

Preparing young Muslim scientists to follow footsteps of Medieval scholars

By Basheer Ahmed M.D.

The Institute of Medieval and Post Medieval studies was established in 2001 to help generate a climate of mutual understanding and respect between Muslims and people of all other faiths and cultures by making them aware of the Muslims' contributions to world civilization.

Thus, we strive to correct the concept of dark ages when Muslim scholars and scientists enlightened the world with their original scientific contributions. This is accomplished by making presentations in national and international conferences, publishing books,



newsletters and developing an informative website.

In 2018, the Institute joined hands with Dis-

coverSTEM and adopted a new goal—encouraging youth by engaging them in learning about the Islamic heritage and inspiring and training

them to become scientists, innovators and thinkers.

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First Image of Black Hole Page. 2



TMO will publish a summary of the Surahs Page. 12

Man Drives Into Crowd Because He Thought They Were Muslim

By: Aysha Qamar

In another series of this month's hateful events comes the news of a man who plowed his Toyota Corolla into a group of pedestrians at a crowded intersection in Sunnyvale, Calif.

Isaiah J. Peoples, a 34-year-old army veteran, intentionally drove his car into a crowd of people in Sunnyvale because he thought some



of them were Muslim, police said Friday.

Peoples is accused of hitting eight pedestrians with his car on Tuesday, April 23. According to police, Peoples had picked up food and was driving to a Bible study group when he deliberately drove into a crosswalk.

“Based on our investigation, new evidence shows that the defendant intentionally targeted victims based on their race and his belief that they were of the Muslim faith,” Sunnyvale police chief Phan Ngo said outside court.

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How to Prepare for Ramadan: 3 Steps I am Planning to Take This Year



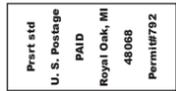
By Nida Siddiq

Can you believe it's already that time of the year again? The sacred month of fasting, giving, and connecting is soon upon us. Here's how to

prepare for Ramadan to get the best of this month.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic cal-

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Scientists Unveil First Image of Black Hole

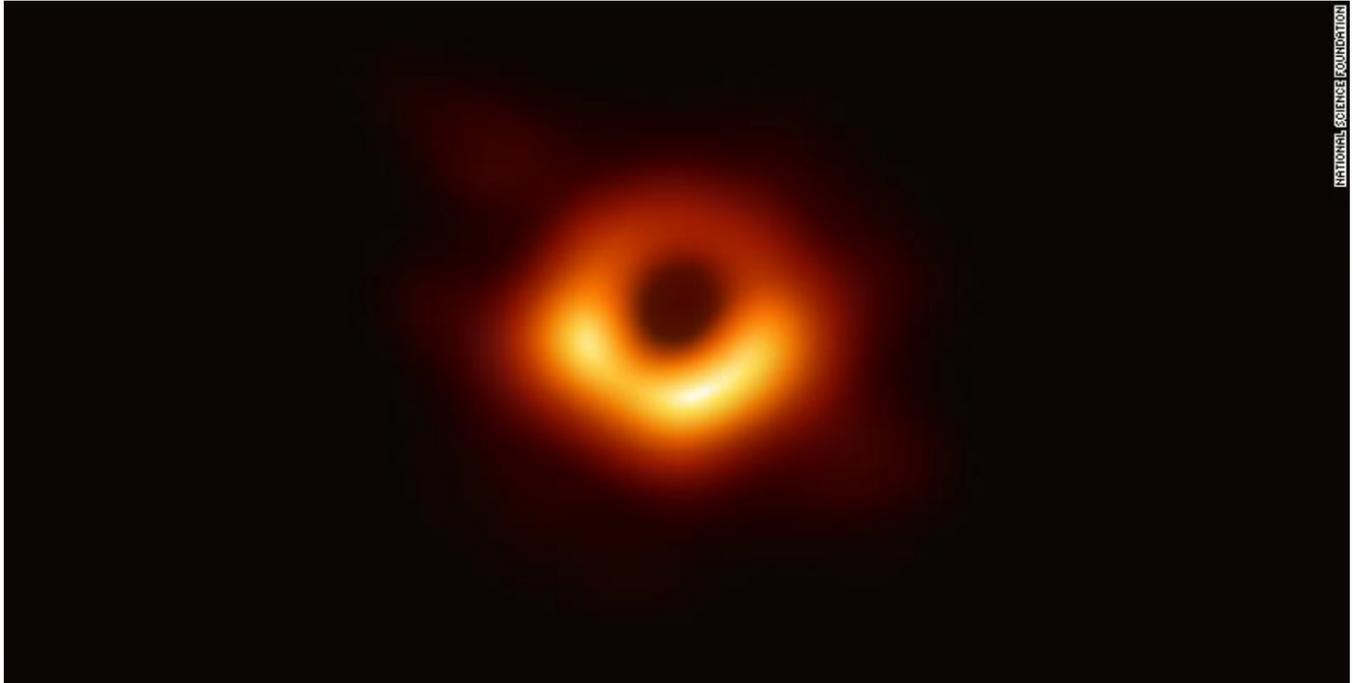
By: TMO Staff

Scientists have unveiled the first image of a black hole, the first direct visual evidence that black holes exist. The unveiling of the image, being called Powehi in Hawaii, marks a day of celebration for astronomers and astrophysicists.

The image further bolsters Einstein's theory of general relativity and helps scientists better understand black holes.

The Event Horizon Telescope (EHT), a planet-scale array of eight ground-based radio telescopes possible through international collaboration, succeeded in what it was designed to accomplish, SciTecDaily reported.

The EHT links telescopes around the globe to form an unprecedented Earth-sized virtual telescope. It was designed to capture images of a black hole and on April 10, it unveiled the first direct visual evidence of a supermassive black hole and its shadow.



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

A black hole is a region exhibiting such strong gravitational effects that nothing not even particles and electromagnetic radiation such as light can escape from inside it. This discovery was announced in a series of six papers published in a special issue of The Astrophysical Journal Letters. The image discloses the black hole at the center of Messier 87, existing 55 million light-

years from Earth. The mass of the black hole is 6.5 billion times that of our Sun, the largest and only star in our solar system. This past week, Google also honored the breakthrough detection through their First Image of a Black Hole doodle in many countries. Although black holes have been a topic of discussion for years in

science books, magazines and Hollywood movies, an actual image was yet to be captured. This caused many people to believe they were both mystery and myth. "We are embarking on a wonderful new series of putting new telescopes (at places around) the Earth, so if you add more telescopes, you build out that virtual mirror," Director of EHT Sheperd Doeleman of Harvard

University said at a news conference. "Even adding two or three more stations in just the right places will increase the fidelity of the image a lot," he added. Based on Doeleman's statements, it is possible that this image is just the beginning of unveiling many alike in the future.

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Holy Quran

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An Open Letter to Ramadan From the Perspective of Three Muslim-Americans



By Aysha Qamar

If Ramadan was a person and I had a chance to say one thing, it would be "I need you."

To me, Ramadan isn't just a month of spiritual cleanse, but one of self-reflection. One of self-awareness, self-love, and forgiveness. I await Ramadan each year because — although it may not be a significantly noticeable change- I change for the better each Ramadan. Each Ramadan allows me to reflect on not only my actions of the year, but on who I am as a person. You see, for me, fasting is not only about abstaining from food and drink. Fasting is not about being hungry. For me, fasting is about self-control. It allows me to take time and reflect on who I am as an individual.

I need Ramadan because it grounds me. It allows me to forgive myself. It gives me an opportunity to change. They say 30 days of doing something makes a habit — and Ramadan is just that. Thirty days of changing into a better you. I remember growing up I never really understood when my mother said: "During Ramadan you not only fast with your stomach — but with your tongue and

heart."

I never understood why people suddenly stopped doing so many of the things they did all year — just during Ramadan. I never understood- until now. Ramadan in a sense is an opportunity for one to develop positive traits. Each Ramadan, I focus on one negative trait I have that I want to get rid of — whether it's cursing too much, controlling my anger or being hurtful to myself. I try to avoid doing these things for a month in hopes of making it habitual to live without them.

Ramadan allows me to not only bring myself closer to God and my religion but myself. It allows me to learn how far I can push myself to change- it reminds me that God is all forgiving. It reminds me that if God, a higher being, can forgive my actions, so can I. It allows me to take time out of my day and find the inner peace that brings me closer to loving my lord. Ramadan reminds me that everyone makes mistakes and everyone can receive forgiveness.

The Quran says, "O Son of Adam, even if your sins were to reach the clouds of the sky

and were you then to ask forgiveness of me, I would forgive you." Ramadan reminds me of this.

I'll be honest, I'm not the best Muslim out there. I have made countless mistakes — mistakes I have been so regretful of — mistakes I even found myself not being able to seek my own forgiveness for. Ramadan allows me to reflect on these mistakes, to learn from them and remember that God is all forgiving — that I can better my actions for the future to avoid making similar mistakes again. That I need to forgive myself to better myself.

I once read a quote that till this day reflects exactly how I feel about Ramadan, it said:

"I love Ramadan because that kid who never prays, prays. That girl who never covers, covers. That guy who never fasts, fasts. Even if it's just for a month, at least these 'types' of people have tested the 'sweetness of faith' just for one month. And perhaps months later down in life, if their life ever becomes bitter — they'll refer back to Ramadan and yearn for that same 'sweetness; they sampled

just that one month. You call them 'Only Ramadan Muslims' but I call them 'Muslims who may only need Ramadan to change.'"

I yearn for that sweetness — I yearn for that change.

By Duriba Khan

Hey. You're here, and like every year, a smile will creep on my face at the thought of you.

No, not Zayn Malik.

RAMADANNNN,
 AYEEEE WASS
 GOODDD?!

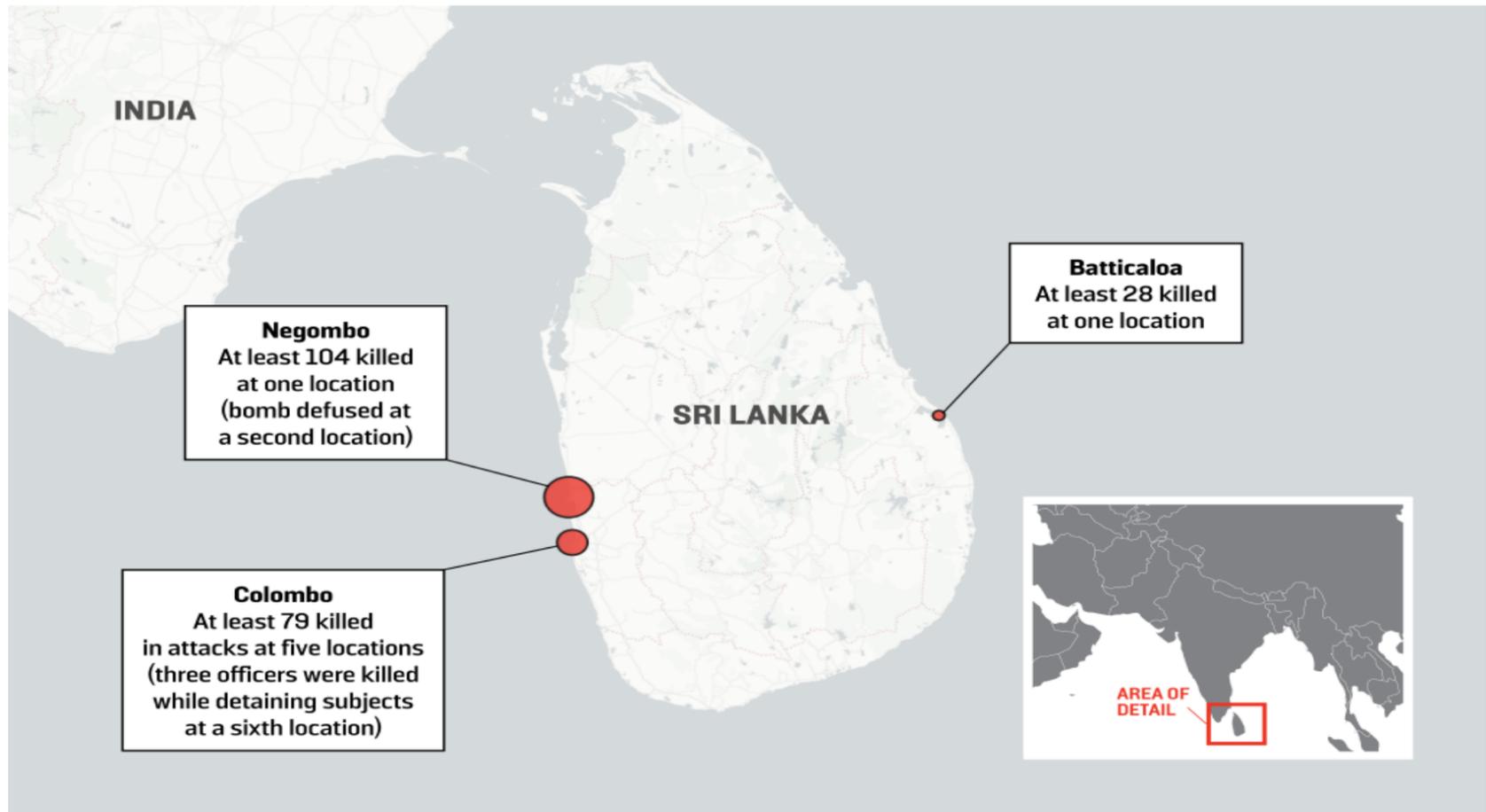
As a fair and lovely crescent hangs in the sky and pakoras suffer in the heat of the deep fryer, I embark on my religious journey to spiritual perfection. For Muslims like myself, Ramadan is the last minute project the Teacher assigns after everyone bombs the final: the saving grace. In Ramadan, I get to try myself to test how much control I have, from looking ahead and stepping the gas a little harder every time I pass Starbucks to preventing myself from Tweeting strings of colorful profanities at Donald Trump.

And I'll be honest: I haven't taken advantage of the month as

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Terror unleashed in peaceful worshipers



By Dr. Aslam Abdullah

On one of the most sacred and significant days in Christian history, in a Buddhist dominated state of Sri Lanka, suicide bombers allegedly belonging to an outfit described as Muslims killed more than 250 worshippers and injured hundreds more. The US described them ISIS-inspired and the Sri Lankan government called them local Sri Lankans with ties to National Toweeth Jamath.

The Sri Lankan Muslim community realizing the seriousness of the situation issued the following statements

“For members of Sri Lanka’s Muslim community, it’s no surprise that local jihadist group National Thowheed Jamath is being blamed for deadly bombings that killed nearly 300 people on Easter Sunday.

Hilmy Ahamed, vice president of the Muslim Council of Sri Lanka, said he warned military intelligence officials about the group and its leaders about three years ago. “Targeting the non-Muslim community is something they encourage — they say you have to kill them in the name of religion,” Ahamed said in a phone interview from Colombo on Monday. “I personally have gone and handed

over all the documents three years ago, giving names and details of all these people. They have sat on it. That’s the tragedy.”

Religious places and religious worshippers are the easiest targets, a terrorist can attack without much resistance. This is what the terrorists have been doing for decades. A mob in 1992 in India demolished a house of God under the instigation of political leadership that claimed that it was built on the birthplace of a mythological Hindu warrior and ruler Rama, who has been given the status of a god by some of the followers of the Hindu faith. Two years later, a Jewish doctor gunned down scores of worshipping people in occupied Palestine. Until 2010, scores of places were attacked, vandalized and brutalized, sometimes by followers of rival religions and sometimes by the followers of the same religion belonging to different sects.

Houses of worship around the world, a place of reflection and peace, have been targeted for attack by extremists. Here are some of the deadly assaults over the last decade:

Since 2010, the world started taking note of such incidents. Thus in the last 19 years, some

major acts of violence took place and they are as follows.

Oct. 31, 2010: Al-Qaida in Iraq attacked Our Lady of Salvation Catholic Church in Baghdad during Sunday night mass, killing 58 people.

Dec. 15, 2010: Two suicide bombers from the Sunni extremist group Jundallah blew themselves up near a mosque in southeastern Iran.

July 16, 2010: Jundallah group killed 27 and injures 270 after it carried out a double suicide bombing against another Shiite mosque in southeastern Iran.

Aug. 5, 2012: Six members of the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin, in Oak Creek, were fatally shot by a white supremacist, Wade Michael Page. Page was shot by a responding officer and later killed himself.

Nov. 18, 2014: Two Palestinians using axes, knives and a gun killed four Jewish worshippers and an Israeli police officer in an attack on a Jerusalem synagogue.

Jan. 30, 2015: Suicide bombing at a Shiite mosque in the Pakistani town of Shikarpur killed 71. Jundallah claims responsibility.

March 20, 2015: Islamic State suicide bombers attacked a pair of

mosques in Yemen’s capital, unleashing monstrous blasts that ripped through worshippers and killed 137 people.

June 17, 2015: Nine black worshippers including a pastor were killed by Dylann Roof, a 21-year-old white supremacist after he prayed with them in Charleston, South Carolina. Roof was convicted of federal hate-crime and obstruction-of-religion charges and sentenced to death.

Sept. 24, 2015: A suicide bomber struck a mosque in Yemen’s rebel-held capital, killing 25 worshippers during prayers for the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha.

Nov. 12, 2016: Suicide bomber from ISIS killed over 50 at the shrine of Shah Noorani, in Pakistan’s Baluchistan province.

Dec. 11, 2016: Suicide bomber struck inside a Cairo chapel adjacent to St. Mark’s Cathedral, the seat of Egypt’s ancient Coptic Orthodox Church killing at least 25 people.

Jan. 29, 2017: At the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City, a mosque in the Sainte-Foy neighborhood of Quebec City, Canada. Six worshippers were killed and nineteen others injured when a man opened fire

Feb. 16, 2017: Suicide

bomber detonated his explosives vest among the devotees at the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Pakistan’s Sindh province, killing 98.

April 9, 2017: Twin suicide bombings rocked churches in the Egyptian coastal city of Alexandria and Tanta, killing at least 45 people. The attack was claimed by the Islamic State group.

June 15, 2017: A suicide bomber killed four people at a Shiite mosque in Afghanistan’s capital city of Kabul. Among the dead is a leader of Afghanistan’s ethnic Hazaras, who are mostly Shiite Muslims.

Aug. 1, 2017: A suicide bomber stormed into the largest Shiite mosque in Afghanistan’s western Herat province, opening fire on worshippers before blowing himself up, killing at least 90 people. Hundreds more were wounded in the attack, which happened during evening prayers.

Aug. 3, 2018: Suicide bombers disguised in burqa robes attacked a Shiite mosque in eastern Afghanistan, killing 27 people.

Aug. 25, 2017: Militants storm a packed Shiite mosque in Kabul during Friday prayers. The attack ends with at least 28 worshippers

Cont. on page 13.

Measles Outbreak Rises to 626 Reported Cases in the US

by Rohan Shah

An outbreak of a preventable disease has caught headlines, with over 626 reported cases of measles in the United States (US) as of April 23. If the disease continues to spread at the current rate, 2019 will have the highest number of cases in the past 25 years.

Measles, also known as Rubeola, is a deadly and highly contagious disease that is making a speedy comeback in the US.

Health officials said they expect 2019's case counts to rise in the coming weeks because of increased disease spread as a result of religious gatherings this month.

New York City has currently reported the largest outbreak in the country. There is an ongoing measles outbreak in the Orthodox Jewish communities in Brooklyn affecting Williamsburg and Borough Park. Cases have also been identified in Midwood/Marine Park and Bensonhurst resulting from a lack of vaccinations being provided to children.

New York City officials have implemented interventions including education programs for parents and children, reaching out to religious leaders of affected areas and the distribution of thousands of flyers. Mayor Bill de Blasio has gone as far as to mandate vaccinations and implements fines of up to \$1000 for noncompliance, the New York Times reports.

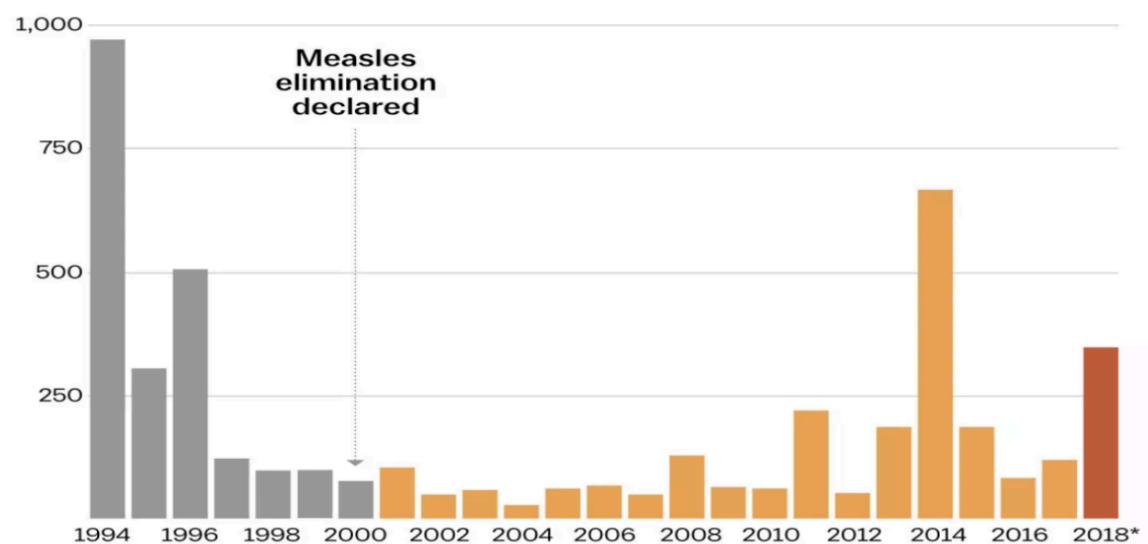
At this time, children that are unvaccinated and suspected of having the disease can be barred from entering public settings such as daycares and schools. Even though some question the constitutionality of such interventions, others applaud the swift and decisive steps taken to curb the epidemic.

Measles, a disease that is still common in countries outside the US, was brought by travelers to the nation. These travelers came to Washington and New York state,



Measles outbreaks are preventable — but they keep happening

Cases of measles reported per year in the US



* as of December 29

Source: CDC

Javier Zarracina/Vox

Vox

which have been identified as the epicenter of this current outbreak.

The disease has spread

Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oregon and Texas.



to 18 other states including Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky,

According to Mayo Clinic, the measles infection is caused by a virus that is primarily found in the nose and throat of the

infected individual. This infection is spread when droplets from infected individuals—during sneezing, talking and coughing—come in contact with non-infected individuals.

Children ranging from newborn to 5-years-old, unvaccinated individuals and people that have traveled abroad are at the highest risk of contracting the disease.

Symptoms include fever, dry cough, runny nose, sore throat, inflamed eyes and skin rashes. Complications associated with this disease include ear infections, bronchitis, laryngitis, pneumonia, encephalitis, other pregnancy-related problems and even death.

Public health officials are urging unvaccinated indi-

viduals to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

The Measles, Mumps, and Rubella vaccine comes in 2 doses.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the effectiveness of individuals with one dose and two doses of the vaccine is 93% and 97% respectively.

This means that even with the two doses, individuals have a 3% chance of contracting the disease. Individual suspected of having this disease should be reported to the appropriate health authorities and isolated from others with the utmost urgency.

Algerian President Bouteflika Departs Office

By Yousuf Ali

After weeks of protests, Abdelaziz Bouteflika resigned the presidency of Algeria despite only saying that he would not run for reelection. He had been the president of Algeria since 1999 amidst a bloody civil war and has won several elections with more than 80% of the vote.

Additionally, The news was confirmed in the following statement: "The president of the Republic, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, has officially notified the president of the constitutional council of his decision to end his mandate as president of the republic."

This announcement was not sufficient to quell the protests with many demanding more reforms.

Despite Bouteflika's departure, Algerians face many difficult conditions. To begin, half of the population is under 30, and many such people are unemployed. Additionally, many elderly people



took part in the protests demanding change.

One female protestor said "We are tired of this regime, they have robbed us. We've had enough of that," The protests began in February and have been mounting since. Many protesters told the BBC that they don't trust anyone associated with the Bouteflika era

and the reporter described the protestors as full of pride.

In giving its own opinion the Economist wrote "In getting rid of Mr. Bouteflika without bloodshed, the Algerian protesters have achieved much, but their victory is far from complete. They need to learn from their neighbors and unite until a

new regime is embedded. A peaceful transition to democracy is a rare flower in the Arab world's political desert, but it could just flourish in Algeria's parched soil."

Additionally, many of Bouteflika's associates have been detained for allegedly trying to take their gains outside of the

country. Additionally, the newspaper argued that Bouteflika was simply a figurehead for a clandestine group of businessmen and generals who were running the country behind closed doors and that there were several empty concessions during that period.

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AN APPEAL

to strengthen your media-your voice




Islamophobia is a major obstacle for peace and religious harmony in our world. If it is not countered properly and effectively, it has the potential to create havoc all over the world. Gruesome terrorism in Christchurch, New Zealand, causing 51 murders is a glimpse of the future.



This bogey of Islamophobia is raising its ugly head worldwide. We recently saw the most gruesome terrorist attack on the innocent congregation gathered for Friday prayers in Christchurch, New Zealand.



Islamophobia has its roots in the US and Europe among those who believe in the concepts of supremacy on the basis of race, religion and ethnicity. Only through a long process of dialogue, discussions and education, this menace that is spreading fast can be checked effectively.



We need to invest in our younger generation to be able to counter constant attacks on Islam and Muslims. We want them to be skillful communicators, excellent writers and objective researchers. Only through bringing out facts and demolishing myths and stereotypes, our young journalists can challenge the narratives spread by Islamophobes.

TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES:

- (a) **We must prepare** a strong team of our own reporters and communicators that will report objectively.
- (b) **We must support** students willing to do accurate and balanced research on the issues that impact Muslims and other fellow citizens in America.
- (c) **We must fund** Internship with State and Federal Law makers by providing living expense stipends for Muslim students,
- (d) **We must provide** Education on the political process and facilitate Muslim participation in local and federal government.

We need your help in carrying out this strategy that will prepare a strong contingent of our own reporters to effectively convey our message.

We are together in our movement to achieve these objectives. Many of our past interns and writers are now part of the main stream media.

Our interns and writers with the help of researchers have carried out following research projects in the past.

Here are the examples:

- 1) Demographic survey of Michigan Muslims and its political impact on Congressional districts,
- 2) Safeguarding Muslim civil right in America,
- 3) States that have passed Halal laws
- 4) How cities with high Muslim concentration have effectively used their positions to gain access to local councils or other legislative bodies,
- 5) And a Muslim perspective on Obama health care, etc.

We want our next research project to focus on the sources of Islamophobia and hatred incited to pitch communities against each other. We need at least \$50,000 for this project. Please fund this project and donate generously. Your donations are tax deductible.

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'Why Aren't You Eating?': The Ramadan Struggle for Muslims With Eating Disorders



by *Nahrin Majid*

Why aren't you eating?

It's a question I've been asked all my life, whether it's posed by nosy aunts at desi parties or concerned friends at school. If it's during Ramadan, I don't hesitate to tell the truth: "I'm fasting," a response that's usually met with nods of approval, and sometimes praise. This interaction always unfolded the same way until one year, I had to start improvising different answers. I had to lie and say "I'm not hungry" or "I just ate." Something had changed, and no one, not even me in the beginning, realized it was happening until it was almost too late.

The year I turned 15, my anxiety and depression manifested in the form of two eating disorders: anorexia and binge eating disorder. Anorexia is an emotional disorder characterized by an obsessive desire to lose weight by refusing to eat. Binge eating disorder is a serious eating disorder in which a person frequently consumes unusually large amounts of food and feels like they can't stop eating. I finally told my parents about disorders when I was 20, after a mental breakdown that nearly cost me my grades

and my job. I wish it didn't take the feeling that I had nothing left to lose to tell my parents things I rant about casually to strangers on the internet.

There were a lot of reasons I was afraid to admit that I had a problem. I was scared, I was ashamed, and I was silenced by a looming fear incited by mental health-related stigmas in the South Asian community. This fear was reaffirmed time and time again by judgmental comments and attitudes. I can hear my parents' voices in my head now:

"What will others think? What will the community think?"

Don't blame my parents for being afraid. It's terrifying when the less digestible parts of your life are made open to the public. It's become clear that people wouldn't be so quick to accept me, or even understand me, if they knew the real reason I wasn't eating. No auntie, this time I'm not starving myself because I'm devoted to God. I'm starving myself because I'm devoted to being perfect.

I felt the pressure to be perfect even as a kid, along with the toll of anxiety and depression as I realized I was

different from everyone else in my class. Growing up desi is hard enough, but growing up desi in a Muslim community as an Asian minority in suburban America really skews your idea of normal. The word "perfect" begins to take on diverging meanings, and I was forced to navigate these meanings as a brown girl in this intersection of identities.

I felt as though I was being pulled in three different directions, contradicting criteria of what it meant to be perfect in society. The perfect desi girl is expected to have long dark silky hair, large almond-shaped eyes, a pale complexion that we pretend isn't a remnant of colonialism—she is also expected to love Bollywood and, really, anything loud and colorful. The perfect Muslim girl is expected to be submissive, wear a hijab, pray five times a day, and pretend men don't exist—until she marries one and is expected to be a flawless wife, because divorce is taboo. Lastly, the perfect Asian minority, or the "model minority," is expected to be quiet, docile, and achieve a high degree of socioeconomic success. These pressures cornered me all at once, the forces unrelenting

and unforgiving. I was bent, but not broken. That would come later.

Anorexia was the final culmination of those warring identities. I thought that if I could have some semblance of control over my body, I could fix my mind. I could remake myself. I could finally stop being so different. I could finally be perfect.

The scary thing about an eating disorder is that it actually tricks you into thinking it's working. And right when you think everything's perfect, the magic carpet of your delusion is pulled out from under you. You've been floating for so long, and the fall back to reality is violent and bruising. It gets harder to lose weight because your metabolism has finally caught up to you. You realize your body is fighting back because you've been trying to kill it.

I had my first mental breakdown two months into my eating disorder. It finally hit me: something was seriously wrong. I was tired all the time and my joints ached when I ran. I'd lose focus in class and have bouts of dizziness. None of that happened before. The initial panic attack snuck up on me one morning in tenth grade. I remember

my vision going spotty, the voices of my classmates fading out as I ran out of class. I fell to my knees in the hallway, and burst into tears, just trying to remember how to breathe. I couldn't believe I'd turned into a statistic I once rolled my eyes at: another teenage girl with an eating disorder.

After that, my anorexia led to a binge eating disorder. Not only did I end up back where I started in a fraction of the time I was anorexic, but I was worse off.

Since then, it's been a turbulent five years of recovery. There hasn't been a day that I don't wake up afraid that I'll slip back into my old ways. On a regular day, it's a task to exhibit "normal" eating habits, to resist the urge to skip meals, to stop myself from exercising to the point of injury. During Ramadan, it becomes that much harder. Ramadan essentially mirrors the practice of anorexia and binge eating disorder. For a month, food is prohibited for long periods of time, until daylight ends, at which point, all anyone wants to do is stuff themselves with as much food as possible. Every time around this year, when

Cont. on page 13

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**Cont. from page 3.
Open Letter**

much as I should have. Yes, I've fasted and performed Taraweeh prayer (the additional nightly prayers), but..that's all I did. I didn't devote time to understanding the religion better and strengthening my relationship with God yet, and I'm determined to change that. I write to you today to tell you that it is NEVER too late. Yes, you have classes and it's hot out. But it never goes unnoticed by God: you are always rewarded for your struggles.

If you don't fast, start. If you fast, look for reasons why. Don't fast because you have to, fast because you want to make God proud of you and you want to feel for the poor and put yourself

in their position. Don't blindly read the Quran because your mom said you should, instead, try to understand it. Acquire knowledge, from the details of the beloved Prophet's lifestyle to the Arabic alphabet.

It doesn't matter how far along the road you are, just that you are moving forward with all your heart and soul.

By Suraiya Ali

(The following open letter to Ramadan from a Shia-Ismaili-Nizari Muslim)

Well, this is awkward. Most people, most Muslims, don't know what an Ismaili is outside of derogatory remarks and fumbled guesses at our "practices." That, however, is rightly juxtaposed by the fact that most Ismailis don't really have a grasp on Ramadan in any

facet. Ramadan, you and I are in an awkward spot, to say the least. To make things easier, let's just lay out the basics. Yes, I am fasting. No, my family is not fasting. No, I do not pray five times a day. No, I do not cover my head when I pray – nor have I ever been so compelled. No, I do not read the Quran as penance. I am considered heterodox by all standards expect for this fast I keep.

I am the only Ismaili I know that is fasting. Without the support system of an ummah to back you – Ramadan is harder than what is already perceived. When your entire family gets up with you at 5 a.m. to make an egregiously delicious breakfast and worship – the weight of the early morning disappears,

and the will to continue with your ethical oath is strengthened and validated. I do not have this physical support system. Ismailis are Shia by sect and stress an esoteric approach to Ramadan. Holding one's tongue and thoughts in place of holding one's hands back from grabbing lunch. Ismailis, as far as I can equivocate, haven't fasted in the exoteric sense, i.e. refraining from food, since the Middle Ages.

That still leaves me in an awkward spot. Where is the Ismaili community in my exoteric fast? It's no lie Ismailis consider themselves part of the broader ummah but the ummah doesn't always reciprocate that sentiment. This isolation is often internalized. Ramadan is very fleet-

ing to the Ismailis of my generation.

To call oneself Muslim, yet not fast in the exoteric sense, causes much cognitive dissonance among Ismaili youth. Against these odds, this will be my third year holding an exoteric fast. So to Ramadan, I say thank you. Thank you for proving that the ubiquity of Islamic sacrifice goes beyond sectarian theological politics. Thank you for connecting me with the ummah regardless of the community's acceptance. In spite of this strange spiritual solitary confinement, I can still understand brotherhood. Thank you for teaching me submission in all facets- esoteric and exoteric.

**Cont. from page 4.
Terror unleashed**

killed and 50 wounded, many of them children. Two of the assailants blow themselves up and another two are shot dead by Afghan security forces.

Sept. 29, 2017: A suicide bomber blew himself up outside a Shiite mosque in Kabul, killing five. The attack took place as worshippers were leaving the mosque after Friday prayers.

Oct. 20, 2017: ISIS claimed a suicide bomber attack, killing 31 and wounding 29 people, at a Shiite mosque in Kabul.

Nov. 5, 2017: Dressed in black tactical-style gear and armed with an assault weapon, 26-year-old Devin Kelley opened fire at the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas, killing

26 people and wounding about 20 others.

Nov. 24, 2017: Militants killed 311 worshippers in a mosque attack in north Sinai, the deadliest such terrorist attack in Egypt's modern history.

Dec. 17, 2017: ISIS attacked on a church in the Pakistani city of Quetta kills 16 people.

Oct. 27, 2018: A gunman believed to have spewed anti-Semitic slurs and rhetoric on social media entered Tree of Life Congregation synagogue in Pittsburgh and opened fire, killing 11 and wounding six, including four police officers.

Jan. 27, 2019: Two suicide attackers detonate two bombs during a Mass in a Roman Catholic cathedral on the largely Muslim island of Jolo in the southern Philippines, killing 23

and wounding about 100 others. Three days later, an attacker hurls a grenade in a mosque in nearby Zamboanga city, killing two religious teachers.

March 15, 2019: At least 51 people are killed in an attack at mosques in the New Zealand city of Christchurch.

In addition to that hundreds of places of worship were destroyed by either authorities or mobs in China, Myanmar, Israel, Congo and India in the last several decades.

Apparently, religious violence is on the rise and the religious leadership is failing to control hatred, terror and violence committed by their followers.

In this increasingly volatile and violent situa-

tion, it is easier to point fingers at others and blame them and religion for that. The reality is that no sane person and no genuine religion can promote violence or terror against those who differ with its basic tenets. No one is born with hatred as part of his or her gene. People learn to hate based on what learn in their families, religious institutions, schools and social and political circles. People are often instigated to use violence and terror to silence others or to intimidate a whole community.

It is this notorious brainwashing done in the name of religion that needs to be challenged and eliminated. Every religious community has to play a proactive role in controlling its hate mongers, but the most effec-

tive way is to challenge the promoters of violence and terror through inter-faith efforts.

The religious community must come together to fight this menace that has become a political tool to divide people and spread hatred and violence. If such an initiative is not taken, then we all will suffer.

The attack on the Christians of Sri Lanka was, in fact, an attack on Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists and in fact, the people of all faith and no faith. Only when the religious communities come together to fight the menace of terror, we can work for peaceful coexistence, otherwise, the monster of terror would continue to hurt each one of us.

**Cont from page 11.
Ramadan Struggle**

starving yourself is expected and encouraged, I find myself torn between multiple identities again: the girl who values spirituality and wants to fast, and the girl who still hates herself sometimes and wants to starve.

For these reasons, I struggle with separating the act of fasting from an eating disorder. How do I imitate the actions of anorexia and binge eating

without relapsing and undoing years of progress? How do I participate in Ramadan without losing myself to toxic practices? How do I keep my intentions spiritual, pure, untarnished by the twisted thrill of starving myself in the endeavor to achieve a shallow European beauty standard?

Over the years, I've realized that there is no easy answer to these questions. Complex problems don't afford the luxury of simple solutions. I do

know this to be certain: Ramadan will come next year, and every year after that, and I will ask myself these very same questions. The process will be confusing and harrowing, but I don't have to continue punishing myself for mistakes I made six years ago. I'm not 15 anymore and I know the consequences of being consumed with restriction and discipline. If it starts to become too much, if I start to forget that Eu-

rocentric features don't equate beauty, I know I need to stop so I don't cross a line that took me six years to redraw.

Recovery is a day-to-day battle and healing is not linear. I know there will be ups and downs because mistakes are inevitable, but hopelessness is not. I will try every day to exist peacefully in a society that has contradicting, violent definitions of perfection. I will remember that there are more important reasons

to get out of bed than beauty and validation. I will show myself all the kindness and forgiveness I couldn't show when I was 15.

I will be okay.

This post was originally posted on Brown Girl Magazine.

Cont. from page 1. Muslim scientists

The Qur'an started with the word "IQRA" which means "Read" and Allah (SWT) reminds us that every Muslim man's and woman's prayer should be: "Rabbi zidni 'Ilmaa" (O Lord, increase me in 'ilm (knowledge) -20-114, and Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) said, "The ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of the martyr." Allah (SWT) created humans to be superior over all other creations.

The major use of Ilm, (knowledge) and Aqal, (intelligence), is to develop critical thinking. This is necessary to make rational and sustainable decisions.

During the early period of Islam, between the 7th and 15th centuries, Muslims acquired knowledge in every field of the sciences including Astronomy, Mathematics, Medicine, and Philosophy. In the 9th century, great Institutions such as "The House of Wisdom" were established in Baghdad which attracted scholars from many parts of the world.

The work of great scholars like Aristotle, Euclid, Galen, Ptolemy, Socrates, and many more were collected, preserved, and translated into Arabic. By the 11th century, all major Muslim cities (Bagdad, Cairo, and Cordoba) had unique institutions like universities, hospitals, and scientific laboratories. Muslims became the leaders of knowledge, and people from all over the world would go to Muslim cities for higher education. There is no field of knowledge which

Muslims did not explore, investigate, research, think, or invent exemplary innovations.

Some of the noted Muslim medieval scholars who had made a profound influence on the world civilization are: AL-KHAWARIZMI (780- 840 A. D.) Al Jabra, JABIR IBN HAIYAN (721- 803 A.D.) Chemistry, AL-KINDI (800 – 873 A.D) Philosophy, AL-RAZI (864 – 932 A.D.) Physician, AL-FARABI (870 – 950 A.D.) Philosophy, AL-MASU'DI (896- 957 A.D.) geography, AL-ZAHRAVI (936 – 1013 A.D.) Surgeon, AL-HAITHAM (965 – 1040 A.D) Physics, AL-MAWARDI (972- 1058 A.D.) Political Science, AL-BIRUNI (973 – 1048 A.D.) Astronomy, IBN SINA (980 – 1037 A.D.) Physician, AL-KHAYYAM (1044 – 1123 A.D.) Astronomy, AL-GHAZALI (1058-1128 A.D) Philosophy, IBN ZUHR (1091 – 1161 A. D.) Surgeon, AL-IDRISI (1099 -1166 A.D) Geography, IBN RUSHD (1128 – 1198 A.D.) Philosophy, IBN AL-NAFIS (1213 – 1288 A.D.) Physician, AL-TUSI (1201 – 1274 A.D.) Astronomy, DIN RUMI (1207-1273 A.D.) Philosophy, IBN BATTUTA (1304 -1369 A.D.) Geography- World traveler, IBN KHALDUN (1332-1395 A.D.) Social sciences. (Please see the details about their work on Google search)

The decline of the intellectual superiority in the Muslim Ummah.

In the 11th century, the separation of the revealed ("Quranic") sources from the rational sources of knowledge

were raised by distinguished Muslim scholars. They insisted on the supremacy of the revealed source which was of divine origin, adding that it should not be complemented or supplemented with rational sources of knowledge which they believed to be inferior and would bring a corrupting influence on the revealed knowledge.

Consequently, the madrasas in the Islamic realm abandoned teaching sciences. The great Renaissance Movement which transformed Europe into a dynamic and progressive civilization did not impact the neighboring Islamic countries because of the continued inflexible attitude of the orthodox, dogmatic Muslim jurists who only promoted teaching from Quran and Hadeeth, abandoning natural sciences.

Post-colonial Muslim countries were more preoccupied with consolidating their own political power than promoting the advancement of knowledge. Muslims today are, as a result, suffering from this ignorance. There are no contributions by scientists from Muslim countries in the technological revolution of the 20th century that has radically changed the world.

Current Status of Muslims:

There are only 500 universities in 57 Muslim countries, whereas the USA has 5,758, and India has 8,407. Muslim-majority countries have 500 scientists per million, whereas the USA has 5,000 per million. There are approximately

1.8 billion Muslims in the world and there are roughly 15 million Jews. There have been 3 Muslim Nobel Laureates –in Science. A smaller Jewish population has 193 Nobel Laureates. We will never learn about modern knowledge of science, technology, innovations, and inventors unless we drastically change our mindset from rote learning to productive rational learning.

Hope for the future:

Today, we need an education system which can produce Muslim experts in all fields of knowledge. By virtue of good educational programs for both males and females, the future generations will become the torchbearers of Islamic values and play an effective role in the world. We need to develop and effectively apply critical thinking skills to the complex problems that we face, and to the critical choices, we will be forced to make, as a result of the information explosion and other rapid technological changes. The progress for the future lies in the hand of this new generation and our focus should be to aspire this new generation to develop an interest in science and technology.

Institute of Medieval Scholars and Preparing of Modern Scientist (IMPMS) presented a seminar in April in Dallas, TX. This was a unique seminar presented for the first time in North Texas or possibly in the entire USA (Or World).

Six teams of young children (11-17 years old) were trained by Mr. Faizan Mirza who is a world-renowned aero-

space scientist and the inventor of the Ground Reality Information processing system. He was a recipient of several prestigious awards and the founder of "DiscoverSTEM" whose goal is to transform young children into thinkers, creators and innovators. The children presented their innovative ideas on various themes such as:

1. Alternative Fuel-Based rocket launch system.
 2. Self-Sanitizing door handle. This innovation is an attempt to prevent communicable diseases by a door handle which sanitizes itself.
 3. Relay Launch System. This NASA award-winning (1st prize among 10,000 students of 31 countries) innovation presents an alternative process of launching satellites.
 4. Micro-turbine Brick. This 'Future City Competition' award-winning (2nd prize in Texas State) innovation enables all buildings to generate electricity using forces of nature like air & water.
 5. Self-degradable plastic bottle. This innovation plastic bottle degrades itself in 4-6 weeks after use. This innovation was adjudged "Alternate Finalist" at global student's innovation competition.
 6. Yuvi- Aircraft tray table sanitizer. Innovation to make your travel safer by disinfecting aircraft tray table by innovation 'Yuvi'.
- We are very hopeful that this new generation of Muslim scientist will take the place of their ancestors and one day assumes the leadership in science and technology.

Cont. from Page 1 Man drives into crowd

"We understand that you will have many questions based on this announcement. However, we will not be releasing further information for now."

Peoples faces eight counts of attempted murder in the incident, in which eight people were injured. Three of the victims were minors, including a 13-year-old girl, who remains in critical condition.

Witnesses told the local San Francisco news, that he reached speeds of 60 miles per hour before striking the victims.

"After crashing, he dragged himself out of the sedan and repeatedly moaned, 'Thank you, Jesus,' witnesses told the San Francisco Chronicle. Police found a disassembled, inoperative shotgun in the Toyota."

Peoples appeared in court on Friday and is being held without bail at the Santa Clara County

Jail. His lawyer Chuck Smith told reporters he will enter a plea on May 16.

During a news conference after the court hearing, the New York Times reported, Smith focused heavily on Peoples's military experience and how the time may have affected him. Peoples served in the Army from 2004 to 2006 and in the Army Reserve from 2006 to 2008, he said.

"His mental state is going to be the battle-

ground in the case," Smith said. "We're going to have him evaluated by the best people we can find because, like all veterans, he deserves the best people we can find."

"This," he added, "is obviously a story that we're seeing unfold in many, many cases across the country."

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**Cont. from page 1.
Prepare for Ramadan**

endar. It's when Muslims from all around the world come together to observe a fast from dawn to dusk. Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam, which are the core principles of our religion. Ramadan is significant because it is the month in which the Quran was first revealed to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

Raadan is not a month of

just fasting. The physical fast is a symbol of the inner fast. It's a month to reflect on yourself, to connect with the Almighty and to surrender yourself and every selfish desire you may have. It's a time to detach from the world to focus on what's truly important.

1. Prepare yourself both mentally and physically: I start by reducing the amount of television I watch and music I listen

to. By doing so I get myself out of the habits I have created for myself in the past 11 months. After all it takes time to break any habit. Next, I prepare my home. I start off by washing all the prayer rugs in my house (musalas). After washing and drying them I apply itar (attar) to all of them. It gives the prayer rugs a great scent, that praying on the rugs becomes an act you look forward to. Having that beautiful

scent everywhere in my home gives me the Ramadan feels. Lastly, I start to talk to the kids about Ramadan. I try to include them in the process as much as I can. They really enjoy decorating the house for Ramadan. Kids (especially those living in America) love seeing Christmas lights and holiday decorations. I want mine to be just as excited for Ramadan. Unfortunately, I am not crafty at all, so I just buy some things online and we make some as well. Honestly, anything you can do together with them is good enough.

2. Get all your shopping done:

This way I'm not spending the blessed month of Ramadan shopping for Eid clothes for the kids or buying groceries for my house. I usually buy a big box of dates and some other must-haves for suhoor and iftaar time. After all, no one should go to the grocery store while they are fasting!

3. Start preparing your-

self and your mind to be in the state of worship:

I start by reading more Quran and reflecting on myself and the words of the Quran. Sometimes we read it but don't really apply it to ourselves and our lives. That's why reading the Quran with the English translation is one of my goals this year, InshaAllah!

It has been said, that the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) use to plan for Ramadan six months in advance. We happily do this for weddings and vacations but not when it comes to the purification of our souls. If we really want to make the most of Ramadan we should start now!

Hope you liked my tips on how to prepare for Ramadan. Would love to hear from you!

This post was originally posted on Brown Girl Magazine.



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