

In the name of God, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful!

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Muslims Celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr

This year the last day of Ramadan was on November 24, 2003. November 25th marked the Eid-ul-Fitr celebration or the feast of fast breaking. Eid-ul-Fitr is one of the two Islamic holidays and is a joyous occasion celebrated by 1.2 billion Muslims around the world. The celebration tends to last three days as Muslims rejoice the end of the month of fasting. The fasting, which is accompanied by prayer and humility, is a month long achievement, and its end marks one's personal triumph over inner desires.

The day of Eid starts an early morning prayer service in which Muslims show their thanks and gratitude to God for helping them get through the month. This year the prayer service was held at various locations in the Salt Lake valley, including the Sandy Convention Center on 9500 South State Street. The prayer service at the Sandy Convention Center was presided by Imam Shuaib-ud-Din, who

in his sermon asked the Muslim community to become more involved in the betterment and development of the Salt Lake community.

After the prayer service, gifts are given to children and loved ones; friends and family exchange social visits throughout the next three days. Muslims also express their thanks to God through the giving of *dms* to the poor and needy prior to the Eid prayer. This is known as payment of *Zakat-al-Fitr*. It is a requirement that it be given any time during Ramadan and prior to the Eid prayer so that all Muslims, even though they may be poor or needy, could join the Muslim community in the celebration.

In Salt Lake valley, programs for children were arranged on Eid day at Jungle Jim in Murray and on November 26 at Hollywood Connection in West Valley. Maysa Kergaye made the arrangements for the programs for children.

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Eid Message from the Forum Monthly

The staff of the Forum Monthly sends Eid Greetings to the entire Muslim community of Utah. For Muslims, Eid-ul-Fitr is a time to give thanks to God for helping Muslims get through the month of Ramadan. The fast is unlike any other because its purpose is to improve oneself spiritually, emotionally, and physically. It is a time to subdue inner temptations that detract people from the path of good. It is a time to reflect within and determine if we are any closer to our goals. It is a

time to ask for forgiveness from others if we have done any harm to them. These things do not only apply to our dealings with other Muslims but with all those whom we come in contact with. The way we treat people will decide how others treat us. The poor and the needy, the refugees, the orphans, the widows, the unemployed, and those of poor health are all in our thoughts as we pray that Allah gives them the ability to overcome their conditions and grant them a full and healthy life.

Al-Rasool Center Elects new Executive Committee

On November 7, 2003, Al-Rasool Center elected a new executive committee to run the affairs of the Center. The new committee members are Ghulam Hasnain, Loay Alabbasi, Abdul Basit Al-Jarreh, Hani Al-Hiriz, Salah Qubaili, Tabish Zaidi, Haan Mardanu, and Jamal Barakat. Al-Rasool Center is located in South Salt Lake and can be visited on the web at <http://www.al-rasool.org>.

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The most tragic thing in life is not death; it is what dies inside you while you live

Anonymous

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We Are Here To Stay

Dr. Asif Saberi

In the Eid day sermon, Imam Shuaib said very poignantly that the American Muslims are here to stay. He offered that Islam has the answers to many of the problems that ail our society and exhorted the Muslims of Salt Lake to take their message of moral values to their American fellows.

Like every immigrant group who has arrived on the shores of this country, we have learned the language and mastered the cultural nuances. We have assimilated in our work places. Some of us have married Americans. Our children are American born. Yea, we are here to stay. As most people who come here, we will assimilate given the time it takes to bring about this social phenomenon – there is no denying this. It happened in India and lands farther east. It will happen across the big ocean. On the timeline of history where eons may be akin to mere moments, we have been here hardly at all.

But a turn of events has suddenly thrown the attention upon us. And in the uncomfortable spot light we have received the last 2 years or so, we have squirmed and fidgeted. We have sweated and stuttered. We have avoided looking the problem in its face. Rather than reach out and grab this opportunity, we put our hands out

of sight into our pockets. Do we deliver our message now? Or should we wait for the air to clear a bit?

Even though this society will give succor to any of the world's dispossessed – often embracing some who would not be welcome any place else in this wide, wide world, no group of immigrants has automatically claimed the trust of its benefactors.

'How then shall we gain this acceptance?' asks a voice inside me. How shall we do this, seeing that our skins are a different hue and our features, distinct? How shall we overcome these hurdles when our culture is strange and foreign to our neighbors? Moreover, we speak a funny English – at least a funny American! How will we mingle with our fellow American, this voice asks, unless we relegate some of our values and mores abaft?

Most such questions make the presupposition that the fellow American will only be comfortable with someone who is just like him. But look at the landscape, lad! You will see that if nothing else, diversity is a statement of this country's character. I will however grant that, there is little comfort in this diversity for my fellow American knowing that my name is very much Muslim; knowing that I follow some strange

customs and practices; and knowing that people who claimed to follow my professed religion perpetrated heinous crimes on this country. What then will surely disarm my fearful neighbor?

What will surely comfort my neighbor is the discovery that I hold the very same cares as he does. What will disarm him is the knowledge that I am haunted by the very same fears for this country that he does. That I feel the same deep pangs for each young man and woman who dies for this land.

It is this voice that Imam Shuaib answered with his exhortation to be an open and living example of our true selves – and our neighbor will be comfortable with this. We can surely take our message and our solutions to our neighbor, but not before we have applied these in our own lives. We cannot claim that we have a solution for the ills of this society when our own problems are rampant. And lastly, and surely you will never be the Americans you desire to be until you have sent your sons and daughters to the fronts with the readiness to spill your own blood to safeguard the way of life that has drawn you here. If we have a moral message, there is a moral imperative in this for us.

Concept of Social Service in Islam

In Islam, social service is of immense significance. Whatever services a person renders for the welfare of humankind, and through these deeds, hopes for the blessings of Allah will be regarded as righteous deeds. These deeds if done solely for seeking the pleasure of Allah (and not for recognition or show) will be considered *Karze Hasana* and will surely be rewarded by Allah.

Allah repeatedly instructs in the Qur'an to behave kindly, to give charity, to serve the poor, the orphans, and the needy. While the Qur'an condemns hoarders and misers, it also prohibits ill-treating and threatening the poor and the needy. In all these verses of the Qur'an, Allah has not instructed the Muslims to work only for the wel-

fare of the Muslims. All these instructions are general in their scope and hence include both, the Muslims as well as the non-Muslims. The Prophet (pbuh) too has made it clear that striving of a Muslim for the welfare of any of the human beings or living creatures is an act of charity.

Prophet Muhammad said, "While a man was walking he felt thirsty and went down a well and drank water from it. On coming out of it, he saw a dog panting and eating mud because of excessive thirst. The man said, 'This (dog) is suffering from the same problem as that of mine. So he (went down the well), filled his shoe with water, caught hold of it with his teeth and climbed up and watered the dog. Allah thanked him for his (good

deed and forgave him." The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! Is there a reward for us in serving (the) animals?" He replied, "Yes, there is a reward for serving any animate

Islam ordains Muslims to treat all the living creatures well and with kindness. Social service that is done by a Muslim for any human being, irrespective whether the beneficiary is a Muslim or a non-Muslim, and which gets this beneficiary closer to his Creator and makes him/her understand Islam better, then the reward for the performer of such service will be further multiplied.

Working in food shelters, organizing food drives, teaching the uneducated on how to read and write, and helping the under-privileged are just few of the ways in which one can do good to their fellow men and women.

The Women of Islam

Today, the Muslim woman has a tarnished identity in Western society. In fact, a point has been reached where any discussion on Muslim women is focused on whether or not they are repressed in Islam. To most westerners, it comes as a shock to see a professional Muslim woman. The "burqa", a black veiled covering from head to toe, is engrained in their minds after the defeat of the Taliban in December, 2001. Expecting to see all Muslim women having "burqas" is a notion that is as ridiculous as expecting all Texans to have cowboy hats or Mexicans to have sombreros in their closets.

However, it would also be an injustice to say that the Muslim woman of today has the best of all worlds. Depending upon the world she lives in, her status is anywhere from a chattel to a leader, which is no different from any other society. In uneducated and male chauvinistic societies, she is treated very poorly. In educated societies, she is treated with respect and enjoys the same rights that her male counterparts do. On top of that there are rights accorded to women by the Koran; some are followed, some ignored. In fact, since after the time of Prophet Muhammad, the only thing a woman was not allowed to do was to become the Caliph.

In this article, we will focus on the role that women have played in Islamic history. Despite the stereotypes, Muslim women have been an important part of the Muslim community. However, their achievements have gone unrecognized even in Islamic countries. Since the advent of Islam 1400 years ago, women have been scholars, mystics, orators, preachers, writers, warriors, and political and social activists.

The wife of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Khadeeja bint Khuwaylid, is considered the model archetypal Muslim and was described by Prophet Muhammad after her death in the following words: "she believed in me when no one else did; she accepted Islam when people rejected me; and

she helped and comforted me when there was no one else to lend me a helping hand." Khadeejah, the first woman to accept Muhammad as a prophet of God, was perhaps the most significant reason behind his success.

Aisha, the third wife of Prophet Muhammad, is also considered as one of the greatest women of her time. She played important roles as a scholar of law, transmitter of Hadiths, an educator, and a public speaker. Ash Shifa bint Abdullah was appointed inspector of the markets at Medina by Caliph Omar.

The number of women who were politically prominent are well over a hundred and exerted influence during the reigns of the Umayyads, Abbasids, Turks, Persians, Mongols, and Indians. Shajar ad-Durr ruled over Egypt in the 13th century, led a resistance against the seventh Crusade, and captured the Christian leader King Louis IX.

Al Sayedah was the official title given to a slave, Shaghab, who ruled the Abbasid empire for 25 years under the name of her son. She would sit in the company of jurists, religious authorities, and government officials and carry on with her decrees. On Fridays, she would sit in meetings to listen to the people's complaints and cases.

In Delhi, Razia Sultana was the first female Muslim ruler of South Asia. She was an outstanding leader in the battlefield, a great administrator, and was very well versed in government affairs.

Muslim women also displayed strong artistic and literary talents. Walladah bint Mustakfi (1001-1080 C. E.) was the daughter of the caliph of Cordoba in Islamic Spain. Cordoba was a tolerant, multicultural society, famous for its many libraries and sophisticated literary life, in which women were often scholars. After her father's death, Walladah inherited enough wealth to guarantee her independence. She was well known as a poet and hosted literary gatherings for both men and women.

Nana Asma'u (1793-1864) was a poet, teacher, and role model for

Muslim women. She was also a scholar of Islam and a key advisor to her father as he taught Islam in Nigeria.

Muslim women were also scholars of Islamic Fiqh. Rabi'ah Bint Mu'awwad, a great scholar of fiqh, taught the intellectual scholars of Medina. The companions of the Prophet and learned scholars among the tabi'een used to go to Umm 'Atiyah to learn various aspects of Islamic jurisprudence. A'isha bint Sa'd bint ibn Abi Waqqas was the daughter of one of the Prophet's companions. She was very learned in Islamic sciences to the point that Imam Malik, Hakim ibn Utaybah, and Ayyub as Sakhtiyani, the famous jurists and scholars of ahadith, were her pupils. Sayyida Nafisa, granddaughter of Hasan, taught large number of pupils who came to her from all over the Islamic world. Imam Shafi'i was one of her pupils. Fatima bint Qays - discussed a juristic point with 'Umar and 'A'isha. Imam Nawawi said, "She was one of those who migrated in the early days, and possessed great intellect and excellence." Hafsa bint Sirin, sister of M. Sirin, memorized the Quran at 12, and read half of the Quran each night.

Zubaidah bt Ja'far b al-Mansur was the wealthiest and most powerful woman of her time. She was the wife of Harun ar-Rashid. She is often described as a benefactor of political acumen and understanding, noble woman, generous and munificence, possessor of great intellect and profound opinions, eloquent master of Arabic, a builder of cities, Makkah's water supply, and the pilgrimage route. She was also a patroness of writers, poets, and physicians -irrespective of their religion.

Rabia al Adawiya al Qadsiyya was an orphan slave girl who was later freed by her master and came to be known as Rabia of Basra. She retreated to desert for life of worship and led a life of poverty.

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Religions

Benan Zahawi

It does not take much for one to realize that the bloodiest wars in history were those carried out in the name of God or religion. It does not take one much either to realize that many of the wars and conflicts that are occurring in the world are carried out in the name of religion.

How can we convince ourselves, or any one else for that matter, that religion teaches compassion, teaches love for other human beings and teaches to strive to do good and prohibit bad.

If one studies any religion, one will see that the basic teachings do not differ much from other religions. Is there a religion that does not teach to help the poor, not to kill, not to steal, to be kind, to be generous and so on? Where is the problem then? What is it that causes all these wars in the name of God or religion? What is it that causes this great divide among religions?

The problem, as I see it, lies with the followers of each religion and not with the religion itself. It is the followers of a religion who kidnap it, take what suits them from it then mold it and shape it to their liking.

The worst of the worst mistakes that followers of any religion make is believing in the idea of "we" and "them". It is "we" who are right and it is "them" who are

wrong. It is "we" who are going to heaven and it is "them" who are going to hell. It is "we" who hold the truth and it is "them" who have gone astray.

Holding the idea of "we" and "them" in itself causes a division and builds boundaries. Why? Well, if I believe that I hold the whole truth and everyone else is going to perish, why should I want to be part of them?. Actually I need to stay away from them so as not to be influenced by them.. To the contrary, religions teach the followers to go out and engage with people so as to teach it to others. Religions teach the followers to be kind and have good manners so that others would say "The followers of such and such a religion are such good natured and kind their religion must have something in it".

One solution is to change the "we are right" and "they are wrong" is to say "we believe we are right but might be wrong" and "we believe they are wrong but could be right". This way, people will try to come closer to each other, listen to each other and maybe even convince others of their religion.

One final word, religions DO divide. They divide the good from bad. This division is acceptable and all should strive to achieve it.

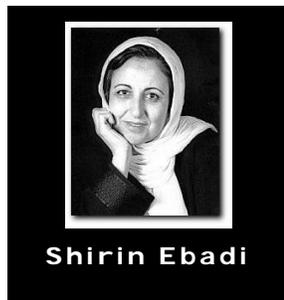
The Women of Islam

Rabi'a is probably best known for her emphasis on unselfish love for Allah (swt): loving Allah (swt) only for His sake, and not for fear of punishment or desire of reward. She prayed: "O Allah! If I worship You for fear of Hell, burn me in Hell, and if I worship You in hope of Paradise, exclude me from Paradise. But if I worship You for Your Own sake, grudge me not Your everlasting Beauty."

Even today, Muslim women continue to lead the way in the development of Islam. Among the notables are Shirin Ebadi, Zaynab al Ghazali, Maryum Jameelah, Khadijah Haffajee, Shahina Siddiqui, Ingrid Mattson, and Maha Genaidi.

Iranian human rights activist Shirin Ebadi won the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize on 10 October 2003 for her work fighting for democracy and the rights of women and children. She became the first woman and the first Iranian to receive this accolade.

Egyptian Zaynab al Ghazali is a defender of the rights of Muslim women in accordance with what she perceives to be the correct Islamic doctrine. The daughter of an Azhar-educated father, she has been an organizer of women and a strong Islamic activist. At the age of eighteen in 1936, she founded the Muslim Women's Association, in order to organize women's activities according to Islamic norms and for Islamic purposes. Zaynab al-Ghazali believes the Islamic system will bring justice to



everyone, but Muslims must first be united. There can be differences of opinion among Muslims on issues over which their ranks will not be divided: they may differ on means but not on ends, where the goal should always remain unity.

Khadija Haffajee is a retired schoolteacher who is originally from South Africa. In 1996, she was elected Assistant Secretary General of the International Muslim Women's Union and was a member of the 1996 Steering Committee for Christian-Muslim NGO Dialogue on Development. She has received recognition for her work with Afghan refugees in Peshawar, Pakistan in 1987.

A social worker, Shahina Siddiqui is the executive director of the Islamic Social Services Association of the United States and Canada (ISSA). She has written extensively on social topics such as marriage. Another North American, Dr. Ingrid Mattson is the director of Islamic Chaplaincy and a professor at the Macdonald Center for Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary in Hartford. Her research is focused on Islamic law and society, especially in the early Islamic period. In 2001, Dr. Mattson was elected Vice President of the Islamic Society of North America.

As the education system improves in Muslim countries, it is likely that so will the status of women in Muslim countries all over the world. At that point, the Muslim women would no longer be viewed as either they wear a Hijab or not, but rather viewed for the contributions they make in society. However, for this to happen, the Muslim mind has to undergo a change and that is to become educated.

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Kid's Corner

Words and Actions Should Be the Same

There once was a boy who loved eating sweets. He always asked for sweets from his father. His father was a poor man. He could not always afford sweets for his son. But the little boy did not understand this, and demanded sweets all the time.

The boy's father thought hard about how to stop the child asking for so many sweets. There was a very holy man living nearby at that time. The boy's father had an idea. He decided to take the boy to the great man who might be able to persuade the child to stop asking for sweets all the time.

The boy and his father went along to the great man. The father said to him, "O great saint, could you ask my son to stop asking for sweets which I cannot afford?" The great man was in difficulty, because he liked sweets himself. How could he ask the boy to give up asking for sweets? The holy man told the father to bring his son back after one month.

During that month, the holy man gave up eating sweets, and when the boy and his father returned after a month, the holy man said to the boy "My dear child, will you stop asking for sweets which your father cannot afford to give you?"

From then on, the boy stopped asking for sweets. The boy's father asked the saint, "Why did you not ask my son to give up asking for sweets when we came to you a month ago?" The saint replied, "How could I ask a boy to give up sweets when I loved sweets myself. In the last month I gave up eating sweets."

A person's example is much more powerful than just his words. When we ask someone to do something, we must do it ourselves also. We should not ask others to do what we do not do ourselves.

ALWAYS MAKE SURE THAT YOUR ACTIONS AND YOUR WORDS ARE THE SAME.

**EID
MUBARIK**

Ramadan Books For Kids

1) "Ramadan," by Suhaib Hamid Ghazi

Enhanced with beautiful drawings, this lovely book covers all the special traditions of the month through the eyes of Hakeem, a Muslim boy in America. Awarded Book of the Year by the National Council for the Social Studies in 1997.

2) "Three Muslim Festivals," by Ibrahim Ali Aminah and A. Ghazi (Eds.)

A collection of stories about the three main celebrations in Islam: Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha. Told through the eyes of children and illustrated with lovely watercolors, this book captures the warmth of the holidays and traditions.

3) "Celebrating Ramadan," by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith

This new book (September 2001) follows Ibraheem, a Muslim fourth-grader, as he and his family observe the holy month of Ramadan. Photographs accompany the brief yet comprehensive text, making this a quality introduction

4) "Magid Fasts for Ramadan," by Mary Matthews

This charming story captures the excitement of a young boy trying to fast his first Ramadan. While it is not required for him to fast, he is determined to make it through the day.

Dear Kids,

Eid Mubarik to all of you! Starting in the January issue, we would like to receive stories and poems you have written. While not all of them will be printed in the newsletter, all these stories and poems would be set aside and looked at very carefully. Those whose stories and poems stand out will receive a \$25 gift certificate from Borders or Barnes and Noble Bookstore. There will be one gift certificate for short story and one for a poem. This competition will end at the end of March and winners will be announced in the May issue. Submit all entries to newsletter@muslim-forum.org.

The editors and reporters of the Forum Monthly are always eager for new stories, fresh ideas, and original works. The *Forum Monthly* covers every subject: international, national, and community news, religion, health and science, business, media and entertainment, sports, education, cuisine, and the arts. We are also interested in analysis, commentaries, and opinions on subject areas of interest to both Muslims and non-Muslims in the the Salt Lake community. The views represented in the *Forum Monthly* do not necessarily represent the views of the Muslim Forum of Utah.

There is also a section for children called the Kids Corner. If your child has written a great story or a beautiful poem, submit it to us. If a beautiful drawing or a cartoon, we welcome it as well. If there is a book you have read, a movie you have seen, or a favorite restaurant you have visited, provide us a review. We are interested in subjects that interest you. If you are interested in being a writer for the Forum Monthly, we are interested in hearing from you. While we don't guarantee that we will publish everything that will be submitted to us, we hope that what we publish will make the *Forum Monthly* one of your favorite newsletters.

How to Submit your story or work to the Forum Monthly?

Please type your story and attach an electronic copy (text format) of your work to the email addressed to: Newsletter@muslim-forum.org. Deadline for all submissions is the 15th of every month!

Forum Monthly Editors and Staff: Kirin Patel (Women's Editor), Amna Sial (Kids Page Editor), Benan Zahawi (Contributor), Asif Saberi (Editor), Babak Darvish (Editor), and Nadeem Tusneem (Editor-in-Chief)

Writing to Newspapers on Issues that concern you!

Salt Lake Tribune: Letters@sltrib.com

(<http://www.sltrib.com/help/forum.asp>)

Opinion pieces for the Sunday op-ed pages may be submitted in one of three ways: (1) E-mail the submission to Vern Anderson, editor of the editorial page, at **vander-son@sltrib.com** **E-mails with attachments will not be accepted.** The opinion must submitted as a plain text in the body of the message. (2) Send the typed, double-spaced submission to Vern Anderson, The Salt Lake Tribune, 143 S. Main, Salt Lake City, UT 84111 (3) Send the submission by fax machine to 801-257-8515 All submissions should include name, address, telephone number and some information on the author so that it can be included on the end of the piece.

Deseret News: Letters@desnews.com

(<http://deseretnews.com/>)

Keep letters short and concise. Letters focusing on a singular theme are more likely to be published!

E-mail with attachments will be deleted. The letter must submitted as a plain text in the body of the message.

Cuisine Corner

Falafel

- 1 cup dried broad beans
- 1 cup dried chick peas
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 4 cloves of garlic crushed
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tbs ground cumin
- 1 onion chopped
- 1/2 cup fresh coriander chopped
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley chopped
- 1/4 tsp mixed spices
- Salt & pepper

Soak the beans and the chick peas in water and bicarbonate of soda overnight or for 24 hours. Drain and wash. Put with the rest of the ingredients in a food processor, and blend till you get a soft dough like mixture. Remove and keep in the fridge for 1 hour before use. Divide and shape the mixture into small balls, the size of a walnut. Flatten with your hand, then deep fry in hot oil till golden brown. Serve warm, rolled in pitta bread, with added salad.

**Submit your favorite recipe to the
Forum Monthly at:
newsletter@muslim-forum.org**

Baba Ghanoush

- 2 big aubergines
- 2 tbs tahini (sesame paste)
- 2 tbs lemon juice
- 2 tbs yogurt
- 1 garlic crushed (optional)
- Salt &pepper

Make a slit in the skin of the aubergine and place under a hot grill for a few minutes on each side or until the skin blackens on all sides. Leave it to cool down, then peel off the skin, wash with cold water and put in a colander for a few minutes to get rid of all excess liquid. Put the aubergines and the other ingredients in a food processor to make into a dip, or crush the aubergines with a potato masher and mix with the other ingredients to get a rough mix . Serve cold topped with some olive oil and chopped parsley or fresh basil.

Ibn Rushd: The King Philosopher

Dr. Muqtedar Khan

This brief article is dedicated to the memory of Ibn Rushd (1128-1198). On the 800 hundredth anniversary of his death, I would like to remember the contributions of this great Muslim. Abul-Waleed Muhammad Ibn Rushd was born in Cordova, Spain in 520 A.H. (1128 C.E.).

During his life time Ibn Rushd worked as a Qadi (judge) in Morocco and Spain and was for over ten years the Chief Qadi of Cordova. He was also a physician and adviser at the courts of the Moroccan Caliph and the Spanish Caliph.

Ibn Rushd wrote over 87 books on philosophy and over twenty on medicine. He wrote commentaries on Aristotle's *Anima* and *Politics*, on Plato's *Republic* and on Farabi's *Logic*. While his commentaries made him the most famous philosopher in the West from the 12th to the 17th century, his most original works in philosophy were *Fas al-Maqal* (The Decisive Treatise), *al-Kashf `an Manahij al-Adillah* (The Exposition of the Methods of Proof) and *Tahafut al-Tahafut* (The Incoherence of Incoherence). In the first two books he challenges Asharite theology in order to emphasize the harmony of philosophy and religion, or reason and faith. In the third he takes on Al-Ghazali's attack on philosophy head on and in the process makes his own position on the relation between philosophy and religion clear. He uses this opportunity to also provide an Islamic understanding of Aristotle.

Ibn Rushd, like Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina before him, saw no discordance between religion and philosophy. He maintained that both philosophy and religion were capable of leading humanity to truth. Interestingly, unlike other philosophers Ibn Rushd recognized the validity and significance of prophecy. He also believed that shariah derived from prophecy was definitely superior to the *nomos* (laws) derived from reason. However, Ibn Rushd was also convinced that the philosophers approach to both nature and revealed text was superior to that of the *fuqaha* (jurists) and the *mutkallimoon* (theologians).

Ibn Rushd identified three methods to knowledge. The *burhan* (method of logical demonstration) was the most superior method and in his opinion only the philosopher was capable of employing this approach. The second was *jadal* (dialectical). *Jadal* according to Ibn Rushd was the method used by theologians. And finally the art of *Khatabah* (rhetoric, sophistry and persuasion). This method Ibn Rushd argued was to be used while dealing with the masses. Indeed the theologians were masters of this art, which often prompted Islamic philosophers to use the Greek analogy of sophists for Muslim theologians.

Ibn Rushd represents a unique convergence of philosophy, religion, science and law. For over four decades he was a prominent judge in al-Andalus and was not only a major practitioner of Maliki law but he was also an important scholar of Maliki jurisprudence. As a court physician and the author of the famous text *Kulliyat*, known and widely used in Western medical schools as *Colliget*, Ibn Rushd was the pre-eminent medical practitioner of his time. His impact on the study of medicine was felt for over 500 years. He is well known for his commentaries on Aristotle and for his critique of Neoplatonism of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina. But he is best known for his reconciliation of religion and philosophy, *aql* (reason) and *naql* (tradition).

Ibn Rushd used Quranic injunctions to reflect upon and to observe Allah's signs as an injunction to philosophize. He genuinely believed that the methodology of the theologians was not adequate to elucidate the divine Shariah and in an extremely clever fashion underscored the religious necessity of philosophy. Ibn Rushd's contri-

One of the unfortunate consequences of the decline of philosophy in the Muslim world has been the stagnation of Islamic sciences.

bution to reconciling philosophy and religion actually was a deconstruction of the differences between Asharite theologians and ancient Greek philosophers. He was able to show that the elements of Aristotelian and Platonic philosophy that the Asharites deemed unIslamic was indeed within the domain of the freedom of thought allowed by Islamic shariah.

Philosophy, since Ibn Rushd has evolved very much and so has theology. Indeed we are living in an era which is witnessing the emergence of a philosophical tradition explicitly opposed to "reason" (postmodernism). Moreover modern philosophy and its secularized world view make us wonder whether even Ibn Rushd can bridge the gap between religion and modernity today?. One of the unfortunate consequences of the decline of philosophy in the Muslim world has been the stagnation of Islamic sciences.

Deprived of the intellectual challenge from philosophy, Islamic theology has become stunted and indeed in dire need of reexamination. Islamic philosophy

had played a major role in the development of Islamic theology and Fiqh. Remember, initially the sources of Islamic Law were, The Quran and the Sunnah alone. But the development of the *Usul al-fiqh* and the use of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) has led to the recognition that public interest and reason can also contribute to legislation, particularly in areas on which the original sources (Quran and Sunnah) are silent. This development transpired when Islamic theologians and jurists were forced to respond to challenges posed by rational theologians like the *muttazalites* and philosophers.

Thus the dialectics between reason and revelation was played out as debates between philosophers and theologians, between Sufis (mystics) and *Fuqaha* (jurists). The debates between Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd, and Ibn Rushd and Ibn Taymiyyah, are great milestones in the general development of Islamic thought. As inheritors of this great intellectual tradition we are indeed blessed. It is time that we remember the contributions of Ibn Rushd to Islamic thought.

The great Muslim philosopher enriched Islamic discourses through his writings on Law and his debates with the theologians. He also enriched and indeed transformed Christian theology through Aquinas and Jewish theology through Maimonides. We need to revive the spirit of Ibn Rushd to once again inject vitality into Islamic thought. Even though we lament the fact that Ibn Rushd did not have a great impact on Islamic thought and are jealous of the West which has benefited from him so much, we can remember with pride his role in the most fascinating debate between philosophers and theologians that spanned four centuries. This debate remains an integral part of the development of Islamic thought and Ibn Rushd played a central role in it. We conclude by reminding our readers that great scholars like Ibn Rushd are jewels not only in the heritage of Islam but also in the legacy of World civilization. Ibn Rushd may not have been a Philosopher-King but he was indeed a King amongst philosophers.

This article is published with the consent of the author.

Mission: To improve the image and condition of the Muslim community in Utah by providing educational opportunities for Muslims and non-Muslims; foster the correct representation of Islam in the mass media; and develop and establish programs that will improve the conditions of all Utahans.

Vision: We envision a Utah where Muslims can become strong contributors to the economic, intellectual, and political growth of their communities.

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Community Calendar

December 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Adult Arabic Classes at Iqra Academy	3	4 Dua Kumail at Al-Rasool Cen- ter	5 Quran Study; Youth Discus- sion Group	6 Women's Swimming
7 Women's Quran Recita- tion Class at Khadeeja Mosq	8	9 Adult Arabic Classes at Iqra Academy	10	11 Dua Kumail at Al-Rasool Cen- ter	12 Quran Study; Youth Discus- sion Group	13 Men's Swim- ming
14 Women's Quran Recita- tion Class at Khadeeja Mosq	15	16 Adult Arabic Classes at Iqra Academy	17	18 Dua Kumail at Al-Rasool Cen- ter	19 Quran Study; Youth Discus- sion Group	20 Women's Swimming
21 Women's Quran Recita- tion Class at Khadeeja Mosq	22	23 Adult Arabic Classes at Iqra Academy	24	25 Dua Kumail at Al-Rasool Cen- ter	26 Quran Study; Youth Discus- sion Group	27 Men's Swim- ming
				Christmas		
28 Women's Quran Recita- tion Class at Khadeeja Mosq	29	30 Adult Arabic Classes at Iqra Academy	31 New Year's Eve			

With Eid-ul-Fitr being celebrated two days before Thanksgiving holiday in the United States, this provided an opportunity for Muslims to partake in the Thanksgiving celebrations since the year 2000. During the last two years, Muslims spent the Thanksgiving holiday fasting from sunrise to sunset.

President George Bush also sent Eid greetings to the Muslims in the U.S. In a message to all, he encouraged people of all faiths "to reflect on our shared values: love of family, gratitude to God, commitment to religious freedom, and respect for the diversity that adds to our nations strength."

As in the past few years, the three monotheistic faiths again celebrate their major holidays in a period of about a month. Learning to respect and accept the way others show their appreciation to God could be a by product of this occurrence. It definitely provides for an opportunity to teach our children the similarities and differences of the customs we hold dear.

Events for the Month of December

- Friday (Juma) Prayers
Khadija: 2 pm
Noor: 1:30 pm
- Swimming: At Dive Utah 4679 S. 2225 East from 2-4 pm \$3/adult and \$1.50/child
- Quran Study at
Khadeeja: Friday 8 pm
Noor: Friday 7:30 pm
Iqra: Friday 7:30 pm
- Youth Open Discussion at Al Rasool center around Maghrib time
- Dua Kumail at Al-Rasool on Thursdays at Maghrib time.
- Women's Convert Support Group: 1st Saturday of Each month at Whitmore Library. 11:00 am to 1 pm; pot-luck lunch at Iqra Academy of Utah
- Women's Friday Meeting is held at Masjid Al Noor every Friday from 7:30 pm till Maghrib prayer.

Special Events

Volunteer at the Food Shelters on December 24th or 25th in four hour shifts!!!

For more information, Contact Newsletter@muslim-forum.org