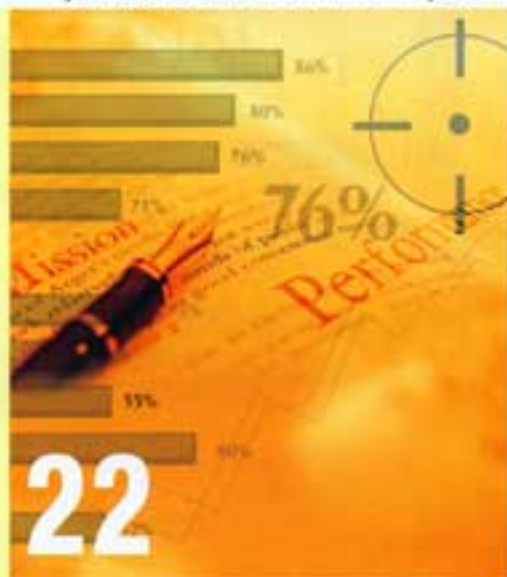


## CORNERSTONE TO THE NEW MUSLIM NONPROFIT

### Defining and Writing Your Organization's Mission

Step one in forming or professionalizing your organization is exercising the first-order leadership task of thinking the mission of your nonprofit through to the end. How to identify the components of the mission statement for your organization and how to develop one are two of the questions our cover story for this issue attempts to answer.

By Khalil Jasseem and Mohamad Chehade



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Hearts swinging between hope & fear.

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Requirements the knowledge seeker must heed should he be desirous of Allah's rewards on the Day of Reckoning. (Part-2)

**14** CHARACTER

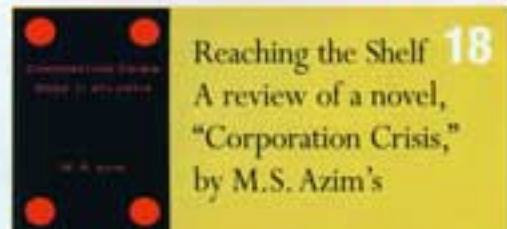
Forgiveness is not easy. But being able to forgive enables us to move on with our lives. This is its reward in this life. In the next, we reap the best of forgiveness from the Oft-forgiving.

**16** YOUTHFUL HORIZONS

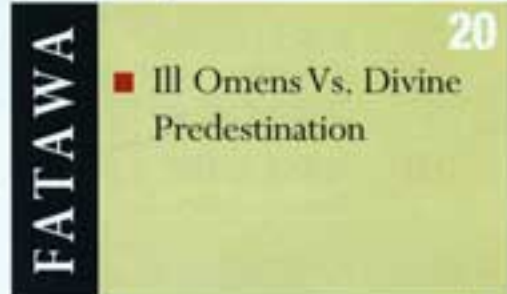
Temporary shields against evil temptation can be effective. But once we go out in the real world, the ultimate protection lies in our embedded faith.

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*This magazine contains some of Allah's names. Please do not erase or in the trash. Please keep circulation sheet in recycle.*

## QUR'AN

"And follow the best of what was revealed to you from your Lord [i.e., the Qur'an] before punishment comes upon you suddenly, while you do not perceive." [39:55]

## HADEETH

"Each day, two angels descend from the heaven and one of them says, 'O Allah! Compensate those who spend in Your cause,' while the other angel says, 'O Allah! Give the haves who spend not in Your way a scattering.'" (Bukhari)

## NOTABLE QUOTES

"If you wish to know whether you belong to the partisans of this life or the partisans of the hereafter, check which is most beloved to you: giving or receiving."

- Imam Shafi'ee

"He who is content can never be ruined."

- Chinese Proverb

"See to it that you ever are in one of the following situations: preparing for the hereafter; handling your worldly affairs; or having halal fun to freshen up for the two former undertakings."

- Anonymous

# Contentment is the Antidote to Anxiety

BY DR. HASSAN SHAMSI

Psychologists trace the best part of worries and anxieties we sustain to lack of contentment. Triggers of this contentment deficiency syndrome are infinite—one may not always get what he wants, and even if he gets it, he still might not feel the satisfaction he anticipates. Not only that, even when one gets what he wants, he continues to harbor feelings of fear and worry that these gains might slip away from his hand. So anxiety, whether natural or pathological, is a fact of life.

Natural anxiety, also called healthy anxiety, is essential for life, or, to be specific, life is meaningless without it, for when we lack this type of anxiety, we succumb to spiritual and emotional dullness.

And life, to be sure, is rife with concerns: relationship difficulties, work inconveniences, peer pressure, stress from unfulfilled expectations, grief, you name it. All these are situations that plant worry in one's heart; they may cause one to lose sleep, blunt one's appetite for food, or renders one cranky—exploding in rage for the least irritation. But then comes a time when these worrisome feelings go away and we bathe once more in the cool pool of tranquility and satisfaction endeavoring to make the best out of this respite before worry assaults again—welcome to life!

Pathological anxiety, on the other hand, is ambiguous and saddening because it derives from fear, fear of an indefinite thing. The victim of this condition starts to sustain high blood pressure, tachycardia and feel as if something inside him is dashing downward, and soon he or she starts shutting hysterically between this and that clinic complaining to doctors of stomach ache, bloating, headache, etc. Yet, it remains that

his complaints have no organic basis whatsoever, rather, they are rooted in inorganic causes like worry, fear and inability to adapt to life.

Now, what should a Muslim do in the face of all this?

The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, "Do not allow worldly concerns to tyrannize over you, for whoever makes this life his major concern, Allah will increase him in worries and place poverty before his eyes; and whoever makes the Hereafter his utmost concern, Allah will set his affairs aright for him and plant content in his heart. And whoever turns to Allah wholeheartedly, Allah will turn the hearts of His servants toward him (with love and compassion)." (Baihaqi) This Prophetic directive is meant to impart tranquility in one's heart and to root out from it covetousness and desire for things material.

Also, the recommended list of worry's antidotes include consenting and submitting to Allah's will and decrees, showing patience in the face of ordeals, hoping for Allah's reward, and believing firmly that His aid and relief is near.

Grumblers cannot taste happiness because they are caught in the clutches of despair. But those whose faith is solid bask in the light of certainty and hope. They trust in Allah and are always relaxed, because they know that: "No misfortune can happen on earth or in your souls but is recorded in a decree before we bring it into existence: that is truly easy for God: In order that you may not despair over matters that pass you by nor exult over favours bestowed upon you. For God loves not any vainglorious boaster." [57:22-23] **A**

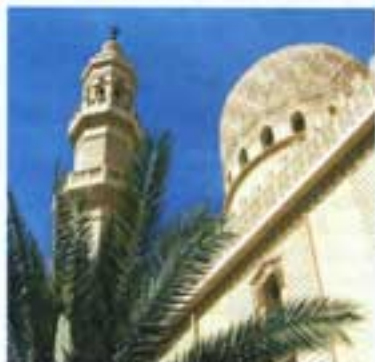


# STUDYING ARABIC: A PRECIOUS USE

BY RODRIGO ADAM

## A Big Step

I awaken, my soul returning to my body. The sound seeps into my range of hearing, subsiding and resurging, a reoccurring yet familiar presence. I make out consonants within the echoing hum—*"ashhadu alla ilaha illallah...ashhadu anna Muhammadan rasulallah..."* The *Athan*. I glance through my bedroom window, seeking out the echoing sound of the *Mus'ithin* (*Athan* chanter) reaching me from the nearby moonlit masjid, echoing the same beautiful chanting as the nearby



masjid in the immediate neighborhood; as, in fact, all the masajid in the city; as the entire country. Amman, Jordan: My place of residence for the next nine months as a student of classical Arabic.

The decision to go and study was admittedly a big one to make. A recent college graduate, I made the choice to put Arabic studies before any thought of graduate work. I had also had to struggle to assure my non-Muslim parents, who fear violence and instability in the Middle East, about the wisdom of my decision. Yet I think that ultimately the choice I made—to dedicate extensive time to the acquisition of the Arabic language for the serious study of Islam—is one which other young Muslims must make to reenact themselves if they sincerely care about the future of Islam in their communities.

## Passing the Message of Islam

"Thus have We sent this down—an

Arabic Qur'an—and explained therein in detail some of the warnings, in order that they may develop *taqwa*, or that it may cause their remembrance (of Him)." [20:113]

Classical Arabic is the key to understanding the Qur'an, the basis of our way of life. Learning what the word of God is does not only broaden your appreciation for the message of Islam, but it helps you to better call others to appreciate the oneness of God. Furthermore, you will be able to help others in your community learn more about their deen. You can truly gain the potential to be a positive force of educational enrichment in your community. Furthermore, the language learning environment helped me identify two primary objects of concern: Our lacking in understanding the elevated importance of Islamic knowledge, as well as the dire need for personal integrity and sense of duty in transmitting this knowledge from the Prophet, *sallallahu alayhe wa sallam*. For this direct transmission of knowledge from

# Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal

## A Man of Legendary Piety and Learning (Part -2)

BY UWAYMIR ANJUM

**I**n his studies, Ahmad as a young student was devoted, after the words of Allah, to the words of the His Messenger, *sallallahu alayhe wa sallam*. He memorized hadeeth at the feet of all the available scholars of Baghdad. He was so keen and devoted a student his mother had to beg him to wait till the call for the Fajr salah to leave home after the darkness had faded. After completing his education in Baghdad, he set out for Basrah, Hijaz (Makkah and Madinah), Yemen, Syria and al-Jazirah (northern Iraq) to learn hadeeth from the reputed scholars of the time.

His first journey to the land of Hijaz is worth describing. He set out on foot amongst fervent prayers of his mother who gave him all the money she could muster for the journey, but it amounted to very little. He recalled later that

he completely lost his way at least three times, and each time he did, he would turn to Allah, seeking forgiveness and saying "O Lord, Guide of the lost, guide me," and no sooner had he done that than he found his way once again.



The Muslim ummah has had no dearth of gifted savants who had prodigious memories, but Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal perhaps tops them all with his treasure of one million traditions of the Prophet, *sallallahu alayhe wa sallam*. His devotion to the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet was complete, as was his rejection of anything that he believed corrupted or competed with that sacred God-given knowledge. Hence he vehemently rejected the increasing influence of the new translation movement which made available the philosophy and other literature of the Greeks and other nations to the Muslim readers of the second-third century Baghdad. He had seen the corrupting influence this knowledge had had on the faith and character of the Muslims of the time, and avoided even the company of those who learned it even for the sake of defending Islam. Even defending the truth of God on the turf of foreign sciences, he believed, was too much to concede and compromise.

# FAMILY

MUSLIM FAMILY LIVING HAPPILY AND HEALTHILLY

# LIFE

## PARENTING

### Sharing the Joy of Giving

BY SALMA SANWARI

*"My children are so unappreciative! They have so much and yet all they ever do is want and want. They have the latest games and toys and they come home from school asking for more. They see things in the store and ask for it. They see things that others have and ask for it. They are so ungrateful! Help!"*

Does that sound familiar? For many moms, this is all too common. We hear our children tell us time and again that they want what their friends have and that ultimately they are not satisfied with what they already have. And we are stumped with how to teach them to be happy and content with what they have. How do we teach them to be pleased with what Allah has already blessed them with? How can we teach them to be satisfied with enough when it is never enough?

It is human to want more and to want what we do not have. And once we have acquired what we want, we move on to the next thing. This begins at a young age and progresses as we mature. And it seems never to stop. One way to combat this would be to realize that Allah has blessed us with



whatever He has given us and we have to use His blessings in the best way possible. In other words, there are some people whom Allah has blessed with financial security. They have enough money for home and provisions and their children have what they

need and most of what they want. In these situations, they see that their children are still asking for more and this is where they find that their children are becoming 'greedy'.

These parents are worried that their children do not value what they have and will grow up to under-appreciate the true blessings that Allah has bestowed on them.

#### SAYING 'THANK YOU' SAYS SO MUCH

One of the most elementary steps in gratitude is to simply say, "Thank you." And this applies to us, as well. When our children see us saying "Thank you" to one another, to our own parents and friends and especially to our spouses, they will mimic that behavior. When