

# THE FAITHFUL FUTURE GAZETTE

SUNDAY SCHOOL ●

1<sup>ST</sup> EDITION ●

MASJID-UT-TAQWA

The students of Masjid Taqwa's Sunday School have come together and have created their first ever newsletter:

**"The Faithful Future Gazette"**



This inaugural issue will address the five pillars of Islam and what the students have to say about them.

The newsletter has been compiled and edited by the entire team of the Sunday School Teachers.

## WELCOME NOTE

I am honoured and pleased to write the preface for the first newsletter published by our Sunday School teachers and students.

Masjid-ut-Taqwa's Sunday School was established 12 years ago, with the sole purpose of establishing a strong sense of Aqeedah (faith) and Akhlaaq (morals & mannerisms) with the younger generation.

Alhamdulillah we have dedicated teachers and volunteers who have committed themselves to achieving this goal. They work tirelessly on their weekend to engage the children in fun and productive ways in order to help them build strong identities as Muslims.

We hope to have feedback from parents for this new newsletter initiative. It is our hope that through it, we stay connected together, offer suggestions, and find ways to improve our Sunday School, with the best interests of the younger generation in mind.

I thank everyone who has supported us in any way since our establishment, and I pray that we will all continue to work together to build a strong community of young Muslims.

**Seyad Mubarak**  
**Principal – Sunday School (Masjid-ut-Taqwa)**



# Shahadah *The first pillar*

*Written by the boys of Sunday School*

The Shahadah is the first pillar of Islam. It is a verbal proclamation in which one testifies that there is no god worthy of worship besides Allah and that Muhammad (SAW) is the Messenger of Allah.

By expressing the Shahadah, the individual declares himself free from all false gods like idols, money, the self and Shaitan. It is a step to bring faith into your heart. The person who bears testimony to this Shahadah is considered a Muslim.

One of the virtues of reciting the Shahadah is that when one is reverting to Islam and recites the Shahadah with a firm belief, then all his past sins will be forgiven.

These are some of the few benefits of reciting Shahadah (being a Muslim):

1. The Believers will receive mercy from Allah (SWT) and obtain Allah's guidance along the straight path.

"As for those who believe in Allah and hold fast to Him, He will admit them into His mercy and grace and guide them to Himself through the Straight Path" - Surah 4:175

2. Receive safety and the right guidance from Allah (SWT)

3. Protection from the fire of Jahannam.



# Salah

## *The second pillar*

*Written by the boys of Sunday School*

Salah is the daily prayer all Muslims must perform. It is one of the five pillars of Islam, and it is an essential part of every Muslim's life. During Muhammad's (SAW) lifetime, five compulsory prayers were prescribed: Fajr, Dhuhr, 'Aṣr, Maghrib, and 'Isha. This was a gift that was given to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on the night of Mi'raj. Cleansing oneself through ablution (wudhu) is necessary before prayer. The three options of ablution are ghusl, wudhu, and tayammum. Unless one is in a state of major ritual impurity, wudhu will be enough.

Muslims pray facing the Ka'ba which is located in the city of Makkah. Prayer includes a recitation of the opening chapter (Surah Fatiha) of the Holy Qur'an, and an additional surah. Salah is performed on a small rug or mat called a musallah. Muslims can pray individually at any location, or together in a mosque, where a prayer leader (imam) guides the congregation. Men gather in the mosque for the noonday prayer on Friday which is called Jumu'ah; women are welcome but not obliged to participate. On that day, a sermon that focuses on a passage from the Qur'an is given, and then it is followed by prayers by the Imam.



Salah is a great gift to us from Allah (SWT). In the Salah, we can ask Allah (SWT) for our needs and pray to Him to guide and help us. In one hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had said that the Salah is a key to Jannah. Allah (SWT) has also said that those Muslims who have guarded their prayers are the truly successful ones.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) once asked: "If there was a river flowing in front of the door of your home wherein you take a bath five times daily, will any dirt remain on you?" The companions replied "No dirt would remain on us". The Prophet (SAW) replied "This is similar to the five prayers by means of which Allah (SWT) erases (minor) sins".

(Hadith Sahih Al Bukhari & Muslim)



# Zakah *The third pillar*

*Written by the girls of Sunday School*

**Did you know** that Zakah and Salah are mentioned together in the Qur'an 28 times?

Zakah is the third pillar of Islam, after the Shahaadah and Salah, and Allah (SWT) made it an obligation of all Muslims. It is the mandatory charity that is given to those in need and when it is fulfilled, it purifies, increases and blesses the wealth of the one who gives it. The duty of giving Zakah falls on a Muslim who is mature, sane and has owned wealth more than the nisab amount for a complete Islamic year. The amount that is given is 2.5% of the wealth that has been saved over the year. Zakah is also given on gold, silver, farmed crops, livestock, and business merchandise. It is not given from money that a person needs to survive.



The benefits of giving Zakah are many. Firstly, by giving out Zakah, an obligatory command from Allah is fulfilled. It is a commandment that the previous nations also had to fulfill. Secondly, those who give Zakah receive Allah's Mercy. In Surah al-A'raaf, verse 156, Allah says, "And My Mercy extends to everything. So I shall write it for those who pay Zakah and those who believe in Our verses." Thirdly, giving zakah is also a quality of a true believer who will be successful, because Allah (SWT) mentioned in Surah al-Mu'minoon verses 1-4, that "Success is attained by the believers...who perform the Zakah".

Furthermore, our beloved Prophet (SAW) said that giving charity does not decrease wealth. In fact, by spending our wealth on those who need it, Allah will increase us. It is mentioned in one narration that Allah (SWT) says, "Spend, O son of Adam, and I shall spend on you." In another narration, 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar RA said that when Zakah was ordained, and Allah made it a way to purify the wealth. Lastly, communities can grow and develop more when the Zakah is given properly, and poverty can also be reduced, allowing people to have a better quality of life.

Just as the reward for fulfilling the Zakah is enormous, likewise the consequences for failing to do so are very severe. When a person does not pay the Zakah on their wealth, that wealth is called “al-Kanz”, which means “hoarded wealth”. In the Quran, Allah (SWT) says in Surah al-Tawbah, verses 34-35, that on the Day of Judgement, the hoarded wealth that Zakah was not given on will be heated up in the Hell-fire and the foreheads of the owners will be branded with it.

In one hadith, Abu Hurairah (RA) said that Nabi (SAW) said, “Anyone whom Allah has given wealth but he does not pay its Zakat, then, on the Day of Resurrection, his wealth will be presented to him in the shape of a bald-headed poisonous male snake with two poisonous glands in its mouth. It will encircle itself around his neck and bite him over his cheeks and say, “I am your wealth; I am your treasure.”

During the time when Abu Bakr (RA) was the leader of the Muslims after the Prophet (SAW) had passed away, some people began to refuse to pay Zakah. They started to deny that Zakah was an obligation upon them. Abu Bakr (RA) fought with these people because believing that Zakah is not a command of Allah leads to disbelief. He said that Zakah is no different from Salah, so he would fight anyone who denied the obligation of Zakah. This shows how important it is to give the Zakah that is due.

Therefore, Zakah is a command of Allah that is just as important as Salah and the other pillars of Islam. It is the right that the poor people have over the rich ones. Giving Zakah purifies the wealth and the soul. Allah's (SWT) mercy and blessings are also achieved by fulfilling this obligation.



# Fasting *Sawm* – The fourth pillar

Written by the girls of Sunday School



Another pillar of Islam is fasting in the month of Ramadan. Fasting (*Sawm*) is when one abstains from one's desires, such as eating, and drinking from sunrise to sunset. The meal that is eaten before sunrise is called *suhoor* and the meal that one ends the fast with at sunset is called *iftar*. The act of fasting in the month of Ramadan is *fardh*, as it is commanded by Allah (SWT) in the Qur'an. The Quran mentions that the purpose of fasting is to build one's *Taqwa* (to become more conscious or aware of Allah SWT).

Fasting was not only prescribed for the Muslims, it was also a command for the nations before us. Here is an interesting fact: Did you know that at the time of Maryam (AS), fasting also included abstaining from speaking?

Ramadan occurs after the month of Sha'ban, and before the month of Shawwal. The Holy Qur'an was also first revealed in the month of Ramadan. During this holy month, Muslims from all over the world fast in the name of Allah (SWT). They wake up for *suhoor* and make the intention of fasting till sunset. Then they have their *iftar*. Ramadan brings so much unity as all the people in a household and community open and breaks their fast at the same time. This causes most families to prepare and have their meals together.



By Allah's mercy good deeds that are done during this month are multiplied by 70 and the doors to Jahannam are closed. Shaitan is also locked up during this month. Shaitan is not around to incite us to commit sins. In this way, we are only fighting against ourselves in the month of Ramadan.

## Our Prophet Muhammad (SAL) has said:

*"This is a month, first part which brings Allah's mercy, the middle of which brings Allah's forgiveness and the last part of which brings emancipation from the hellfire." (Hadith Sahih Al Bukhari)*

Besides the obligatory fasting that is done in Ramadan, there are other days that are rewarding to fast on. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "Whoever fasts for a day in the way of Allah, then Allah will move his face away from the Hellfire by a distance of seventy years". It is also a Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) to fast on Mondays and Thursdays. In conclusion, fasting is an act of worship that Allah has set aside a special reward for and it is a shield from the Hell-fire.

### **A common question we all have. How many hours is fasting in Islam?**

Muslims fast from pre-dawn to sunset, which can last anywhere between 10 to 19 hours depending on where in the world you are. However, here in Canada, fasting is generally between 12-16 hours and depending on which season fasting falls (Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring), the hours could be longer or shorter than usual.

## **Eid** *The celebration*

At the end of the month of Ramadan, people wait until the new crescent moon is sighted. The new moon tells us that the next Islamic month, Shawwal, is beginning. The celebration of Eid-al-Fitr is on the first day of Shawwal.

**Did you know that it is impermissible to fast on the day of Eid?** Eid is a day when people give gifts and money and share their happiness with each other. Eid is also a day to forgive people and Allah forgives you. Eid Al-Fitr lasts three days. On Eid day, Muslims go to the masjid to pray the Eid salah and give charity to the poor. It is a good idea to take a break from work so that you can celebrate Eid with your family.



# Hajj

## *The fifth pillar*

*Written by the boys of Sunday School*

Hajj is the 5th pillar of Islam. Muslims are required to perform Hajj at least once in their lifetime. To perform Hajj you must be pure and have pure clothes. The performance of Hajj can be summarized in seven steps below:

### **STEP 1 - NIYYAH**

Which means to have a sincere intention of performing Hajj for the sake of Allah. Making an intention and wearing the ihram are two of the first essential steps when going for Hajj. After making the niyyah, Muslim pilgrims are advised to wear the Ihram—two pieces of unstitched white sheets for men and a loose-fitting Abaya for women, to properly cover the whole body.

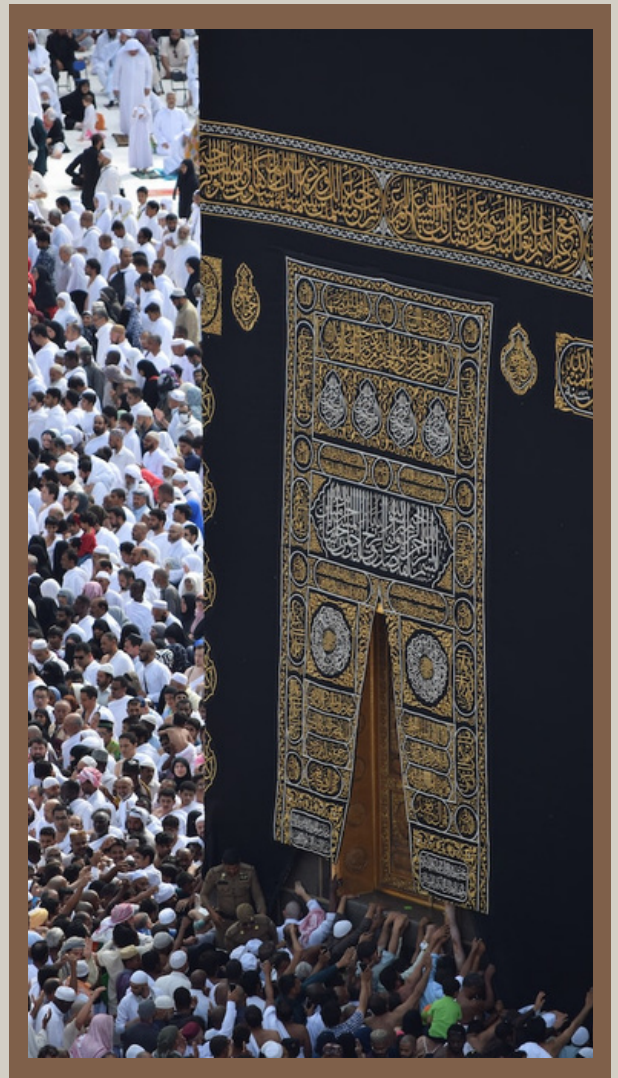
### **STEP 2 - JOURNEY TO MINA**

Mina is also known as the city of tents. The small town is filled with tents for the pilgrims to stay in. Arriving at the tent city of Mina, pilgrims are advised to rest there until the following day. Starting with the noon prayer (Dhuhr) and ending with the dawn prayer (Fajr), pilgrims perform all five prayers while staying in Mina.

### **STEP 3 - JOURNEY TO ARAFAH**

On the morning of the second day of Hajj (9th of Dhul Hijjah), pilgrims start walking towards Arafah while reciting the Talbiyah loudly.

Muslim pilgrims combine the Dhuhr and Asr prayer (Qasr prayer) upon reaching Mount Arafah, also known as Jabal ar-Rahmah. Jabal ar-Rahmah is Arabic for 'Mountain of Mercy'. This is known as Wuqoof – the act of standing before Allah (SWT) and it is observed near Jabal al-Rahmah from noon to sunset.





#### **STEP 4 - JOURNEY TO MUZDALIFAH**

The pilgrims' next destination for Hajj is Muzdalifah, a small town located between Mina and Arafah. Upon arriving at sunset on the grounds of Muzdalifah, the pilgrims combine the night prayers, Maghrib and Isha. Muslims spend one whole night under the open sky and collect 49 pebbles, they then leave the town of Muzdalifah on the morning of the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah and return to Mina.



#### **STEP 5 - RAMI (STONING)**

Upon arriving at Mina, pilgrims perform the act of Rami by stoning the Jamraat al-Aqabah. Seven stones are thrown at the column structure. These columns represent the Shaitan. The stoning of Jamarat act is performed in the memory of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) when Shaitan tried to discourage him from following Allah's command. In reply, Prophet Ibrahim (AS) threw small pebbles to make the Shaitan go away. Rami should be carried out at noon each day. Rami is performed on the 10th, 11th and 12th of Dhul-Hijjah.

#### **STEP 6 - NAHR (SACRIFICE)**

After the completion of the Rami on the 10th day of Dhul-Hijjah, Muslim pilgrims are advised to sacrifice an animal within the days of Nahr (which are the 10th, 11th and 12th of Dhul-Hijjah). It can be a small animal like a goat or sheep or it can be a share of a large animal like a camel or cow. For this, pilgrims can either purchase sacrifice coupons or vouchers, stating that the sacrifice has been made on their behalf. The meat of the sacrificed animal should be distributed to the needy.

#### **STEP 7 - FAREWELL TAWAF**

After completing all the above rituals, pilgrims return to the Holy Kaaba in Makkah to perform the farewell Tawaf called "Tawaf al-Wida".

# Islamic Word Search

K X X V I C W G Q U X G F U R Q M  
G M M J U L R M G W F Z S I T X B  
W X W H H Z D K B G P Q F H G E K  
K U V T A E Z A K A H O F Q M V Y  
C W Z S B L K L M C V A S Z O T A  
O H A D A H A H S I B L J N Q S R  
O F C X H I B S X F A L F L M N P  
T I P S N P X Q I K W A D I P V Z  
R Q Y L D M Z A I T P H L N L J D  
H Q A I B Y P L Z G Q S A A N E S  
Z I D A V T H R X G U N F W A E P  
N S W I F S O F O M G L A O D H E  
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I M T H C D M Z B A J E J J A H W  
J Z V Y Q R V R C W R K T F R S S  
H I K Z R N A E C M B X K Z S M H

SAWM

ZAKAH

SHAHADAH

HAJJ

PRAY

SALAH

MUSLIM

RAMADAN

ISLAM

ALLAH

PROPHET



# Islamic Fun Corner

S A L A H A A L A A T H H A L  
L R A M A D A N F A A Y T H G  
I H M O K L A I A J A E H T F  
O U E N A S U S J R O H D E R  
C H M E Z T U A R A U S E H T  
O D A Y T H A B E G A Q M I R  
G L G I O P H W D N A G N I T  
S A H O F G S H A H A D A H N  
I P R A T F I V I F G S M L A  
F Y I R O T A D N A A M R E Y  
E A B L R P H T I S A F F O Y  
I N O M L I T S E T T E H T S  
L H A L L A R A L I L I P E V  
E I F N O P R U T N L I U B S  
B H A Q A D A S I G M A L S I

SHAHADAH      FASTING  
MAGHRIB      PILLARS  
SUHOOR      BELIEF  
TAWAF      MONEY  
QURAN      DHUHR

SADAQAH      SALAH  
RAMADAN      IFTAR  
HAJJ      ALLAH  
ZAKAH      ASR  
FAJR      ISHA

The remaining letters from  
the bottom to the top spell  
a secret message

## Riddle me this ...

I am a sweet fruit and  
I can be found on a  
calendar.

**What am I?**

I was built upon five  
pillars.

**What am I?**

I am a warner, mentioned  
in the Quran, but I am not  
a human or a jinn.

**What am I?**

You wait for me before  
you begin to fast.

**What am I?**

I was sacrificed in the  
place of a son of a  
Prophet of Allah.

**What am I?**

I am a mandatory prayer,  
but people find me odd.

**What am I?**

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A PROUD PUBLICATION OF  
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS  
OF



**MASJID-UT-TAQWA**