

E-NEWS – NOVEMBER 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Salamun Alaikum

The past month has been blessed with 3 Eids. Firstly, **Eid uz Zuha** which also marks the Annual Haj pilgrimage. This is followed by **Eid e Ghadeer**, which according to the traditions is the most important Eid for the believers and finally **Eid e Mubahila**, which marks the event where the lofty status of the Ahlul Bayt is made evident to all.

The Library team wishes to extend greetings to the whole community on these joyous occasions.

LIBRARY NEWS

1. NEW BOOKS

The Library Admin Team has recently acquired the unique **Tafsir of the Holy Quran - ascribed to the eleventh Holy Imam Hasan Al Askari (as)**. This book, in English, contains the Tafsir of Surah Al Fatihah and Surah Al Baqarah (upto verse 114).

The Tafsir, as per the narrators, was dictated to them by Imam Hasan Al Askari (as) while they were staying under his protection.

The Tafsir begins with Imam Hasan Al Askari (as) narrating from his father Imam Ali Naqi (as) who narrated from his father Imam Mohammed Taqi (as) and so on up to Imam Ali (as) who narrated from the Holy Prophet (saws).

Hence this is a "Tafsir e Riwayi" with the chain of narrators being the holy Imams (as) and the Holy Prophet (saws). Since the Imams (as) are the "Spoken Quran", who would be better to provide the tafsir (exegesis & commentary) of the Holy Quran other than the Imams (as).

One of the traditions mentioned in the Tafsir is from the Holy Prophet (saws) who said: ***"It is absolutely obligatory and a must for you to remain in contact with the Holy Quran, because it is a beneficial healing and a bountiful remedy. The Holy Book is the protector of one who follows its commands. It gives salvation to one who obeys it."***

We invite the members to take advantage of this Tafsir by borrowing this from the Library and gain some gems of knowledge and increase their understanding of the Holy Quran.

2. MEMBERSHIP CARDS

The Panjtan Library team has recently sent by post, the Membership cards to all the members. If you have not received your membership card, please contact one of the Library Co-ordinators.

Community members are invited to sign up for the library membership and utilise the great treasures of knowledge which are held within the books and audio/video media (including CDs, DVDs and Cassettes) available. Panjtan Library currently has **618 book titles available in English, Urdu and Arabic** and many audio and video cassettes, CDs and DVDs.

Library membership is **FREE** for PSV members and forms are available on the Panjtan Website. For non-PSV Members, membership can be attained with an annual fee of \$25.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Each month, the Library Admin team will present a "Book of the Month", providing a brief review of a book available in the Panjtan Library.

The Book of the Month for November 2010 is:

Book: KITAB AL IRSHAD - THE BOOK OF GUIDANCE (INTO THE LIVES OF THE TWELVE IMAMS)

Author: SHAYKH MUFID (A.R.)

Publisher: ANSARIYAN PUBLICATIONS

Category: ISLAMIC HISTORY

Review:

This famous book is written by Shaykh Mufid (336 AH – 413 AH), one of the most distinguished among the scholars of Shia Islam. He was a student of Ibn Babuyah Al Qummi, the great teacher of jurisprudence and hadith. Shaykh Mufid, in turn was the teacher of the celebrated theologians Shaykh Al Murtaza and Al Razi.

Kitab Al Irshad was written by Shaykh Mufid, in answer to a request for guidance about the lives of the Imams. (as noted in the book) – *“so that you may distinguish (between) obscure errors and proven facts and you may rely on the truth in it with the sureness of one who has justice and true beliefs of religion.”*

The book is in two halves. The first deals exclusively with the first Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (as) and the second half deals with the other eleven Imams.

The first half details several accounts from historians about the exploits of Imam Ali (as) during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (saws), the Prophet’s reliance on Ali (as) and his designation of Ali (as) as his successor. Shaykh Mufid follows the historical accounts with an analysis which attempts to demonstrate that Ali (as) must be the most excellent and therefore was the logical Imam after the Prophet.

Shaykh Mufid also produces a collection of Imam Ali's legal decisions which covers the time of the Prophet and the first three caliphs. A wide selection of the speeches of Ali (as) are also included in this book which predates the later compilation of the speeches of Ali (as) by Al Razi in the famous treatise of Nahj Al Balagha.

Finally, in the first part, the book mentions the miracles attributed to Ali (as) including his miraculous strength during the victory in the battle of Khayber, his sending back of the Sun, his victory over the Jinn among others.

In the second half of the book, the accounts of the other eleven Imams are mentioned. These are not detailed life histories of the Imams; rather Shaykh Mufid has brought together collections of traditions concerned with critical aspects of their Imamates.

Shaykh Mufid emphasises the true line of Imamate and refutes the arguments of the followers of some other claimants of Imamate like those who become followers of the Zaydi and Ismaili branches of Shia Islam.

Finally, regarding the twelfth Imam, Shaykh Mufid quotes traditions relating to his secret birth and rejecting the claims of Jafar, the uncle of the Imam, who falsely claimed to be the twelfth Imam.

Regarding the historical account of Imam Husain (as), Shaykh Mufid gives a very detailed account of the events that led up to the martyrdom of Imam Husain (as) in Karbala. This is a heart-rending account of history and as we approach the days of Muharram, these events are a reminder of how the revolution of Imam Husain (as) gave a re-birth to the true Islam which was floundering under the onslaught of the Umayyeds and their corruptions.

May Allah give us the opportunity to gain more ma'rifat of the true Imams and increase their wilayat in our hearts for surely they are the means of gaining nearness to the Almighty.

BOOKS ON THE TOPIC OF IMAM HUSAIN (AS) AND THE EVENTS OF KERBALA

The Panjtan Library has a number of books on the topic of Imam Husain (as) and the events of Karbala. We invite the members to utilise these books during the month of Muharram which is starting in a week's time.

We would hope that appraisal of these books will bring the readers closer to Imam Husain (as) and soften their hearts towards the calamities which were faced by the household of the Holy Imam.

A list of the major books available in the Library is as under:

1. Nafasul Mahmoom – By Shaikh Abbas Qummi
2. Al Malhoof Ala Qatlal Tufoof – By Sayyed Ibne Taawoos
3. The Tragedy of Karbala – By Syed Mohsin Naquvi
4. Karbala and Beyond – By Yasin T. Al Jobouri
5. Husain, The Saviour of Islam – By S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali
6. The Tragic Verses (Vol 1 & 2) – A collection of Urdu marsiyas with English translation from famous poets like Mir Anis, Mirza Dabeer, Josh Malihabadi, Faiz Ahmed Faiz & Ummid Fazli

CONTRIBUTED BOOK SUMMARY

This month's contribution comes from **Br. Abbas Faiyaz**, Panjtan Madressa Grade 6 student who submitted an essay on the **Event of Mubahila**.

The Event of Mubahila

Najran was a place where the Christians had migrated to and the Holy Prophet (saws) had sent a letter to them to invite them to Islam. One of the letters he sent was:

“In the name of the God of Ibrahim, Ishaq and Ya’qub.

This letter is from Mohammad, the prophet and the messenger of Allah to the Asqaf of Najran.

Praise be to the God of Ibrahim, Ishaq and Ya’qub. I invite you to worship Allah instead of his servants. I invite you to come out of the rule of the servants of Allah and into the rule of Allah himself. If you do not accept my invitation, then you should at least pay jyaza (tax) to the Islamic state, otherwise you are warned to danger.”

The Holy Prophet (saws) wanted the Christians of Najran to believe that there is only one God. The leader of the Church received this message and then decided to get together to talk about this. 60 responsible people were chosen to come to Medina to talk about this.

The group arrived at Medina wearing gold, pure silk clothes and golden crosses around their necks. On seeing them wearing fashion, the Holy Prophet (saws) was disturbed and ignored them. They realized that something was wrong and were unsure what to do.

Imam Ali (a.s) decided to advise them to change their style and take out all the ornaments. They listened to Imam Ali (a.s) and then returned to the Holy Prophet (saws) who received them with a warm welcome. Before they started the discussion, they asked permission to say their prayers somewhere. They were granted and were put in one part of the mosque where they could pray with ease. They then had started the conversation.

The Holy Prophet (saws) had invited them to Tawheed and to worship one God. The Christians were determined that Jesus was the son of God. At that time the angel Jibrael brought ayah 59, Surah Ale Imran where Jesus was compared to Adam. The Christians were stuck and they had no reply as they went on with the conversation.

There after ayah 61 of Surah Ale Imran was revealed where Allah instructs the Holy Prophet (saws) to tell them to call their sons, women and each other and they have to pray to Allah to curse the liars. This form of dua to Allah of cursing the liars is called Mubahila. The Christians accepted the challenge.

When the Christian fathers returned to their camp, their leader warned them if any of the Holy Prophets (saws) family members came for Mubahila, then they should not agree to the challenge.

The contest was agreed to take place in open desert outside Medina on 24 Zilhaj 9 A.H. The Holy Prophet (saws) came with his two grandsons Imam Hasan (a.s), Imam Hussain (a.s) along with Lady Fatimah (a.s) and Imam Ali (a.s).

Looking at these shining faces of Ahlul Bayt, the Christian fathers realized that if they pray to God to curse the liars then they will surely be destroyed. They started to back away and the Holy Prophet told them that they should accept Islam or abide by the treaty that was drawn up. Finally they accepted to sign the treaty.

In the treaty, Christians would be protected by the Holy Prophet (saws) along with their religion, land and property. The Christians agreed to give 2000 piece of clothing every year to the Islamic government. They also agreed that they would provide 30 horses, 30 camels, 30 battle armours and 30 spears to Muslims army if required in any war. Christians agreed that if they get involved in any kind of usury the treaty will be broken.

Some Christians accepted Islam and Imam Ali (a.s) was known as the soul of Prophet.

The Library Admin team invites library members to contribute a book summary of the books that they borrow from the Library so that this may benefit all community members.

CHILDRENS SECTION

The Panjtan Library has a significant number of back issues of **Al Mujtaba - Monthly Islamic Kids Magazines**, which have been kindly donated to the Library.

Members are invited to borrow these for their children, to introduce them to the flowers from among the gardens of Islamic Knowledge. We include a selection (on the next page) from this magazine in our Children's Section of this Newsletter.

FEEDBACK

We request community members to provide us with your feedback on Panjtan Library services provided so far; any questions, comments and suggestions are most welcome, and can be made to library co-ordinators via phone, email or in person. Attached with this email is also the updated Library Borrowing Guide.

Was salamo alaikum,

Library Admin Team

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Quran is a Treasure



Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Quran:
Therefore eat of what Allah has given you, lawful and good (things),
and give thanks for Allah's favour (Surah Nahl 16: ayat 114)

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاشْكُرُوا
 نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ

Food! Delicious Food!

Food is essential for life. We eat and drink to make our bodies work properly. Allah (SWT) made so many different kinds of food for our benefit.

Let's explore food this month and learn about some wonder foods and what they do for us. We must remember to eat in moderation though. The holy Prophet (s) recommends: **"Eat what is just enough to keep the back-bone upright."**

A balanced diet is the best for our health. So, let's strike a balance in our plates with enough proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. Go easy on the fats and sugars. Remember to begin each meal with **Bismillah** and some salt for it prevents 70 illnesses. Enjoy!



Prophet Muhammad (s) has said: **"If anyone of you is fasting, let him break his fast with dates, if he doesn't have any, then with water. Verrily water is a purifier."**

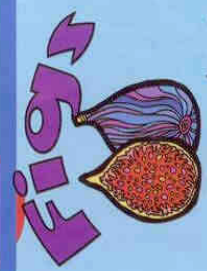
Dates are great because they're easily digested and give us energy. They also cure constipation and a weak heart.



It's super too because it; boosts your energy, builds up your immunity and cures sore throats, cough, cuts and bee stings.

Our holy Prophet (s) ate honey every morning.

Jannah will have flowing rivers of honey.



Figs are great energy boosters, help maintain blood pressure and improves memory. They're rich in calcium so helps our bones. Eating figs also helps in weight loss and are mentioned in Surah Teen.

We must take a lesson from the fig and be great people just as it is a great fruit with so many benefits. How beneficial are you to others?

Food Feast!

Packed here are 37 foods we eat.
Can you find the fruit from Jannah?

