

# THE MSA NEWSLETTER

Periodical issued by the Muslim Students Association - NMSU Chapter <http://web.nmsu.edu/~msa> email: [msa@nmsu.edu](mailto:msa@nmsu.edu)

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### Did you Know?

- In the Richter Scale, an earthquake that measures 8 would be **10,000 times stronger** than an earthquake that measures 4.
- An **anemometer** is used to measure wind speed.
- The **ruble** or rouble is the unit of currency in Russia.

## ISLAM 101 PART 2

The first part of this article, in the previous edition, talked about the two integral parts of the religion of Islam: faith and actions. For a person to have a complete religion, they must have faith in the heart and perform actions that reflect that faith. In this part, we explore what Muslims believe in (faith) and what worship they perform.

Islam, as a faith, is a set of six basic beliefs which are also called "The Pillars of Faith". All Muslims believe in:

1. **The Oneness of God (Allah):** God or Allah has no partner, son, daughter, helper, or competitor. There is nothing that even remotely resembles Him, for He is unique. He is the Creator, Sustainer and Cherisher of everything that exists.
2. **The Angels.** This is the belief in the existence of angels as part of the unseen world.
3. **All of The Messengers And Prophets of God.** A Muslim must accept all of God's prophets and messengers as legitimate, for denial of one means denial of all. All messengers came to deliver the same message from the same source which is God.
4. **The revealed books of God to His messengers.** Muslims believe in all the past revealed books. Examples of the revelations mentioned in the Qur'an are the Torah of Moses, the Zubur (Psalms) of David, and the Injeel (Bible) of Jesus.
5. **The Day of Judgment and the Hereafter:** The Qur'an teaches that life is a test for each individual.

Those who spread evil and oppression will be judged and punished. And those who do good in this life will be rewarded by God the Most Generous. Then both will live for eternity in what is called the Hereafter.

**6. The fact that nothing happens without the knowledge and permission of God.** While we may not understand why certain things happen, it is part of the divine plan for our lives.

The other integral part of Islam, is the actions that Muslims must do to be Muslims; i.e, the obligations. In general, Muslims are required to **do all that is good and abstain from all that is evil.** Below are the five pillars of Islam that constitute the common actions done by all Muslims :

1. **Shahadah (The Declaration of Monotheism):** Recognizing and acknowledging the monotheistic nature of God is at the core of Islam. This consists of a public affirmation that "there is no god but Allah (God), and Muhammad is His Messenger."

2. **Salah (Prayers):** A Muslim must perform the five daily prayers. These must be done at specific times, corresponding roughly with dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and nightfall. Be-

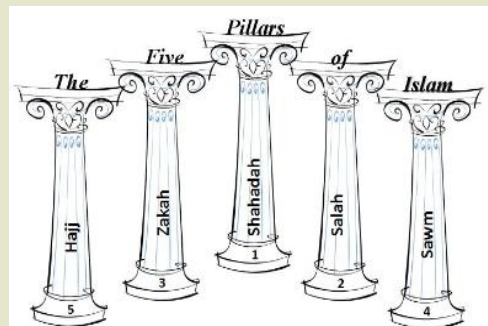
sides being a direct connection with God, prayers stress and manifest equality and the sense of community, brotherhood, and sisterhood. Prayers also raise the individual to a higher level of morality, purify their heart, and help them resist their desire to engage in forbidden or evil acts.

3. **Sawm (Fasting):** Every year during the Islamic month of Ramadan, Muslims abstain from food, drink, and sexual activity from dawn to sunset. Fasting offers numerous benefits. One benefit is that it strengthens one's patience, self-restraint, will power, and sincerity.

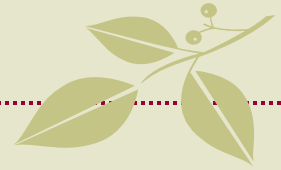
4. **Zakat (Charity):** Every Muslim whose net annual savings are above a certain specified minimum must pay an annual amount of 2.5% to the poor and needy.

5. **Hajj (Pilgrimage to Makkah):** Hajj is an act of worship that is to be performed at least once in a lifetime, provided that one is physically and financially able to do so. Please see the "Hajj" article on page 4.

By: Waleed Alkohlani  
Source: Islamic Center of Irvine, CA



## ISLAMIC EIDS (HOLIDAYS)



The word Eid is derived from the verb Ya'ood, which means to return. Therefore Eid is repeated every year and is celebrated by Muslims around the world. Two of the Eid festivals celebrated by Muslims are Eid al-Adha, which is also known as the "Greater Eid", and Eid al-Fitr known as the "Smaller Eid".

Eid al-Adha, "Festival of Sacrifice", is celebrated by Muslims all around the world to honor and remember the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son Ismael (Ishmael) as an act of submission to Allah. It is celebrated on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijja, according to the Islamic lunar calendar. While commemorating and remembering the act of Prophet Ibrahim, Muslims themselves slaughter an animal on this day such as a sheep, camel, or goat. The meat is mostly given away to others; one third is eaten by the family and relatives, one third is given away to friends and neighbors, and one third is donated to the poor. This act represents our willingness to give up things that are of benefit to us in order to follow Allah's commands. It also represents our willingness to give up some of our own bounties in order to fortify and strengthen bonds of friendship and help those who are in need. Doing so we are able to acknowledge that all blessings come from Allah and we should open our hearts and share with others.

On the other hand, Eid al-Fitr, "Festival of breaking fast", is a Muslim holiday that symbolizes the end of the holy month of Ramadan, the holy month of fasting. Therefore, this holiday symbolizes the breaking of the fasting period. It occurs on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Shawwal—the month following Ramadan according to

the Islamic lunar calendar. On the night of Eid al-Fitr it is obligatory for the adult of the family who is not poor, on behalf of himself as well as on behalf of those who are dependents on him, to give about three kilos per person of either wheat, or barley, or dates, or raisins, or rice etc. They could also pay the price of one of these items in cash instead.

In celebrating both Eids, Muslims visit family and friends and exchange gifts. "Eid Mubarak", Arabic for "Happy/Blessed Eid" becomes the standard greeting on those days. The Eid day starts with a special prayer called "Eid Prayer" where all the Muslims (men, women and children) of a city or neighborhood gather in one place to perform the prayer and to thank God for the Eid and for all the blessings He has poured on them. Muslims, especially children, wear new clothes for the Eid, and they receive gifts from parents, relatives and friends. In addition to the above, different Muslim countries have different special customs that are done on the Eid days.

By: Maryam Kalantarian

## FAST-A-DAY 2009 RECAP

The Muslim Student Association of New Mexico State University started fasting September 10<sup>th</sup> with the intentions of breaking that fast in the company of their fellow students, University staff, faculty and administrators. As part of the NMSU MSA's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Fast-a-Day, Muslim and non-Muslim members of the NMSU community observed Sawm( fasting ), abstaining from food, water, and sex, in observing the month of Ramadan.



A Photo from the 5th Fast-A-Day Event, September 10th, 2009 at the Intramurals Fields

As dusk grew near, a strong breeze blew as NMSU students, faculty, and staff came together to discuss Islam, Ramadan, and their collective day of fasting. Before the call for prayer (adhan), signaling the end of the fast, brothers and sisters chatted with their friends and colleagues about both the difficulties and ease of various aspects in fasting. Many of our guests were concerned about fasting, specifically abstaining from water, and Ramadan moving into hot summer months in the years to come.

Ominous rain clouds rolled in as the evening progressed. Everyone rejoiced with the adhan by drinking their water and trying a few delicious dates. With a small lecture after the adhan, our guests learned about Islam's justice system, the importance of woman and their hijab in Islam, and the place of Jesus in Islam. Getting ready to start

the prayer, brothers and sisters lined up for prayer amidst the backdrop of youth playing soccer, dark clouds rolling in with strikes of lightning. The sight of the collective Las Cruces Muslim community praying together on the intramural fields was quite moving.

Our guests enjoyed sampling some of the best food within our Muslim community. Main dishes included Beef, Chicken, Lamb, and vegetarian options prepared in styles representing the entire Muslim world. Several soups, rice, and salad dishes complimented the variety offered in the main dishes to our guests.

Unfortunately, nature and weather were not on our side this evening. As dinner progressed, the weather and rain progressed from light drizzle to a steady down-pour. Brothers and sisters diligently spoke with our retreating guest and cleaned up amidst the ensuing rain. Brothers were soaked as they scrambled to clean up the chairs, tables, and space used for the event. We hope everyone was pleased with our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Fast-a-Day and learned something, even if

it was only Muslim hospitality. Maybe we'll try an indoor location for our next Fast-a-Day, stay tuned. Send us your thoughts and suggestions for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Fast-a-Day in Ramadan 2010 by emailing us to [msa@nmsu.edu](mailto:msa@nmsu.edu) or filling out our feedback form at <http://web.nmsu.edu/~msa/feedback.html>

By: Nabeeh Hasan

### Arabic Proverb

A foolish man may be known by six things: Anger without cause, speech without profit, change without progress, inquiry without object, putting trust in a stranger, and mistaking foes for friends.

# CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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60						61				62	63			
64						65				66				
67						68				69				

**Down:**

1. A community in Northern Ontario, Canada.
2. Meaning of track or way (unarranged letters).
3. The fifth letter of the Greek alphabet +D
4. First 3 letters of an exciting skiing and snowboarding mountain in California.
5. Sunrise vs. sun..... (Inverted).
6. Revolves around the earth + h.
7. Abbreviation means Ante Meridiem +V + O.
8. Word used as an early name for Afrikaans.
9. H + different letters.
10. Two letters from the word 'windows' + First two letters of an underground crop +I+M.
11. The largest city in the state of Nebraska. USA.
12. An object used in microscope to hold a specimen (unarranged word).
13. Causing laughter or amusement.
21. The nearest star to the earth (inverted direction).
22. The whole duration of a being lifetime + L.
23. Affected with madness or insanity.
25. German company which produces luxury cars.
26. A common disease.
27. sized for the thinner than average person.
28. A multi-fingered body part.
29. Name of the Religion means submission to the will of God and obedience to His law.
30. Two similar letters + two similar letters.
34. To decide by reasoning.
35. The word 'done' (unarranged).
36. Different letters.
38. A.
41. Far.
43. A chapter in Holley Quran named after her.
44. The first prophet in Islam.
45. A Latin word means "therefore."
47. Plural of man +Q+E +L.
49. An old Korean currency.
50. A historical crop grown in New Mexico.
51. A month in the year.
52. Third month of the year (unarranged).
55. To flee + A.
56. Symbol of pounds + S.
57. B + A defect in the code or routine of a computer program.
58. M +similar letters+ H.
59. A derived unit of power in the International System of Units (SI).
63. Similar letters + I.

**Across:**

1. A common cereal crop.
6. A science starting with M.
10. A wild and savage carnivores belonging to the genus *Canis* and closely allied to the common dog.
14. A deciduous Eurasian tree (*Malus pumila*).
15. Male Arabic name.
16. A university in New Mexico.
17. Stinging hymenopterous insects.
18. Egg shape abundance.
19. Uneasy sensation in human or animal.
20. A brand for graphic cards.
21. Something very small or a Greek word means dwarf.
22. First letter of citrus tree.
23. Famous Canadian singer-songwriter, musician, poet and novelist.
24. to express mirth, pleasure, derision, or nervousness with an audible.
26. A day in a week (Unarranged).
28. A building or edifice for the habitation of man.
29. A fast growing religion.
31. The ground or floor.
32. A word means a smaller portion or quantity +U +Z.
34. The most widely-consumed beverage in the world.
37. A country was called Bharat and Hindustan.
39. One of the largest species of deer in the world.
40. An acronym for "Yet Another Hierarchical Officious Oracle.
42. M +D.
44. The state of being conscious.
45. The flow of air.
47. A title for a woman.
48. Country bordered by Uganda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tanzania.
50. Used in taking photos.
53. Present tense of went + Y + K.
54. Different letters + Abbreviation of New York + M.
55. R + A large carnivorous feline mammal.
57. Strong car brand.
60. Arabic country.
61. An island country in the Caribbean.
62. Hood snake.
64. Tiny insects that live on the scalp of the head.
65. in a short time (Unarranged).
66. The place where justice is administered.
67. Opposite of paradise (unarranged).
68. What Muslims do during Ramadan?
69. The English number of the Turkish number "sekiz".

**By: Ahmed Al-Hammouri**

**Winners' names will be announced in the next issue of the newsletter. Please email your answers to [m5a@nmsu.edu](mailto:m5a@nmsu.edu)**

## HAJJ: A JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

For 14 centuries, countless millions of Muslims, men and women from the four corners of the earth, have made the pilgrimage to Mecca, the birthplace of Islam. In carrying out this obligation, they fulfill one of the five "pillars" of Islam, called Hajj.

Hajj, which means: 'to set out for a place', is prescribed by God, to be performed at least once in a lifetime, by all Muslims who have the means and are physically able to perform it.

The Hajj and its rites were first ordained by God in the time of the Prophet Abraham and he was the one God entrusted to build the Kaba - the House of God - along with his son Ishmael at Mecca, now located in Saudi Arabia. God described the Kaba and its building as follows:

"And remember when We showed Ibrahim the site of the [Sacred] House [saying]: Associate not anything [in worship with Me and purify My House for those who circumambulate it [i.e. perform tawaaf] and those who stand up for prayer and those who bow down and make prostration [in prayer etc.]." [Surah Al-Hajj 22:26]

The pilgrimage takes place each year between the 8th and the 13th days of Dhu al-Hijjah, the 12th month of the Muslim lunar calendar. During the Hajj men and women wear white clothes, with men wearing a two-piece cloth, one to cover the body from waist to ankle and the other to be thrown over the shoulder, and women wearing a simple white dress and a head-cover, and no veil. This is called Ihram.

The ihram is a symbol of purity and of the renunciation of evil and mundane matters. It also indicates the equality of all people in the eyes of God. When the pilgrim wears his white apparel, he or she enters into a state of purity that prohibits quarreling, committing violence to man or animal and having conjugal relations. Once he puts on his hajj clothes the pilgrim cannot shave, cut his nails or wear any jewelry, and he will keep his unsown garment on till he completes the pilgrimage. This ihram is accompanied by the primary invocation of the hajj, the talbiyah:

Here I am, O God, at Thy Command! Here I am at Thy Command! Thou art without associate; Here I am at Thy Command! Thine are

praise and grace and dominion! Thou art without associate.

On the first day of the hajj, pilgrims sweep out of Mecca toward Mina, a small uninhabited village east of the city. As their throngs spread through Mina, the pilgrims generally spend their time meditating and praying, as the Prophet did on his pilgrimage.

During the second day, the 9th of Dhu al-Hijjah, pilgrims leave Mina for the plain of 'Arafat for the wuquf, "the standing," the central rite of the hajj. As they congregate there, the pilgrims' stance and gathering reminds them of the Day of Judgment. Some of them gather at the Mount of Mercy, where the Prophet delivered his unforgettable Farewell Sermon, enunciating far-reaching religious, economic, social and political reforms. These are emotionally charged hours, which the pilgrims spend in worship and supplication. Many shed tears as they ask God to forgive them. On this sacred spot, they reach the culmination of their religious lives as they feel the presence and closeness of a merciful God.

Just after sunset, the mass of pilgrims pro-



Photo: Overview of the Sacred Mosque in the City of Mecca during Hajj

## H A J J . . . c o n t d .

ceeds to Muzdalifah, an open plain about halfway between 'Arafat and Mina. There they first pray and then collect a fixed number of chickpea-sized pebbles to use on the following days.

Before daybreak on the third day, pilgrims move from Muzdalifah to Mina. There they cast at white pillars the pebbles they have previously collected. This practice, according to some traditions, is associated with Prophet Abraham. As pilgrims throw seven pebbles at each of these pillars, they remember the story of Satan's attempt to persuade Abraham to disregard God's command to sacrifice his son Ishmael. This is a symbolic attempt to cast away evil and vice.

Following the casting of the pebbles, most pilgrims sacrifice a goat, sheep or some other animal. They give the meat to the poor after, in some cases, keeping a small portion for

themselves.

This rite is associated with Prophet Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son Ishmael in accordance with God's wish. It symbolizes the Muslim's willingness to be part with what is precious to him, and reminds us of the spirit of Islam, in which submission to God plays a leading role. This act also reminds the pilgrim to share worldly goods with those who are less fortunate, and serves as an offer of thanksgiving to God.

As the pilgrims have, at this stage, finished a major part of the hajj, they are now allowed to shed their ihram and put on everyday clothes. On this day Muslims around the world share the happiness the pilgrims feel and join them by performing identical, individual sacrifices in a worldwide celebration of 'Eid al-Adha, "the Festival of Sacrifice." Men either shave their heads or clip their hair, and

women cut off a symbolic lock, to mark their partial deconsecrating. This is done as a symbol of humility. All proscriptions, save the one of conjugal relations, are now lifted.

The pilgrims journey forward to visit Makkah to perform the tawaf, the seven-fold circling of the Ka'bah, with a prayer recited during each circuit. Their circumambulation of the Ka'bah, the symbol of God's oneness, implies that all human activity must have God at its center. This is followed by a prayer, preferably at the Station of Abraham, the site where Abraham stood while he built the Ka'bah. Then they drink of the water of Zamzam.

Another, and sometimes final, rite is the sa'y, or "the running." This is a reenactment of a memorable episode in the life of Hagar, who was taken into what the Qur'an calls the "uncultivable valley" of Makkah, with her infant son Ishmael, to settle there.

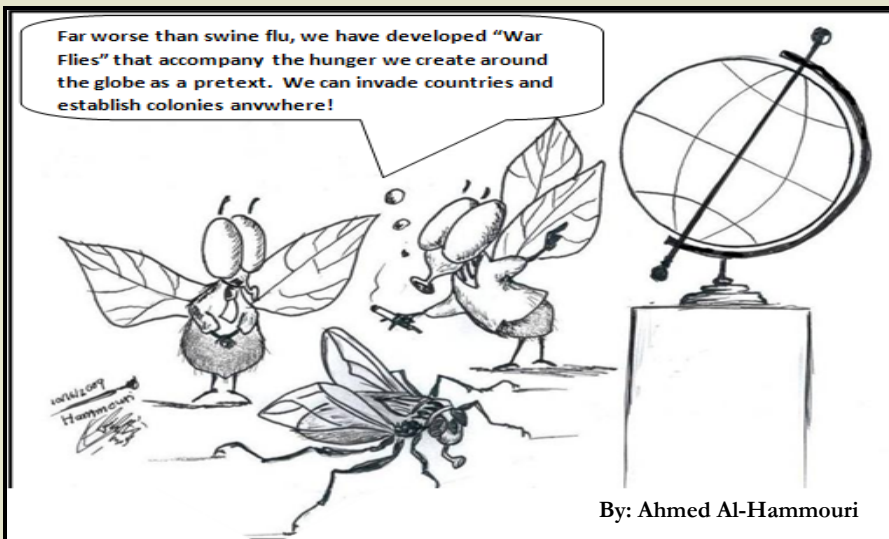
Before or after going to Makkah, pilgrims also avail themselves of the opportunity provided by the hajj or the 'umrah to visit the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, the second holiest city in Islam, where Prophet Mohammad is buried under the green dome. This visit, however, is not obligatory.

From there and Mecca, pilgrims of diverse races and tongues return to their homes, carrying with them cherished memories of Abraham, Ishmael, Hagar, and Muhammad. Returning with the memory of that universal concourse, where poor and rich, black and white, young and old, met on equal footing.

And just like their father Abraham, Prophet Mohammad, and those before them, the Muslims will continue to make pilgrimage till the end of time.

**By: Mohammad Al-Gahmi**

Source: <http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/jlthajj/LifeTimeJourney.shtml>



By: Ahmed Al-Hammouri

### Quick Facts: World Poverty

- ◆ Over 1 billion people – 1 in 6 people around the world – live in extreme poverty, which is defined as living on less than \$1 a day.
- ◆ Another 2.7 billion struggle to survive on less than two dollars per day.
- ◆ More than 800 million people go to bed hungry every day...300 million are children.
- ◆ Poverty kills more than 50,000 people every day – 18 million poor people die every year from extreme poverty.
- ◆ Every year more than 10 million children die of hunger and preventable diseases – that's over 30,000 a day, or one every 3 seconds.
- ◆ The United Nations estimates that unfair trade rules alone deny poor countries \$700 billion every year (that's \$2 billion per day).
- ◆ In America and Europe, the average cow is subsidized at more than \$2 a day. That's more than what half the world's population – more than 3 billion people – have to live on a day.



The MSA newsletter is an effort done by the Muslim Students Association at NMSU to:

- Serve as a communications medium among MSA members and non-MSA members.
- To disseminate knowledge about Islam and Muslim-related topics in an effort to bring about better mutual understanding among students of different faiths.
- To disseminate general knowledge and to entertain!



## Blessings ...

“(22) Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. (23) And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: "My Lord! bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood." (24) Your Lord knoweth best what is in your hearts: if ye do deeds of righteousness, verily He is Most Forgiving to those who turn to Him again and again (in true penitence).” Quran: 17:22-24.



Narrated by Abu Huraira:

A man came to the Prophet Muhammad (Peace & Blessings Be Upon Him) and said, "O Allah's Apostle! Who deserves to be treated with the best companionship by me?" The Prophet said, "Your Mother." The man said "Who is next?" The Prophet said, "Your Mother." The man further said, "Who is next?" The Prophet said, "Your Mother." The man asked for the fourth time, "Who is next?" The Prophet said, "Your Father."

—Bukhari, vol8, book73:2

### Contributed In This Issue:

- ◆ Maryam Kalantarian
- ◆ Ahmed Al-Hammouri
- ◆ Nabeeh Hasan
- ◆ Mohammad Al-Gahmi
- ◆ Waleed Alkohani

### Special Thanks

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