



# Rocket Science



Rabial Awal/Rabial  
Thani 1432

March 2011

*In the name of  
Allah, most  
Gracious, most  
Merciful*

## Contents

Umar (ra)	2
UK women converts	4
Global Muslim population	7
YMWA corner	12
Iqra Academy	14
Voice of Islam	15
Prayer timetable	16

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Alhamdulillah, the circulation of *Rocket Science* has surged to over 1,100 within a span of just two months since our first issue in January 2011. Subscribers live not just in Auckland, and not just in Godzone New Zealand, but also in many countries around the world, including Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Australia. This overwhelming support encourages us to move forward further in the service of Islam.

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*Rocket Science* is a monthly newsletter produced by the Mount Albert Islamic Association.

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# Umar bin Khattab

*This is the third article on the series on the ten Companions of the Prophet (saw) who were given glad tidings of entering Paradise while they were still living on earth.*

This article deals with the life and times of Umar bin Al-Khattab (ra). Umar's (ra) full name was Umar bin Al-Khattab bin Nufail bin Abdul-Uzza Al-Quraishi Al-Adawi. His kunniya or nickname was Abu Hafs. He was related to the Prophet (saw) through his eighth ancestor. His mother was Hantamah bint Hashim bin Al-Mughirah bin Abdullah bin Umar bin Makhzum and she was the cousin of Abu Jahl. He was born three years after the year of the Elephant and he was one of the Nobles of the Quraish.

When he was a youth, his father taught Umar (ra) to care for camels. This was considered a decent but a toilsome profession. The place where Umar (ra) pastured his animals was called Daghnan. In his youth, he practised the professions the noble Arabs practised, such as genealogy, wrestling, oration and horsemanship. He eventually became a skillful senior genealogist and an unsurpassable wrestler. He wrestled in the wrestling field of Ukaz. During that time he also learned to read and write and was one of the seventeen people of the Quraish who were able to read and write.

His reversion to Islam too is quite dramatic. One day he took his sword and went out. A man from Banu Zuhrah met him and asked him: "Where are you going, Umar?" He said: "I am going to kill Muhammad." The man asked, "How do you feel secure from Banu Hashim and Banu Zuhrah if you kill him?" Then, Umar said to the man, "I see you have deserted your religion and embraced that of him." The man said: "May I tell you a strange matter Umar? Your sister and her husband have reverted to Islam and abandoned the religion you believe in." Umar went directly to his sister's house where he found a man of the Emigrants there. His name was Khabbab. When Khabbab heard Umar's voice, he hid in the house. Umar entered and met his sister and her husband, and said: "What did I hear in this house?" They were reading the Surah Ta-Ha (Chapter 20 of the Noble Qur'an). They said: "Nothing, we were just talking." Umar said: "I fear that you have abandoned your religion." He attacked his sister's husband severely. His sister came and pushed Umar from her husband. Umar hit her so severely that her face bled. She said: "Would you not see if the truth was in another religion other than yours? I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah and I testify that Muhammad is His Messenger and Slave." Umar demanded to read what was in her hand. Upon being told that he is impure and should not touch it until he is a believer, he went and made wudhu and began to read until he came to: "Verily, I am your Allah! La ilaha illa Ana (none has the right to be worshipped but I), so worship Me and perform as-salat for My remembrance." Upon this Umar realised the truth and reverted to Islam. It was he who suggested to the Prophet (saw) that they should go public and along with Hamzah (ra) announce to the Quraish (ra) their reversion to Islam.

This was indeed a miracle. The Prophet (saw) made dua on a Wednesday night and on Thursday Umar (ra) came into the fold of Islam. This was because Abu Bakr (ra) was beaten so badly that by evening he was near the point of death. When Muhammad (saw) saw his state, he could not hold back the tears. So the Prophet (saw) made the dua to Allah asking Him to either give the Muslims

**Camelherd**

**Wrestler**

**Embracing Islam**

## *Al-Farooq*

### *Military success*

Umar (ra) or Amr Bin Hishaam, commonly known as Abu Jahl. Obviously, his choice was Umar Ibn Khattab (ra) and the rest as they say is history to the effect that when Gibraeel (as) came down he said, "Ya Rasoolallaah (saw), even the angels are rejoicing today."

Allah's Messenger (saw) gave specific titles to some Companions to express some of their character. After this incident, the Prophet (saw) called Hamzah (ra) Asadullah (Allah's Lion); Khalid bin Waleed (ra) Saifullah (Allah's Sword); and Umar (ra) Al-Farooq (the one distinguishing between right and wrong).

When the Muslims migrated to Madinah, out of fear of the polytheists they used to migrate secretly. Umar was the only one who did not fear the blame of anyone and emigrated publicly.

Umar (ra) is a khalifa who managed a huge empire, conducted huge military campaigns, held fast to the strict sunnah of the Prophet (saw) and thereby met with amazing success. His conquests on behalf of Islam were unparalleled. Umar (ra) went on to rule for ten years, and during this glorious period Islam conquered lands from the large neo-Persian empire to the north west's Eastern Roman so-called Byzantine Empire. Muslims swept across North Africa to the Atlantic Ocean. Once the Prophet (saw) said that "if there was to be another Prophet after me, then it would have been Umar (ra)." Truly even the Kuffars acknowledged that "if there was one more Umar (ra), Islam would have conquered the whole duniya!"

Such a generous and God-conscious man was stabbed during salaah by a kuffar. His name was Abu Lu'lu'ah who was a slave of Al-Mughirah bin Shu'bah. He was a war captive. He came to Umar and complained to him about the high land tax he paid to Al-Mughirah. When Umar heard this, he said to him: "What you pay is not much". He got up with Umar. Then he took a three-headed dagger and hid in a corner until before dawn when Umar would wake the people for the dawn prayer, and he stabbed him three times. One blow was under his navel which was lethal. He then stabbed eleven men after Umar and then committed suicide. Umar became a true shahid (martyr), shahid haqiqi or a kaamil shahid. Before he breathed his last, Umar sent his son Abdullah to Aishah (ra) to ask her permission to be buried beside the Prophet (saw) and Abu Bakr (ra). She permitted him and he was buried beside his two companions, at the age of 63. He was Caliph for ten years, four months and some days.



Door of tomb of Muhammad, Abu Bakr & Umar, Prophet's mosque, Madinah

Referring to Abu Bakr and Umar, the Prophet (saw) said: "These are the masters of the men of Paradise among the first and the last except the Prophets and the Messengers".

# Why are so many British career women converting to Islam?

(abridged from the Daily Mail 28 October 2010, [www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk))

**Tony Blair's sister-in-law announced her conversion to Islam last weekend. Journalist Lauren Booth embraced the faith after what she describes as a 'holy experience' in Iran. She is just one of a growing number of modern British career women to do so.**

What modern, liberated British woman would choose to live such a life? Well, quite a lot, it turns out, including Islam's latest surprise convert, Tony Blair's sister-in-law Lauren Booth. According to Kevin Brice from Swansea University, who has specialised in studying white conversion to Islam, these women are part of an intriguing trend. He explains: 'They seek spirituality, a higher meaning, and tend to be deep thinkers. The other type of women who turn to Islam are what I call "converts of convenience". They'll assume the trappings of the religion to please their Muslim husband and his family, but won't necessarily attend mosque, pray or fast.'

Kristiane Backer, 43, a London-based former MTV presenter, had led a kind of liberal Western-style life, yet turned her back on it and embraced Islam instead. Her reason? The 'anything goes' permissive society had proved to be a superficial void. The turning point came when she met and briefly dated the former Pakistani cricketer and Muslim Imran Khan in 1992 during the height of her career. He took her to Pakistan where she says she was immediately touched by spirituality and the warmth of the people. 'Though our relationship didn't last, I began to study the Muslim faith and eventually converted. Because of the nature of my job, I'd been out interviewing rock stars, travelling all over the world and following every trend, yet I'd felt empty inside. Now, at last, I had contentment because Islam had given me a purpose in life. In the West, we are stressed for superficial reasons, like what clothes to wear. In Islam, everyone looks to a higher goal. Everything is done to please God. It was a completely different value system. Despite my lifestyle, I realised how liberating it was to be a Muslim. To follow only one god makes life purer. You are not chasing every fad. I grew up in Germany in a not very religious Protestant family. I drank and I partied, but I realised that we need to behave well now so we have a good after-life. We are responsible for our own actions.'

For a significant amount of women, their first contact with Islam comes from dating a Muslim boyfriend. Lynne Ali, 31, from Dagenham in Essex, freely admits to having been 'a typical white hard-partying teenager'. 'I would go out and get drunk with friends, wear tight and revealing clothing and date boys. I also



Lynne Ali

*Many UK women converts*

*superficial  
"anything goes"  
permissive  
society*

*liberating*



*“everything ...  
fitted into place”*

*not a flash in the  
pan*

*wonderful Islamic  
culture in London*

*old-fashioned  
family values*

worked part-time as a DJ, so I was really into the club scene. I used to pray a bit as a Christian, but I used God as a sort of doctor, to fix things in my life. If anyone asked, I would've said that, generally, I was happy living life in the fast lane.' But when she met her boyfriend, Zahid, at university, something dramatic happened. 'His sister started talking to me about Islam, and it was as if everything in my life fitted into place. I think, underneath it all, I must have been searching for something, and I wasn't feeling fulfilled by my hard-drinking party lifestyle.' Lynne converted aged 19. 'From that day, I started wearing the hijab and I now never show my hair in public. At home, I'll dress in normal Western clothes in front of my husband, but never out of the house.'

With a recent YouGov survey concluding that more than half the British public believe Islam to be a negative influence that encourages extremism, the repression of women and inequality, one might ask why any of them would choose such a direction for themselves. Yet statistics suggest Islamic conversion is not a mere flash in the pan but a significant development. Islam is, after all, the world's fastest growing religion, and white adopters are an important part of that story. 'Evidence suggests that the ratio of Western women converts to male could be as high as 2:1,' says Kevin Brice. Moreover, he says, often these female converts are eager to display the visible signs of their faith — in particular the hijab — whereas many Muslim girls brought up in the faith choose not to. 'Perhaps as a result of these actions, which tend to draw attention, white Muslims often report greater amounts of discrimination against them than do born Muslims,' adds Brice, which is what happened to Kristiane Backer.

She says: 'In Germany, there is Islamophobia. I lost my job when I converted. There was a Press campaign against me with insinuations about all Muslims supporting terrorists — I was vilified. Now, I am a presenter on NBC Europe. I call myself a European Muslim, which is different to the 'born' Muslim. I was - married to one, a Moroccan, but it didn't work because he placed restrictions on me because of how he'd been brought up. As a European Muslim, I question everything — I don't accept blindly. But what I love is the hospitality and the warmth of the Muslim community. London is the best place in Europe for Muslims, there is wonderful Islamic culture here and I am very happy.'

For some converts, Islam represents a celebration of old-fashioned family values. 'Some are drawn to the sense of belonging and of community — values which have eroded in the West,' says Haifaa Jawad, a senior lecturer at the University of Birmingham, who has studied the white conversion phenomenon. 'Many people, from all walks of life, mourn the loss in today's society of traditional respect for the elderly and for women, for example. These are values which are enshrined in the Koran, which Muslims have to live by,' adds Brice.

It is values like these which drew Camilla Leyland, 32, a yoga teacher who lives in Cornwall, to Islam. A single mother to daughter, Inaya, two, she converted in her mid-20s for 'intellectual and feminist reasons'. 'I know people will be surprised to hear the words "feminism" and "Islam" in the same breath, but in fact, the



Camilla Leyland

***empowering,  
liberating***

***From MTV to  
Mecca***

teachings of the Koran give equality to women, and at the time the religion was born, the teachings went against the grain of a misogynistic society. The big mistake people make is by confusing culture with religion. Yes, there are Muslim cultures which do not allow women individual freedom, yet when I was growing up, I felt more oppressed by Western society.’ She talks of the pressure on women to act like men by drinking and having casual sex. ‘There was no real meaning to it all. In Islam, if you begin a relationship, that is a - commitment of intent.’ Growing up in Southampton — her father was the director of Southampton Institute of Education and her mother a home economics teacher — Camilla’s interest in Islam began at school. She went to university and later took a Masters degree in Middle East Studies. But it was while living and working in Syria that she had a spiritual epiphany. Reflecting on what she’d read in the Koran, she realised she wanted to convert. Her decision was met with bemusement by friends and family. ‘People found it so hard to believe that an educated, middle-class white woman would choose to become Muslim,’ she says.

While Camilla’s faith remains strong, she no longer wears the hijab in public. But several women said strict Islamic dress was something they found empowering and liberating. Lynne Ali remembers the night this hit home for her. ‘I went to an old friend’s 21st birthday party in a bar,’ she reveals. ‘I walked in, wearing my hijab and modest clothing, and saw how everyone else had so much flesh on display. They were drunk, slurring their words and dancing provocatively. For the first time, I could see my former life with an outsider’s eyes, and I knew I could never go back to that. I am so grateful I found my escape route. This is the real me — I am happy to pray five times a day and take classes at the mosque. I am no longer a slave to a broken society and its expectations.’

Kristiane Backer, who has written a book on her own spiritual journey, called *From MTV To Mecca*, believes the new breed of modern, independent Muslims can band together to show the world that Islam is not a faith that stamps on the rights of women. ‘I know women — born Muslims — who became disillusioned and rebelled against it. When you dig deeper, it’s not the faith they turned against, but the culture. Rules like marrying within the same sect or caste, and education being less important for girls, as they should get married anyway — where does it say that in the Koran? It doesn’t. Many young Muslims have abandoned the “fire and brimstone” version they were born into, and have re-discovered a more spiritual and intellectual approach, that’s free from the cultural dogmas of the older generation. That’s how I intend to spend my life, showing the world the beauty of the true Islam.’



Kristiane Backer

# The future of the global Muslim population

## Projections for 2010 - 2030

(abridged from the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life [pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx](http://pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx) 27 Jan 2011. Interested readers are encouraged to access the whole report from this website.)

The world's Muslim population is expected to increase by about 35% in the next 20 years, rising from 1.6 billion in 2010 to 2.2 billion by 2030, according to new population projections by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life.

Globally, the Muslim population is forecast to grow at about twice the rate of the non-Muslim population over the next two



decades – an average annual growth rate of 1.5% for Muslims, compared with 0.7% for non-Muslims. If current trends continue, Muslims will make up 26.4% of the world's total projected population of 8.3 billion in 2030, up from 23.4% of the estimated 2010 world population of 6.9 billion.

While the global Muslim population is expected to grow at a faster rate than the non-Muslim population, the Muslim population nevertheless is expected to grow at a slower pace in the next two decades than it did in the previous two decades. From 1990 to 2010, the global Muslim population increased at an average annual rate of 2.2%, compared with the projected rate of 1.5% for the period from 2010 to 2030.

If current trends continue, 79 countries will have a million or more Muslim inhabitants in 2030, up from 72 countries today. A majority of the world's Muslims (about 60%) will continue to live in the Asia-Pacific region, while about 20% will live in the Middle East and North Africa, as is the case today. But Pakistan is expected to surpass Indonesia as the country with the single largest Muslim population. The portion of the world's Muslims living in sub-Saharan Africa is projected to rise; in 20 years, for example, more Muslims are likely to live in Nigeria than in Egypt. Muslims will remain relatively small minorities in Europe and the Americas, but they are expected to constitute a growing share of the total population in these regions.

In the United States, for example, the population projections show the number of Muslims more than doubling over the next two decades, rising from 2.6 million in 2010 to 6.2 million in 2030, in large part because of immigration and higher-than-average fertility among Muslims. The Muslim share of the U.S. population (adults and children) is projected to grow from 0.8% in 2010 to 1.7% in 2030, making Muslims roughly as numerous as Jews or Episcopalians are in the United States today. Although several European countries will have substantially higher percentages of Muslims, the United States is projected to have a larger number of Muslims by 2030 than any European countries other than Russia and France.

In Europe as a whole, the Muslim share of the population is expected to grow by nearly one-third over the next 20 years, rising from 6% of the region's

**1.6 b in 2010**

**2.2 b in 2030**

**fast growth**

**79 countries with  
>1m Muslims**

**Pakistan largest  
Muslim  
population**

**Islam in the USA**

**Islam in Europe**

***falling fertility  
rates***

inhabitants in 2010 to 8% in 2030. In absolute numbers, Europe's Muslim population is projected to grow from 44.1 million in 2010 to 58.2 million in 2030. The greatest increases – driven primarily by continued migration – are likely to occur in Western and Northern Europe, where Muslims will be approaching double-digit percentages of the population in several countries. In the United Kingdom, for example, Muslims are expected to comprise 8.2% of the population in 2030, up from an estimated 4.6% today. In Austria, Muslims are projected to reach 9.3% of the population in 2030, up from 5.7% today; in Sweden, 9.9% (up from 4.9% today); in Belgium, 10.2% (up from 6% today); and in France, 10.3% (up from 7.5% today).

**Growing, But at a Slower Rate**

The growth of the global Muslim population, however, should not obscure another important demographic trend: the *rate* of growth among Muslims has been slowing in recent decades and is likely to continue to decline over the next 20 years. From 1990 to 2000, the Muslim population grew at an average annual rate of 2.3%. The growth rate dipped to 2.1% from 2000 to 2010, and it is projected to drop to 1.7% from 2010 to 2020 and 1.4% from 2020 to 2030 (or 1.5% annually over the 20-year period from 2010 to 2030, as previously noted).

The declining growth rate is due primarily to falling fertility rates in many Muslim-majority countries, including such populous nations as Indonesia and Bangladesh. Fertility is dropping as more women in these countries obtain a secondary education, living standards rise and people move from rural areas to cities and towns. The slowdown in Muslim population growth is most pronounced in the Asia- Pacific region, the Middle East-North Africa and Europe, and less sharp in sub-Saharan Africa. The only region where Muslim population growth is accelerating through 2020 is the Americas, largely because of immigration.



Falling birth rates eventually will lead to significant shifts in the age structure of Muslim populations. While the worldwide Muslim population today is relatively young, the so-called Muslim "youth bulge" – the high percentage of Muslims in their teens and 20s – peaked around the year 2000 and is now declining. In 1990, more than two thirds of the total population of Muslim-majority countries was under age 30. Today, people under 30 make up about 60% of the population of these countries, and by 2030 they are projected to fall to about 50%. At the same time, many Muslim-majority countries will have aging populations; between 2010 and 2030, the share of people age 30 and older in these countries is expected to rise from 40% to 50%, and the share of people age 60 and older is expected nearly to double, from 7% to 12%.



Other key findings of the study include:

### **Worldwide**

- Sunni Muslims will continue to make up an overwhelming majority of Muslims in 2030 (87- 90%). The portion of the world's Muslims who are Shia may decline slightly, largely because of relatively low fertility in Iran, where more than a third of the world's Shia Muslims live.
- As of 2010, about three-quarters of the world's Muslims (74.1%) live in the 49 countries in which Muslims make up a majority of the population. More than a fifth of all Muslims (23.3%) live in non-Muslim-majority countries in the developing world. About 3% of the world's Muslims live in more-developed regions, such as Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.



- Fertility rates in Muslim-majority countries are closely related to women's education levels. In the eight Muslim-majority countries where girls generally receive the fewest years of schooling, the average fertility rate (5.0 children per woman) is more than double the average rate (2.3 children per woman) in the nine Muslim-majority countries where girls generally receive the *most* years of schooling. One exception is the Palestinian territories, where the average fertility rate (4.5 children per woman) is relatively high even though a girl born there today can expect to receive 14 years of formal education.
- Fewer than half (47.8%) of married women ages 15-49 in Muslim-majority countries use some form of birth control. By comparison, in non-Muslim-majority, less-developed countries nearly two-thirds (63.3%) of all married women in that age group use some form of birth control.

### **Asia-Pacific**

- Nearly three-in-ten people living in the Asia-Pacific region in 2030 (27.3%) will be Muslim, up from about a quarter in 2010 (24.8%) and roughly a fifth in 1990 (21.6%).
- Muslims make up only about 2% of the population in China, but because the country is so populous, its Muslim population is expected to be the 19th largest in the world in 2030.

### **Middle East-North Africa**

- The Middle East-North Africa will continue to have the highest percentage of Muslim-majority countries. Of the 20 countries and territories in this region, all but Israel are projected to be at least 50% Muslim in 2030, and

## *Israel*

17 are expected to have a population that is more than 75% Muslim in 2030, with Israel, Lebanon and Sudan (as currently demarcated) being the only exceptions.

- Nearly a quarter (23.2%) of Israel's population is expected to be Muslim in 2030, up from 17.7% in 2010 and 14.1% in 1990. During the past 20 years, the Muslim population in Israel has more than doubled, growing from 0.6 million in 1990 to 1.3 million in 2010. The Muslim population in Israel (including Jerusalem but not the West Bank and Gaza) is expected to reach 2.1 million by 2030.
- Egypt, Algeria and Morocco currently have the largest Muslim populations in the Middle East-North Africa. By 2030, however, Iraq is expected to have the second-largest Muslim population in the region – exceeded only by Egypt – largely because Iraq has a higher fertility rate than Algeria or Morocco.



Koutoubia mosque, Marrakech, Morocco

### **Sub-Saharan Africa**

- The Muslim population in sub-Saharan Africa is projected to grow by nearly 60% in the next 20 years, from 242.5 million in 2010 to 385.9 million in 2030. Because the region's non-Muslim population also is growing at a rapid pace, Muslims are expected to make up only a slightly larger share of the region's population in 2030 (31.0%) than they do in 2010 (29.6%).
- Various surveys give differing figures for the size of religious groups in Nigeria, which appears to have roughly equal numbers of Muslims and Christians in 2010. By 2030, Nigeria is expected to have a slight Muslim majority (51.5%).

### **Europe**

- In 2030, Muslims are projected to make up more than 10% of the total population in 10 European countries: Kosovo (93.5%), Albania (83.2%), Bosnia-Herzegovina (42.7%), Republic of Macedonia (40.3%), Montenegro (21.5%), Bulgaria (15.7%), Russia (14.4%), Georgia (11.5%), France (10.3%) and Belgium (10.2%).
- Russia will continue to have the largest Muslim population (in absolute numbers) in Europe in 2030. Its Muslim population is expected to rise from 16.4 million in 2010 to 18.6 million in 2030. The growth rate for the Muslim population in Russia is projected to be 0.6% annually over the next two decades. By contrast, Russia's non-Muslim population is expected to shrink by an average of 0.6% annually over the same period.

**60% growth in 20 years**

## *Russia*

## *France*

- France had an expected net influx of 66,000 Muslim immigrants in 2010, primarily from North Africa. Muslims comprised an estimated two-thirds (68.5%) of all new immigrants to France in the past year. Spain was expected to see a net gain of 70,000 Muslim immigrants in 2010, but they account for a much smaller portion of all new immigrants to Spain (13.1%). The UK's net inflow of Muslim immigrants in the past year (nearly 64,000) was forecast to be nearly as large as France's. More than a quarter (28.1%) of all new immigrants to the UK in 2010 are estimated to be Muslim.

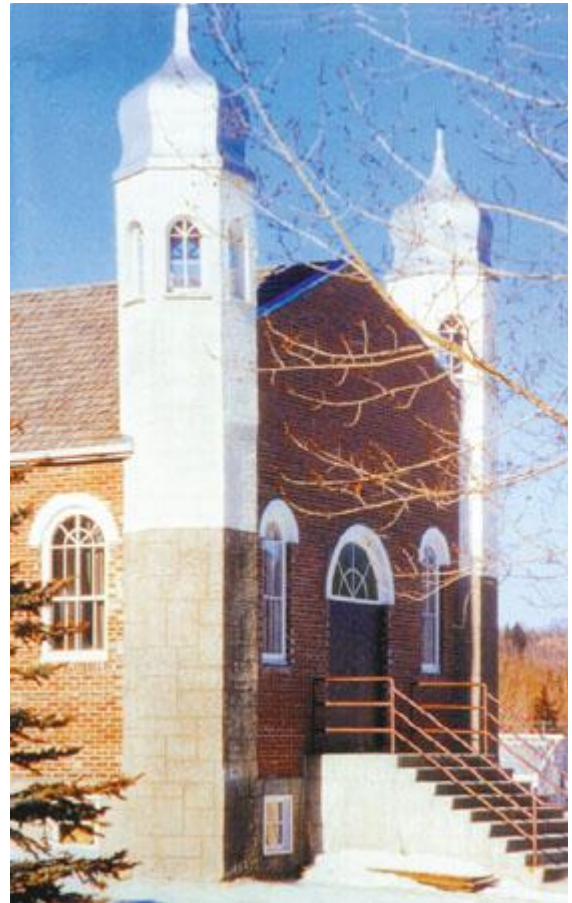
### **The Americas**

## *Canada*

- The number of Muslims in Canada is expected to nearly triple in the next 20 years, from about 940,000 in 2010 to nearly 2.7 million in 2030. Muslims are expected to make up 6.6% of Canada's total population in 2030, up from 2.8% today. Argentina is expected to have the third-largest Muslim population in the Americas, after the US and Canada. Argentina, with about 1 million Muslims in 2010, is now in second place, behind the US.

## *the USA*

- Children under age 15 make up a relatively small portion of the US Muslim population today. Only 13.1% of Muslims are in the 0-14 age group. This reflects the fact that a large proportion of Muslims in the U.S. are newer immigrants who arrived as adults. But by 2030, many of these immigrants are expected to start families. If current trends continue, the number of US Muslims under age 15 will more than triple, from fewer than 500,000 in 2010 to 1.8 million in 2030. The number of Muslim children ages 0-4 living in the US is expected to increase from fewer than 200,000 in 2010 to more than 650,000 in 2030.



Al-Rashid Mosque, Edmonton, Canada, founded in 1938

## YMWA corner

*Synopsis of a talk delivered at YMWA's monthly summer walk. The next walk is 6 March; contact [ymwa.nz@gmail.com](mailto:ymwa.nz@gmail.com) for further information.*

Why is it that we find so many people drinking alcohol, being depressed and generally stressed in this day and age? Is the negativity contributing to their health and overtaking their lives?

You would all have heard the phrase GIGO: Garbage IN garbage OUT! What comes out of a person is a result of what they have fed into themselves. Just like any system or machine, this applies to the human body as well. In fact, the human body especially works on this concept! Unfortunately, most people wander through life, trying to get by every day. This results in having unhealthy food, no rest and no exercise. As a result of this, people find it easy to procrastinate, get depressed and in the end fail to achieve their goals.

We need to realise that all of this has not only been scientifically proven, but also has been addressed in our deen, Al-Islam.

For me, this narrows down to staying productive. That's right, if you can be productive, you can address the underlying issue of staying healthy – not only eating healthy, but also getting enough fitness into your life!

I hear you asking, what is the solution? Simply put, it's all there in our holy book, Al-Qur'an: "And when you are finished with one task, still labour hard." (Quran 94:7)

Our main reason for not getting enough exercise into our lives is the big bad "B" word – "busy". How many of us here can confess to putting off that walk, or gym work-out because we were too "busy" that day?

There's also the "T" word "I am too tired". Does this ring a bell? Let me tell you, no matter how busy or tired you think you are, exercising will make you refreshed as well as more alert to be become more productive. Notice I said "productive" and not "busy". Being busy doesn't always make us productive! I have discovered this many times. I myself can relate to both these words. We can't judge the lives of anyone; we are all busy in our own ways and mostly tired after a long day's work. But try to make an effort to put yourself out one day and see how you feel. I am asking each of you to experiment with yourselves!

What if we wake up half an hour earlier each day in order to fit half an hour of exercise into our day? You don't have to start running marathons or triathlons to be fit and active. The Prophet (saw) used to supplicate saying "O God, make the early morning hours blessed for my nation." He recommended starting the day early and being energetic. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "Every person starts their day out as a vendor for their soul. They either bring value to it or they debase it." (Muslim)

Islam encourages Muslims to take care of their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. This precisely is YMWA's mission.

Another hadith of our beloved Prophet (saw): "Any action without the remembrance of God is either a diversion or heedlessness excepting four acts: Walking from target to target [during archery practice], training a horse, playing with one's family, and learning to swim." We may argue that the 21<sup>st</sup>

*garbage in,  
garbage out*

*staying  
productive*

*"busy"*

*"tired"*

*waking up early*



*energetic, happy*

*tips*

***Surah Al-Asr***  
***By the token of***  
***time! Indeed man***  
***is in loss, apart***  
***from those who***  
***believe, do good***  
***deeds, and***  
***recommend one***  
***another to the***  
***truth and***  
***patience***

century has made us lazy because of the advancement of technology. But this does not prevent us from making an effort to change ourselves.

Let's pause for a moment now. Out of the five pillars, if we reflect on it, we can summarise that three of these require good health and fitness.

- Performance of the five daily prayers involves deep concentration and movement of all our muscles and joints. It aims to relieve our stress and makes us feel energised.
- Fasting in the month of Ramadan ensures we control our food intake and requires stamina to withstand the full day.
- Hajj requires us to push our limits physically and mentally, and is an onerous task.

My personal experience has been that I am much more focused on days when I exercise than on those when I don't. I feel full of energy, and am generally happy, to the extent I get told not to smile so much! Alhamdulillah, Allah has blessed me with this. Eating healthy and staying fit make a huge difference to how we feel everyday! The more consistent you are with your workout, the healthier and better you feel, and the more you will be willing to take on in your life! Not only that, you'll start feeling the "buzz". It isn't hard, just put your mind to it, and once you start, you can't stop!

In another narration, Aisha (ra), the wife of the Prophet (saw) mentions their love of games and sports. She said, "I raced with the Prophet and I beat him. Later when I had put on some weight, we raced again and he won. Then he said, 'This cancels that (referring to the previous race).'"

Here are some tips that will keep you motivated:

- Tell yourself what your exercise goal for tomorrow is, before you go to bed.
- Cut down on caffeine.
- Eat a balanced diet, but don't throw away all your treats every day.

You don't have to go to the gym or be part of a sports club. There are cheaper ways to exercise too:

- Take a walk or run 3-4 times a week.
- Take up gardening as a hobby.
- If you like the indoors, why not invest in an exercise DVD?

Can't do any of those? Then target yourself to do push-ups and sit-ups along with taking up skipping! You'll find yourself getting amazingly fit in no time and, best of all, become super productive! If you truly want to be productive, healthy and fit in your daily life, Islam has provided you with all the answers. A true believer looks after their health and ensures a healthy diet along with the remembrance of Allah.

I would like to conclude today with Surah Al-Asr which signifies the importance of time, a factor we all seem to be racing against not only for fitness, but all areas of our so called "busy" lives.

For exercise videos aimed at Muslim women, see Fit Muslimah ([muslimahfitness.com](http://muslimahfitness.com))



**contact us**

# Iqra Academy

Classes take place on Saturdays, 2.30 – 5.00. For more details, timetable, etc, please contact:

- Muhammad Ali, Email: drasmali@gmail.com, Tel: 815 0700
- Sharif Fattah, Email: fattah56@gmail.com, Tel: 828 3348, 021 042 3938
- Marzan Amara, Nur Jahangir, Email: marnur@xtra.co.nz, Tel: 449 1898

20/02/11

Hi my name is Naima and I think that you

Should let your kids come to IQRA. And why should they be coming? Well IQRA is an Islamic school for kids and we learn about a lot of stuff like Prophet Adam, Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Isa, Hud, Sulaiman, Yusuf (AS) and also Muhammad (SAW). We also learn about Allah and the Quran how Allah made the

Beautiful nature and Taharaat, halal and haram and many more and our teachers are very nice so I think you should really let

your kids to come.

By Naima aged 10

# Voice of Islam



VOI delivers the message of Islam based on the teachings of the Noble Qur'an and the Sunnah (practices) of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The show neither delivers nor promotes any political, national, ethnic, social or class perspective - its focus is purely on da'wah and deen-al-Islam (the Islamic faith/way of life).

VOI television is broadcast:

- on Triangle TV in Auckland (8.00 & 11.30 am sat; 8.00 am Sun)
- CTV in Christchurch
- Channel 9 Dunedin
- Telstra Digital TV in Wellington & Christchurch CH 50
- SKYTV CH 89 and Freeview CH 21 in New Zealand
- MAITV in Fiji
- METRO TV in Ghana, West Africa

***New Zealand***

***Fiji***

***Ghana***

## Programme for March

### 5 & 6 March

Qur'an 18:45-49

LECTURE: The Deception of the World by Abdur Raheem Green

DOCUMENTARY: Perished Nations: Lut by Harun Yahya

### 12 & 13 March

Qur'an 2: 45-46, 21: 34-35

LECTURE: Dead End Death by Yahya Ibrahim

FEATURE: No Stone Unturned: Life and Death by Bilal Dannoun

DOCUMENTARY: The Names of Allah: Al-Awwal by Harun Yahya

### 19 & 20 March

Qur'an 112: 1-4

LECTURE: Building Bridges of Understanding

by Yasir Qadhi

MY PATH TO ISLAM: Abdul Lateef Smith

### 26 & 27 March

Qur'an Isra 39: 55-60

LECTURE: Arrogance by Yasir Fazaga

DOCUMENTARY: Characteristics of the

Arrogant by Harun Yahya

FEATURE: No Stone Unturned: Allah by Bilal Dannoun



Bilal Dannoun

Watch VOI online, or order a free copy of the Quran: [www.voiceofislamtv.com](http://www.voiceofislamtv.com)



# Auckland prayer timetable for March 2011

(from [www.islamicFinder.org](http://www.islamicFinder.org). For other cities in New Zealand, see [www.fianz.co.nz](http://www.fianz.co.nz))

*Verily, I am Allah!  
There is none  
worthy of worship  
but I, so worship  
Me and offer  
prayer perfectly  
for My  
remembrance.  
(Quran 20: 13-14)*

Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
1	5:35	7:04	1:34	5:13	8:03	9:27
2	5:38	7:06	1:34	5:11	8:00	9:24
3	5:39	7:07	1:33	5:11	7:59	9:23
4	5:40	7:08	1:33	5:10	7:57	9:21
5	5:41	7:09	1:33	5:09	7:56	9:19
6	5:42	7:10	1:33	5:08	7:54	9:18
7	5:44	7:11	1:33	5:08	7:53	9:16
8	5:44	7:11	1:33	5:08	7:53	9:16
9	5:45	7:12	1:32	5:07	7:52	9:15
10	5:47	7:13	1:32	5:05	7:49	9:11
11	5:48	7:14	1:32	5:04	7:47	9:10
12	5:49	7:15	1:31	5:03	7:46	9:08
13	5:50	7:16	1:31	5:03	7:44	9:07
14	5:51	7:17	1:31	5:02	7:43	9:05
15	5:51	7:17	1:31	5:02	7:43	9:05
16	5:52	7:18	1:31	5:01	7:41	9:03
17	5:55	7:20	1:30	4:59	7:38	9:00
18	5:56	7:21	1:30	4:58	7:37	8:59
19	5:57	7:22	1:29	4:57	7:35	8:57
20	5:58	7:23	1:29	4:56	7:34	8:55
21	5:59	7:23	1:29	4:55	7:33	8:54
22	6:00	7:24	1:29	4:54	7:33	8:53
23	6:01	7:25	1:28	4:53	7:31	8:51
24	6:02	7:26	1:28	4:53	7:30	8:50
25	6:03	7:27	1:28	4:52	7:28	8:48
26	6:04	7:28	1:28	4:51	7:27	8:46
27	6:05	7:29	1:27	4:49	7:25	8:45
28	6:05	7:30	1:27	4:48	7:24	8:43
29	6:06	7:31	1:27	4:47	7:22	8:42
30	6:07	7:31	1:26	4:46	7:21	8:40
31	6:08	7:32	1:26	4:45	7:19	8:39