



Pathway to Ilm

Monthly Newsletter

Muharram 1446/July 2024

Introduction to Our First Newsletter!

Assalamu Alaikum!

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Pathway to Ilm newsletter! We are thrilled to embark on this journey with you, bringing authentic and reliable Islamic knowledge directly to you. Pathway to Ilm is a collaborative effort of esteemed 'Ulamā from NSW and across Australia, dedicated to addressing the modern challenges our community faces with clarity and integrity.

In this first edition, we aim to enlighten, educate, and inspire. In this newsletter, we discuss the importance of the first Islamic month of Muharram, the Day of 'Āshurā, and the virtues of Friday prayer. In the future, we will send frequent articles related to various topics, so look out for these articles! Our mission is to ensure that every individual, from youth to adults, has access to credible educational resources that cultivate a love for Allah ﷻ and our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

Join us as we combat ignorance with the light of knowledge and strive to uphold the highest standards of integrity and respect in all our educational materials. Together, let's build a supportive and united community rooted in the rich traditions of our Deen.

Our Team*

Dr. Maulana Shabbir Ahmed – Masjid Qubaa, Mount Druitt
Maulana Eshfaq Akbar – Darul Tarbiyah, Lakemba
Mufti Abdul Kareem – Daar Ibn Umar, Campbelltown
Maulana Burhaan Mehtar – Iqra' Academy, Perth
Maulana Tanzeel Haider – Ryde Masjid, Ryde
Maulana Abeerul Hasan Thanvi – Darul Hasan, Mount Druitt
Maulana Ikram Ahmed – Masjid Qubaa, Mount Druitt
Maulana Umar Aldred – Daar Ibn Umar, Campbelltown
Maulana Hasan Iqbal Kazi – Imam, Eastern Suburbs

* More 'Ulamā to join



Mission Statement

In an age where misinformation and confusion are prevalent, the need for authentic and reliable Islamic knowledge has never been greater. The lack of true understanding of Islam has led to various challenges within our community. Pathway to ILM is committed to addressing these issues by providing accessible and credible educational resources for the Muslim community. This initiative is a collaboration of esteemed 'Ulamā from NSW and across Australia, working together to support and guide our community. Our mission is to enlighten, educate, and inspire, ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to develop a profound love for Allah ﷻ and our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

We endeavour to:

- Provide reliable and authentic Islamic knowledge from trusted sources.
- Ensure educational resources are easily accessible, especially to our youth.
- Send monthly newsletters and frequent articles to enlighten the community about contemporary issues.
- Address modern misconceptions with clarity and authenticity, combatting ignorance with the light of true knowledge.
- Create a supportive and friendly educational platform for learning and personal growth.
- Uphold the highest standards of integrity and respect in all educational materials.
- Offer authentic and qualified Islamic knowledge at every level to every adult and child, male and female.
- Deliver programs in a traditional and professional manner.
- Foster a love for Allah and the Nabi ﷺ in learners.
- Share wisdom and teachings as understood and accepted by generations of Muslims through revelation and prophetic guidance.

The Significance of Muḥarram and the Day of 'Āshurā

Muḥarram is the first month of the Islamic lunar calendar, marking the beginning of the Hijri year. The Islamic months are based on the lunar system, as Allah ﷻ says in Surah Al-Tawbah: "Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve months in the register of Allah from the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred." These four sacred months, which include Muḥarram, are times of increased spiritual significance and opportunities for worship.

Muḥarram is also known as the "Month of Allah," a designation that underscores its special status. In a Ḥadith reported by Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ said: "The best of fasts after the month of Ramadān are in the month of Allah, which you call Muḥarram" (Sahih Muslim). This ḥadith highlights the immense virtues of fasting during this month and the increased opportunities for gaining spiritual rewards.

One of the most significant days in Muḥarram is the Day of 'Āshurā, which is observed on the 10th day of the month which corresponds to Wednesday, 14th July. Fasting on this day holds great virtue. The Prophet ﷺ mentioned that fasting on the Day of 'Āshurā expiates the sins of the previous year. This practice commemorates the day when Allah ﷻ saved Musā (as) and Bani Israel from Fir'aun's tyranny, as narrated in Sahih Bukhari. It is a day of reflection, repentance, and seeking Allah's ﷻ mercy.

-Dr. Shabbir Ahmed



100 Ways to Enter Jannah (1-5)

1. Refrain from Polytheism (Shirk)
2. Belief in Allah and His Messenger
3. Praying with submission and humility

4. Paying Zakah
5. Protecting the private parts

Reference: 100 ways to enter Jannah, Dr. Shabbir Ahmed



Seerah: The Dawn of Islam



The birth of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stands as the greatest blessing and favor to our Ummah and a mercy to all the worlds. This significant event was marked by numerous miraculous signs sent by Allah ﷻ, many of which were unprecedented. Allah ﷻ says in Surah Āl Imrān: "Indeed Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when he sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses, and purifying them, and instructing them (in) the Book (Quran) and Al-Hikmah, (the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ), while before that they had been in manifest error", (Surah Āl Imrān: 164).

This heavenly sign (destruction of the elephants) was a hidden precursor and a covert declaration of the imminent arrival of the final messenger of Allah ﷻ. This unseen assistance and protection was granted to the Quraysh because the final messenger, who was about to enter this world, would hail from their tribe, and they were the custodians of the Ka'bah. Despite the religious superiority of the Abyssinians and Yemenis over the Quraysh, this extraordinary defense of the Ka'bah signified the impending birth of the Prophet. A miraculous event occurring close to a Prophet's birth is called *Irhās*, indicating the foundation of prophethood.

The birth of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the greatest of humans and leader of the children of Adam, occurred fifty or fifty-five days after the incident of the elephants in the blessed month of Rabi' al-Awwal in Makkah Mukarramah in the home of Abu Talib. During his blessed birth, extraordinary signs were witnessed.

Fatimah bintu 'Abdullah observed the house filled with radiant light and stars descending low. 'Irbad bin Sariyah related that the Prophet's mother saw a light illuminating the palaces of Syria, as authenticated by Ibn Hibban and reported in Musnad Ahmad. This stooping of stars symbolised the imminent eradication of disbelief and polytheism, to be replaced by spiritual enlightenment. On the same night, an earth tremor struck the palace of Chosroes, causing all fourteen turrets to crumble. Additionally, the fire that had been perpetually blazing for over a thousand years in the Persian fire-temple abruptly extinguished, and Lake Sawah unexpectedly dried up.

Reference: Seerat-e-Mustafa, Maulana Mohammad Idreen Kandhalvi.

—Mufti Abdul Kareem

Enthusiasm for Islamic Knowledge

Yahyā ibn Yāhyā ibn Kathir ibn Wislān ibn Shimlāl ibn Munghāya was a great faqih (jurist) of Spain. He was born in the year 152 Hijri and studied Ḥadīth under the great Imām Mālik (ra), during the last days of the Imām's life. He was present when the Imām breathed his last and also attended his janāzah (funeral prayer). He then returned to Spain, where many enthusiastic people flocked to sit at his feet and benefit from his vast knowledge.

One day, while he was in the lesson of Imām Mālik (ra), an elephant passed by. All the students left to see the elephant, except Yahyā ibn Yahyā, who remained seated. Imām Mālik (ra) was surprised at his lack of interest in the passing spectacle, and asked, "Who are you and where are you from?" "I am from Spain," Yahyā replied. Imām Mālik then asked, "Why did you not go out to see the elephant?" Yahyā replied, "I came from my homeland to see you and learn from your guidance and knowledge. I did not come here to look at elephants. Imām Mālik was so impressed, that he called him, 'The wise man of Andalus'.

References: Wafayātul Aa'yān, vol 6, p 143; Siyar Aa'lām an-Nubalā'; Tartibul Madārik

—Maulana Eshfaq Akbar



Virtues of Friday Prayer



Rasulullah ﷺ said, "The person who has a bath on Friday, purifies himself as far as possible, applies oil to his hair, applies perfume, leaves for the Masjid, when he arrives at the Masjid he does not sit down by removing anyone from his place, offers as many Nafl salaats as possible, when the Imam delivers the Khutbah he remains silent – then his sins from the previous Jumu'ah till now will be forgiven." (Bukhari)

Rasulullah ﷺ said, "The person who has a bath on Friday and goes early to the Masjid on foot, and not by a vehicle, listens to the Khutbah and does not do any foolish act while it is being delivered, will get the reward of one year's 'Ibadah, one year's fasting, and one year's Salāt; for every step that he takes." (Tirmidhi)

Hadrat Ibn Umar and Abu Hurayrah narrate that they heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying, "People should abstain from leaving out Jumu'ah Salāt. If not, Allah ﷻ will put a seal over their hearts whereby they will fall into severe negligence." (Muslim)

Rasulullah ﷺ said, "The person who misses out three Jumu'ah's without any valid reason, Allah ﷻ puts a seal over his heart." (Tirmidhi)

Ibn 'Abbas narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ said: "The person who leaves out Jumu'ah Salāt without a valid reason is written down as a hypocrite in a book that is protected from any changes and modifications." (Mishkaat)

In other words, he will be labelled as a hypocrite forever. However, if he repents or Allah forgives him solely out of His mercy, then this is another matter.

Tazkiyah: Purification of the soul

Tazkiyah is essential for a Muslim's spiritual well-being and success in the Hereafter. It is a continuous process that requires sincere effort and dedication. The Quran emphasises the importance of tazkiyah in several verses. In surah al-Shams, Allah ﷻ takes an oath for purifying the soul with eleven great things then mentions the importance of purifying the soul.

Allah ﷻ further states in another verse: "He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself", (Surah al-A'laa: 14). Another verse states: "It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom – although they were before in clear error", (Surah al-Jumu'ah: 62). In this verse, Allah ﷻ highlights the مقاصد البعثة (objectives of the prophetic mission), which include the recitation of His verses, teaching the Book and wisdom, and tazkiyah (purification), emphasising that spiritual purification is one of the four fundamental goals of the Prophet's mission.

Reference: 100 ways to enter Jannah, Dr. Shabbir Ahmed

–Maulana Ikram Ahmed

Coordinator: Dr. Shabbir Ahmed

Editors: Maulana Eshfaq Akbar, Maulana Ikram Ahmed

These Ahādith emphasise the importance of attending Jumu'ah (Friday) prayers in Islam, highlighting several key practices and their spiritual benefits:

1. Performing Ghusl: Purifying oneself and applying oil and perfume before heading to the mosque.
2. Arriving Early: Going to the mosque on foot, without displacing anyone, and performing voluntary prayers (Nafl).
3. Listening Attentively to the Khutbah: Remaining silent and not engaging in any foolish acts during the sermon.
4. Significant Rewards: Forgiveness of sins from the past week and rewards equivalent to a year's worth of worship for each step taken to the mosque.
5. Severe Warnings for Neglect: Consequences of missing Jumu'ah prayers without a valid reason include a seal placed over one's heart and being labelled as a hypocrite.

Note on Increased Worship on Jumu'ah:

Friday is a significant day for Muslims, and increased worship is highly encouraged. Engaging in additional Nafl prayers, reciting the Quran, making supplications, and sending blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ brings immense spiritual benefits and draws one closer to Allah.

Warning About Misinterpretation: Misinterpreting the Prophet's words "offers as many Nafl salāts as possible" to mean doing less undermines the spirit of striving for increased worship on this blessed day. The intention is to encourage maximising worship and spiritual activities on Jumu'ah, not minimising them.

–Maulana Umar Aldred

Ways to purify the soul

1. Keeping the correct 'Aqeedah
2. Avoiding acts which affect our Imān
3. Establishing Salāh with punctuality
4. Paying our Zakāt
5. Fasting in the month of Ramadān
6. Performing Hajj
7. Remembering Allah ﷻ (Dhikr)

Contact details: Dr. Shabbir Ahmed: 0414944831 / Maulana Eshfaq Akbar: 0405134416

Website coming soon!