

Monthly

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BIRMINGHAM
CENTRAL MOSQUE

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RECREATION AND PLAY IN ISLAMIC CONTEXT

Islâm is a practical religion; it does not float in the stratosphere of imaginary ideals but remains with the human being on the ground of realities and day-to-day concerns. It does not regard people as angels but accepts them as mortals who eat food and walk in the marketplace. Islâm does not require of Muslims that their speech should consist entirely of pious utterances, that their silence should be a meditation, that they should listen to nothing except the recitation of the Qur'ân, nor that they should spend all their leisure time in the mosque. Rather, it recognizes that Allâh has created human beings with needs and desires, so that, as they need to eat and drink, they also need to relax, and to enjoy themselves.

“A Time for This and a Time for That”

Some of the Companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) attained great spiritual heights. They believed that in order to remain at such a spiritual level they should always be serious, engaged in constant worship, turning their backs on all the enjoyments of life and the good things of the world, neither playing nor relaxing but keeping their eyes and their minds fixed on the Hereafter and its concerns, away from common life and its amusements.

Let us listen to what this great Companion and scribe of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), Hanzalah al-Usaidi, has to say about himself: Abû Bakr met me and asked, 'How are you, Hanzalah?' I replied, 'Hanzalah has become a hypocrite.' He said, 'SubhanAllâh! What are you saying?' I replied, 'When we are with Allâh's Messenger (s.a.w.s.), he mentions the Fire and the Garden until it is as if we can see them. But when we leave the Prophet's company and play with our wives and children or busy ourselves with our properties, we forget much.' Abû Bakr said, 'By Allâh, I have experienced the same thing.' He and I then went to visit Allâh's Messenger (s.a.w.s.), and I said, 'O Messenger of Allâh, Hanzalah has become a hypocrite.' He asked, 'And how is that?' I replied, 'O Messenger of Allâh, when we are with you, you talk

about the Fire and the Garden until it is as if we can see them. Then we go out and play with our wives and children and deal with our properties, and we forget much.' Allâh's Messenger (s.a.w.s.) then said, 'By Him in Whose hand is my soul, if you were to continue at the same level at which you were when with me and in remembering Allâh, the angels would shake hands with you when you are resting and when you walk about, but, O Hanzalah, there is a time (for this) and a time (for that).' He repeated this phrase three times. (Muslim.)

The Humanness of the Messenger of Allâh

The life-pattern of Allâh's Messenger (s.a.w.s.) is a perfect example for every human being. When he was in private he would worship his Rabb with such intense devotion, standing for long hours in salat, that his feet would become swollen; in matters pertaining to truth or justice he did not care about anyone's opinion, seeking only the pleasure of Allâh. But in his living habits and dealings with people he was a human being, enjoying good things, participating in small talk, smiling and joking, yet never departing from the truth. The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) liked happiness and disliked grief; he sought refuge with Allâh from difficulties and troubles which result in sorrow, supplicating, ***“O Allâh, I seek refuge in Thee from distress and grief”*** (Abû Daoud.)

Concerning his sense of humor, it is reported that once an old woman came to him, saying, “O Messenger of Allâh, pray to Allâh that He admit me to the Garden.” The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said, “O mother of such a person, no old woman will enter the Garden.” The woman broke down and wept, supposing that she would not enter Paradise. The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) then explained to her that no old woman would enter the Garden as an old woman, for Allâh would restore her youth and admit her to the Garden as a young virgin. He then recited to her the verse, We created them as a (new) creation, and made them virgins, lovers, friends. (56: 35-37) (Al-Tirmidhî)

Relaxing the Mind

Following the Prophet's example, his noble and pure Companions also enjoyed humor and laughter, play and sport, which relaxed their bodies and minds and prepared them the better to travel on the long, arduous path of striving in the cause of truth and justice. 'All bin Abû Talib said, "Minds get tired, as do bodies, so treat them with humor," and "Refresh your minds from time to time, for a tired mind becomes blind." And Abû al-Darda said, "I entertain my heart with something trivial in order to make it stronger in the service of the truth."

Accordingly, there is no harm in the Muslim's entertaining himself in order to relax his mind or refreshing himself with some permissible sport or play with his friends. However, the pursuit of pleasure should not become the goal of his life so that he devotes himself to it, forgetting his religious obligations. Nor should he joke about serious matters. It has been aptly said, "Season your conversation with humor in the same proportion as you season your food with salt."

The Muslim is forbidden to joke and laugh about other people's values and honor. Allâh Ta'ala says: O you who believe, let not some people mock at other people; it may be that they are better than thee...(49:11) Nor is it appropriate for the Muslim to tell jokes based on what is untrue in order to make people laugh. The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) warned against this, saying, ***"Woe to the one who says something which is false in order to make people laugh! Woe to him, woe to him!"*** (Al-Tirmidhî)

Permissible Sports

There are many kinds of games and sports which the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) recommended to the Muslims as a source of enjoyment and recreation which, at the same time, prepare them for worship and other obligations. These sports, which require skill and determination, and which also involve physical exercise and bodybuilding activity, are related to the martial arts and training of Muslims. Among them are the following:

Foot Racing

The Companions of the Prophet (May Allâh be pleased with them) used to race on foot and the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) encouraged them in this. It is reported that 'All was a fast runner. The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) himself raced with his wife 'Aishah in order to please her, to enjoy himself, and to set an example for his Companions. 'Aishah said, I raced with the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and beat him in the race. Later, when I had put on some weight, we raced again and he won. Then he said, 'This cancels that (Ahmad and Abû Daoud.), referring to the previous occasion.

Wrestling

The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) once wrestled with a man called Rukanah who was well-known for his strength,

throwing him down more than once. (Abû Daoud.) In another report of this incident, the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) started wrestling with him. As the fight was hard, Rukanah said, "A sheep for a sheep." (This must have occurred before the prohibition of gambling, or perhaps the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) did not accept the bet and hence did not enforce its terms.) The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) then threw him. The man said, "The same again." The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) threw him again, and the man said, "The same again." The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) threw him a third time. The man then said, "What shall I tell my wife? One sheep was eaten by the wolf, one ran away, but what about the third?" Then the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said, "We are not going to defeat you and take something from you as well. Take your sheep!"

From these reports concerning the Prophet (s.a.w.s.), jurists have deduced the permissibility of foot racing, whether it be between men against each other or between men and women who are their muharammat or wives. They have also concluded that foot racing, wrestling, and sports of this type do not compromise the dignity of scholarship, piety, or age. The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) was more than fifty year old when he raced with 'Aishah. (May Allâh be pleased with her)

Archery

Among the permissible sports is competition in archery or with other weapons. The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) once passed by a group of his Companions who were competing in archery. He encouraged them, saying, Shoot, and I am with you. (Al-Bukhâri) He realized that archery was not just a hobby or a sport but, more importantly, constituted that kind of force which Allâh has commanded to be mustered: And make ready for them all thou art able of (armed) force....(8:60) The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said, "The missiles (arrows) are the force," repeating it three times.

However, the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) warned archers against using chickens and the like as targets for practice, as the Arabs of jahiliyyah used to do. Once 'Abdullah bin 'Umar saw a group of peoples doing this and he told them, ***"The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) cursed the one who takes anything possessing life as a target."*** (Al-Bukhâri and Muslim.)

He cursed such an individual because this sort of act involves the torturing and unnecessary killing of an animal, and a human being has no right to have fun and sport at the expense of a living creature. For the same reason the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) forbade making animals fight each other. (Abû Daoud and al-Tirmidhî) Some Arabs used to laugh and find it amusing to see two rams or bulls fight each other until one of them was gored to death. Scholars have said that the prohibition of making animals fight recognizes that such a practice causes them unnecessary suffering merely for the fun of it, without any benefit.

(To be continued...)

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Contact: 0121 440 5355 (Ext: 2)
Email: familysupport@centralmosque.org.uk
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Please contact: Mr. Hafiz Qaiser 07810 306 627
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Every Tuesday: Time: 12.00 noon – 2.00 pm
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- ❖ **Islamic Studies for special needs (Deaf) Adults and children**
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For more information contact: Sister Amina 07956 012 488

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The Dawn is distributed free in many city mosques on the last Friday of every month. It is also sent to other religious and educational institutions, libraries, hospitals and prisons. However, any individual wishing to receive a copy regularly for a year by post is requested to complete this slip and return it with a minimum donation of £20, to the mosque at the address below.

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BIRMINGHAM
CENTRAL MOSQUE

PRAYER TIMETABLE

"Indeed prayers are enjoined on believers at a stated time." - Al-Quran 4:103

MAY 2023 - SHAWWAL / DHUL QADAH 1444 AH

MAY-23 SHAWWAL			Fajr فجر		طلوع شمس	Dhuhr ظهر			Asr العصر		Maghrib مغرب		Isha العشاء	
Date	Day	Lunar Dates	Start	Jamāt	Sunrise	Zawāl	Start	Jamāt	Start	Jamāt	Sunset	Adhān	Start	Jamāt
1	Mon	10	3.54	4.30	5.37	1.04	1.09	1.45	6.12	6.45	8.33	8.36	9.33	10.00
2	Tue	11	3.52	"	5.35	"	"	"	6.14	"	8.35	8.38	9.35	"
3	Wed	12	3.49	"	5.33	"	"	"	6.15	"	8.37	8.40	9.37	"
4	Thu	13	3.47	"	5.31	"	"	"	6.16	"	8.38	8.41	9.38	"
5	Fri	14	3.45	"	5.29	"	"	"	6.17	"	8.40	8.43	9.40	"
6	Sat	15	3.42	"	5.27	"	"	"	6.18	"	8.42	8.45	9.42	"
7	Sun	16	3.40	"	5.25	"	"	"	6.19	"	8.44	8.47	9.44	"
8	Mon	17	3.38	4.15	5.24	1.04	1.09	1.45	6.20	6.45	8.45	8.48	9.45	10.15
9	Tue	18	3.36	"	5.22	"	"	"	6.21	"	8.47	8.50	9.47	"
10	Wed	19	3.33	"	5.20	"	"	"	6.22	"	8.48	8.51	9.48	"
11	Thu	20	3.31	"	5.18	"	"	"	6.23	"	8.50	8.53	9.50	"
12	Fri	21	3.29	"	5.17	"	"	"	6.24	"	8.52	8.55	9.52	"
13	Sat	22	3.26	"	5.15	"	"	"	6.25	"	8.53	8.56	9.53	"
14	Sun	23	3.24	"	5.13	"	"	"	6.25	"	8.55	8.58	9.55	"
15	Mon	24	3.22	4.00	5.12	1.04	1.09	1.45	6.26	7.00	8.57	9.00	9.57	10.30
16	Tue	25	3.19	"	5.10	"	"	"	6.27	"	8.58	9.01	9.58	"
17	Wed	26	3.17	"	5.09	"	"	"	6.28	"	9.00	9.03	10.00	"
18	Thu	27	3.14	"	5.07	"	"	"	6.29	"	9.01	9.04	10.01	"
19	Fri	28	3.12	"	5.06	"	"	"	6.30	"	9.03	9.06	10.03	"
20	Sat	29	3.09	"	5.04	"	"	"	6.31	"	9.04	9.07	10.04	"
21	Sun	Dhul Qadah	3.06	"	5.03	"	"	"	6.32	"	9.06	9.09	10.06	"
22	Mon	2	3.03	4.00	5.02	1.04	1.09	1.45	6.33	7.00	9.07	9.10	10.07	10.30
23	Tue	3	3.00	"	5.01	"	"	"	6.33	"	9.09	9.12	10.09	"
24	Wed	4	2.58	"	4.59	"	"	"	6.34	"	9.10	9.13	10.10	"
25	Thu	5	2.56	"	4.58	"	"	"	6.35	"	9.11	9.14	10.11	"
26	Fri	6	2.54	"	4.57	"	"	"	6.36	"	9.13	9.16	10.13	"
27	Sat	7	2.51	"	4.56	"	"	"	6.37	"	9.14	9.17	10.14	"
28	Sun	8	2.50	"	4.55	1.05	1.10	"	6.37	"	9.15	9.18	10.15	"
29	Mon	9	2.48	4.00	4.54	1.05	1.10	1.45	6.38	7.00	9.17	9.20	10.17	10.45
30	Tue	10	2.46	"	4.53	"	"	"	6.39	"	9.18	9.21	10.18	"
31	Wed	11	2.44	"	4.52	"	"	"	6.39	"	9.19	9.22	10.19	"

Friday Prayers: Urdu & English Speech at 1.00 pm | Main Arabic Khutba at 1.30 pm

* Islamic dates are tentative and are subject to change as per crescent moon sighting

MOSQUE OFFICE: 0121 440 5355

180 Belgrave Middleway, Highgate, Birmingham B12 0XS | www.centralmosque.org.uk | E mail: enquiries@centralmosque.org.uk

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