matters.

Rasul Allah (S) advised for us to "read the Qur'an, for verily it will come on the Day of Standing as an intercessor for its companions." (Muslim) ■



## BACK TO SCHOOL

# Eight Tips on Making Fajr Prayer

by Sound Vision Staff Writer

Amr ibn Shuaib related on his father's authority that his grandfather reported Rasulullah (peace and blessings be upon him) as saying: "Instruct your children to observe Salat when they are seven years old, and spank them if they do not observe it when they are ten years old and then do not let them sleep in one bed." (Abu Daud).

Going back to school means more than just new backpacks and harder homework for kids: it also indicates a slip back into the routine of getting up early to catch the bus, and if possible, some breakfast before rushing out.

It's hard enough getting the kids out of bed to get to school on time. But do you ever wonder how some parents get their kids to pray Fajr during school days and get to school on time?

Well, it's not so impossible for some parents. Just ask Jamilah Kolocotronis, the mother of six school-aged boys ages, all of whom pray Fajr prayer.

television or lounging around. This way, the whole family is in synch.

"We have to help our kids set up their schedules," notes Kolocotronis.

### Tip #2: Avoid too much junk food

What is childhood without chips, candy bars and soft drinks?

These types of food are high in sugar and tend to make people hyper and lazy, kids included.

Reducing junk food intake, or limiting it to weekends, as well as increasing kids' consumption of fruits and vegetables will ensure a healthier diet and less sluggishness.

Even the time kids consume junk foods should be limited to between Zuhr and Maghrib prayers, as opposed to early in the morning or late at night before bed, Kolocotronis suggests.

### Tip #3: Get them all alarm clocks

In most cases, getting to bed on time and reducing junk food intake should be enough to

in your household, buy and set a series of alarm clocks at various places in the home.

Idris Ali describes how one Muslim brother who has a very hard time waking up established a system using two alarm clocks. One is set in the hallway, away from his bedroom, and a second one in the bathroom. That way, even if he shuts off the alarm in the hallway and goes back to bed, he will have to get up for the one in the bathroom. At that point, there's no point turning back.

### Tip #4: Assign one of the kids the responsibility for waking everyone up

This should instill enough of a sense of responsibility to force your child to wake up for Fajr. It reminds them that if they oversleep and miss Fajr, mom, dad, and all brothers and/or sisters will be missing it too, all because of him or her.

"They take it as a responsibility and a challenge," explains Idris Ali of the wisdom of this method to get kids to wake up for Fajr.

Assign one of the kids the responsibility for waking everyone up. This should instill enough of a sense of responsibility to force your child to wake up for Fajr.

"Four [of them] are over the age of ten so they have to make Salat", she explains matter-of-factly. Kolocotronis is also a Social Studies teacher at the Islamic School of Kansas City in Missouri.

Another parent whose kids regularly pray Fajr is Abdalla Idris Ali. He is currently a member of the Islamic Society of North America's (ISNA) Majlis Shura, which debates Islamic issues and establishes policy for the organization.

They have suggested eight ways parents can help their kids wake up for Fajr this school year (and beyond!).

### Tip #1: Get them to go to bed early

Ensure that your kids get a good night's rest. This is crucial in ensuring they're not just attentive in class, but that they remain healthy as well.

Parents can do more in this area than just setting a specific bedtime and enforcing it. They must set the example by also going to bed early and not wasting time on late night

ensure your kids wake up for Fajr. But there are always those of us who need more creative tactics.

In this case, the alarm clock becomes your ally.

If you're stumped for Eid gift ideas for your kids, buy them a nice alarm clock with a beautiful Adhan. Not only will this be an attractive item to decorate their shelf or desk with, but they will also wake up hearing the call to prayer on a regular basis.

Most of these types of clocks are available in North America at Muslim stores. If you can't find it in your community, order it or bring it back as a gift for your kids when you go for Hajj, Umrah or to a Muslim country where these clocks are sold.

If this is also not possible, get any alarm clock, the louder the better.

And don't just think you have to use only one alarm clock. If waking up is a severe hardship

Using this method also stresses the importance of Fajr prayer, and creates a sense of dutifulness and responsibility. The kids should take turns doing this, but the older ones should be made responsible for getting the younger ones up.

Assigning a responsibility can also be extended to calling the Adhan in the house. One of the children should also be delegated the responsibility of getting everyone up after the Adhan is called.

### Tip #5: Attach getting up for Fajr with a certain privilege

That means, for instance, that if one of the kids misses Fajr on Thursday morning, (s)he will not be allowed to go over to a friend's place later that evening.

By linking missing Fajr with the loss of a privilege, children learn that prayer is a requirement and not an option. It is something all

> See Fajr Pg 9

**Fajr**

&gt;Cont'd from Pg 8

Muslims have to do upon reaching a certain age, and there are consequences for not doing so.

A person who can wake up and pray Fajr can perform the other prayers easily.

importance of prayer, especially Fajr, which is often hard to get up for.

**Tip #7: For teenagers: make sure they have friends who pray Fajr**

While it is usually easier to encourage young kids to pray Fajr, it's harder to get teenagers to do so. In this case, it's important that they develop friendships with other practicing Muslims their age. This will have a positive effect on them, and they are more likely to listen to their peers and follow their example at this age, than their parents.

You can start doing this by widening your circle of family friends to include families who have practicing Muslim kids your son or daughter's age.

As well, invest in sending your kids to Muslim youth camps regularly, where the habit of praying Fajr is practiced. A one-week camp may be better in this regard, since it gives more time to develop the habit of praying in general, as opposed to a two or three-day camp.

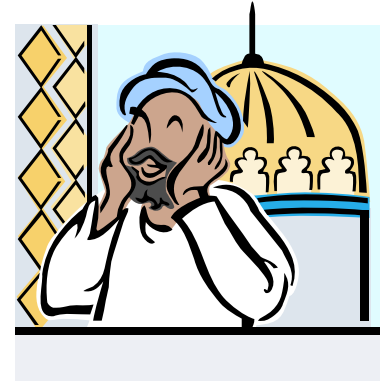
**Tip #8: Establish a Fajr wake up calling system**

This can work for adults too, but especially teenagers. Get your kids to call up their friends to wake them up for Fajr and vice-versa. This will serve as positive peer pressure, and will

feel less like mom and dad nagging them to get up.

They can also drive to the local Masjid if they have their driver's license, with their friends, making this a way to pray and meet friends, and in turn increase brotherhood and sisterhood.

Praying Fajr is difficult for many Muslims. But as Idris Ali notes, a person who can wake up and pray Fajr can perform the other prayers easily. Let's encourage this habit in our kids this school year. ■



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## Contemplation

by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih al-Uthaymeen

From: *Sharh Riyaadh as-Saaliheen*, Chapter: Contemplation [Muraaqaba]. Translated by Abu Rumaysah.

Allah says, "Who sees you when you stand up (for prayer), and your movements along with those who fall prostrate." (26:218-219)

"He is with you wheresoever you may be." (57:4)

"Truly nothing is hidden from Allah, in the earth or in the heavens." (3:5)

"Indeed your Lord is Ever-Watchful (over them)" (89:14)

"Allah knows the fraud of the eyes and all that the breasts conceal." (40:19)

The verses concerning this are many and well known.

After mentioning the chapter concerning Truthfulness and the verses and ahaadeeth pertaining to it, the author follows this up with the chapter concerning Contemplation. There are two aspects to contemplation:

1. That you contemplate Allaah, Azza wa Jall
2. That you know that Allaah is watching you as He says, "and Allah is Ever a Watcher (Raqeebaa) over all things."

As for your contemplating Allah then this is that you know that Allah, the Exalted, Knows your every saying, action, or belief, as He said, "and put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful – Who sees you when you stand up (for prayer) and your movements along with those who fall prostrate." (26:216-218)

"Who sees you as you stand" meaning at night, when the person stands in a place in seclusion from others such that no one would see him, but Allah, Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa, sees Him even if he be in the darkest and most intense of darkness.

"And your movements along with those who prostrate" meaning: and you move along with all those who prostrate to Allah in this hour, for indeed Allah sees a person when he stands and prostrates. Standing and prostrating have been (specifically)

mentioned because standing in prayer is better than prostration with respect to the remembrance of Allah, and prostration is better with respect to its appearance and condition. As for the standing being better than the prostration with respect to remembrance then this is because the legislated remembrance in the state of standing is the recitation of the Qur'an and the Qur'an is the noblest of speech. As for the prostration being better than the standing with respect to its appearance and condition then this is because the person in the state of prostration is closest to His Lord, Azza wa Jall, as is established from the Prophet (SAW) when he said: "The closest a person is to His Lord is when he is in prostration." [Muslim] This is why we have been commanded to increase our supplications while in prostration.

Also from your contemplating Allah is that you know that Allah hears everything single thing that you say as He said, "or do they think that We Hear not their secrets and private discourse? (Indeed We do) and Our Messengers are by them, to record." (43:80)

And along with this, that you know that every good or evil thing that you say, be it openly or secretly then it is written – for or against you. Allah, the Blessed and Exalted says, "not a word does he utter, but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it)" (50:18)

Know this, and beware! Beware that their emit from your tongue a saying which will count against you on the Day of Judgment. Make sure that your tongue is continuously articulating the truth or that it remains silent as the Messenger of Allah) said, "whosoever believes in Allah and the Last Day then let him speak only good or remain silent." [Bukhaaree]

(Also from your contemplating Allah) is that you do so with regards to your secrets and what is in your heart.

Look to what is in your heart! Associating partners with Allah, showing off, deviations, jealousy, hatred and dislike displayed towards the Muslims, love of the disbelievers and other such things that Allah is not Pleased with. Supervise and be attentive to your heart for Allah has said, "indeed We created man, and We know what his own self whispers to him." (50:16)

So contemplate Allah in these three places, in your actions, your saying and your heart so that your contemplation may be complete. This is why, when the Prophet (SAW) was asked about Ihsaan, he replied, "that you worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, then indeed He sees you."

Worship Allah as if you see Him and witness Him with the eye, and if you do not see Him then go to the next station below this: then indeed He sees you.

So the first station is to worship Him out of hope and desire. The next is to worship Him out of fear and awe this is why he said, "and if you do not see Him, then indeed He sees you."

So it is necessary for the person to contemplate His Lord and that he know that Allah is Watching over you. Anything that you say or do or keep secret, Allah, Exalted is He, Knows it. The author has mentioned a number of verses that prove this and began with the verse that we have already mentioned, "and put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful – Who sees you when you stand up (for prayer) and your movements along with those who fall prostrate." (26:216-218) ■

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## Pause and Ponder

### Al-Isra (The Night Journey) Chapter 17: Verse 82 (Partial)

#### Healing and Mercy

"We send down (stage by stage) in the Quran, that which is a healing and mercy."

The results of researches conducted over a group of volunteers from the USA who were subject to a recitation of the Quran were striking. A trace of a tranquilizing effect was recorded on 97% of the participants. Although many of these volunteers did not know Arabic, they nonetheless experienced involuntary physiological changes that led to notable alleviation in the acuity of tension they were observed to possess in their nervous systems prior to the experiment.

Furthermore, an EEG experiment during the Quran recitation revealed that the encephalic waves moved at a slower pattern, indicating a state of deep calmness. Non-Arabic speaking people felt assured, quite, and relaxed when listening to the Quranic verses, in spite of their inability to understand their meaning. This is one of the miracles of the Holy Quran.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, revealed this miracle by saying, "People assembled in one of the houses of Allah (Mosques), and who recite and study the Book of Allah, find that a tranquility prevails over them, and that mercy encompasses them, and that the angels surround them, and that Allah mentions them in the presence of those near Him." ■

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Source: *Medical Miracles of the Quran* by Dr. Sharif Kaf Al-Ghazal.  
The Islamic Foundation, UK. p. 104-105.

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