

## A Ramadan Guide For Non-Muslims

By: Aysha Qamar

For Muslims around the world, April 13 marked the first fast of Ramadan 2021, meaning that from that day until the next 30 days I—alongside millions of Muslims—will be refraining from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset. With the number of Muslims fasting this month even amid the pandemic, odds are you have a friend, coworker, neighbor, or acquaintance who is also observing the month.

But before going into my own and my family's traditions of Ramadan, let's talk about what Ramadan actually is. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the Islamic month and may not have a Muslim friend to ask,



or may just not want to ask for whatever reason, we've got you covered. Here's a guide to some frequently asked questions about Ramadan.

Let's begin with the

basics.

What is Ramadan?

Because of the many festivities that take place during Ramadan, people often think Ramadan is

an Islamic holiday. It's actually an Islamic month, not a holiday. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, which symbol-

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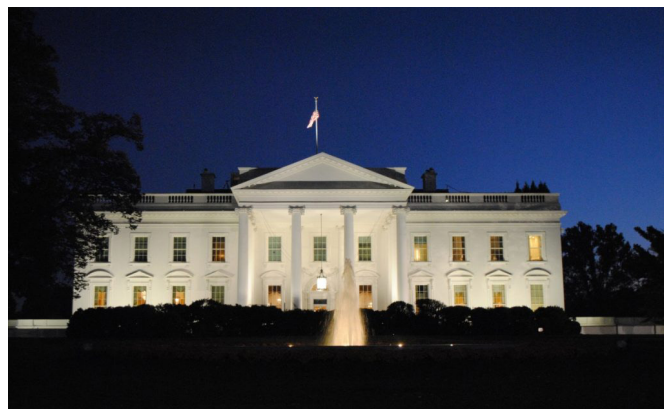
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## Biden Wishes Muslim Americans A Warm Ramadan

By: Rehan Qamar

At the start of Ramadan, President Joe Biden issued a press release wishing Muslims worldwide a "Ramadan Kareem."

In addition to wishing them a warm Ramadan, Biden acknowledged the difficult year it has been for Americans amid the COVID-19 pandemic and how hard it has been to not be able to observe



Ramadan with their loved ones.

His statement differs greatly from that of former President Donald Trump who instead of focusing on Ramadan and the Muslim community consistently focused on terrorism in his statement last year.

"Muslim Americans have enriched our country since our founding. They are as diverse and vibrant as the America they have helped build. Today, Muslims are leading in our efforts to fight COVID-19, play-

*Cont. on page 13*

## US Sees 45 Mass Shootings In A Month



By: Zaid Aleem

On Thursday night, a man killed eight people at a FedEx facility near the Indianapolis airport before killing himself. It was at least the 45th mass shooting in America since March 16, according to CNN. A

mass shooting is generally defined when four or more people — excluding the gunman — are wounded or killed. The US has seen at least 147 mass shootings in 2021, according to data from the GVA, a non-profit

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# Op Ed: My 1442/2021 Ramadan Goals



**By: Yousuf Ali**

We are now less than a week away from the start of Ramadan, and it is the second year in a row in which we will observe the month with little to any communal involvement. In these circumstances, it is all the more important for us to set individual goals to ensure spiritual growth since many of the avenues we would usually pursue are not available this month. In that respect, I would like to share with readers some of my own progress and how I plan to build upon it in Ramadan. In doing so, this will help renew my conviction to achieve these goals as well as encourage others to set and accomplish their own goals.

For me, the pandemic has been a mixed blessing. On one hand, I am going through the same restrictions and isolation that everyone else has. For example, I chose not to take a job last year because it to focus on my graduate studies and put myself in a position to have an even better professional opportunity because of it. To this end, I am happy to say that my progress has been excellent. I am within months of graduation and have had basically all As in my graduate coursework.

In fact, I have never had grades this good in my life and am in a good position to secure an excellent full-time opportunity for myself after graduation. With regards to my spiritual development, the pandemic allowed me to accel-

erate my memorization (hifz) of the Qur'an, and I am happy to say I finished last year.

In that respect, I am going to take this Ramadan as an opportunity to reinforce my achievement and build upon it. To that end I would like to list my two goals and explanations for them:

To complete the reading of the Qur'an in another qira'ah

Alhamdulillah, I have been able to read the Qur'an every year in Ramadan since I was 12. This month this will have an important function of helping me review my hifz. Furthermore, I will also be making the use of an edition of the Qur'an with all the variants listed in the footnotes to recite in another one of the established qira'at. In simple terms, these are the variants that can be traced back to the prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) through mass transmission.

Thankfully, I have completed four narrations of recitations thus far and with the help of Allah, I will do another this year. In doing so, I would help not only deepen my understanding of the word of Allah but also provide a reward for my mother and all those who facilitated my knowledge-seeking until now.

Abstain from all sinful activity

Even more importantly, I plan to repent and abstain from all sins as that is the whole purpose of fasting and worship in general. In fact, some of

our scholars, especially from the Zahiri school, said it was a requirement for the fasting to be valid in the first place following Allah's words that "Allah only accepts from the pious people (muttaqin)", and a person who sins is not pious.

This is going to be a harder goal than the first but more important as the prophet explicitly told us regarding people who do not abandon false speech and action, Allah does not need them to abandon eating and drinking. I came close to attaining this last year but unfortunately failed after one of my rights was violated, and I transgressed the bounds by Allah in an attempt to redress the wrong. I apologized and made up the fast but still failed in my goal. Your goals do not have to be the same as mine, but hopefully, they inspire you to set and accomplish your own for your own spiritual development.

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# Remembering Dr. Abidullah Ghazi: An Obituary



**By: Dr. Aslam Abdullah**

Muslim students attending Sunday schools worldwide can pay their best tribute to the scholar who devoted his life to preparing an Islamic curriculum in English by applying the knowledge in their daily life. Dr. Abidullah Ghazi, the founder of Iqra Education Trust and the author of over 150 titles of children textbooks, left this world on the morning hours of Sunday, April 11, when millions of students were to use his books in their regular Islamic studies program.

He was a man of great stature, humility, and knowledge who teamed up with his wife to prepare the best gift anyone can give to his communi-

ty's coming generation. It is a contribution that the Muslim community can never forget.

He is one of those Muslim community leaders whose contributions are hard to repeat. He was an institution in himself. Born in a family of scholars and activists, Ghazi studied at Muslim University Aligarh, London of School of Economics, and Harvard University. He was a political scientist, economist, and sociologist.

His academic qualifications and religious background produced the community's best outcome when his wife, Dr. Tasneema Ghazi, an expert in Curriculum development, joined him in developing a com-

prehensive program on Islamic Studies. The combined efforts of the two became the strength of the community and its emerging generation. Countries after countries adopted the curriculum and traditional Islamic education system started opening to their efforts.

In a Muslim world dominated by men, the idea of a husband-wife team working toward revitalizing Islamic education was new. But the quality of the work was so high that all who initially were reluctant to see the benefit of the emerging education model gave in

Dr. Ghazi was from India and deeply concerned with the affairs of Indian Muslims. He was actively involved in

Muslim organizations of Indian origin, such as the American Federation of Muslims of Indian Origin (AFMI) that also awarded him an award for his distinguished services.

The government of Pakistan also awarded him two of the country's highest awards. Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Star of Excellence) Award for Seeratun-Nabi Program, (1983) and Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Order of Excellence) Award for Development of Educational Curriculum, (1988)

Dr. Ghazi was a proficient writer in English and Urdu and an accomplished poet. Apart from all these academic achievements, he was a humble and caring person who was always restless for his communi-

ty. He was a passionate advocate of interfaith relations and initiated several programs in Chicago.

Born in the northern Indian town of Ambhehta Saharanpur district on July 6, 1936, this unique scholar left the world on April 11, 2011, in his sleep. But what he contributed in his 85 years of life would continue to impact the community for centuries. One cannot describe the extent of loss that the Muslim community has felt with his departure. He is a pioneer in modern Muslim education and a bridge between tradition and modernity.

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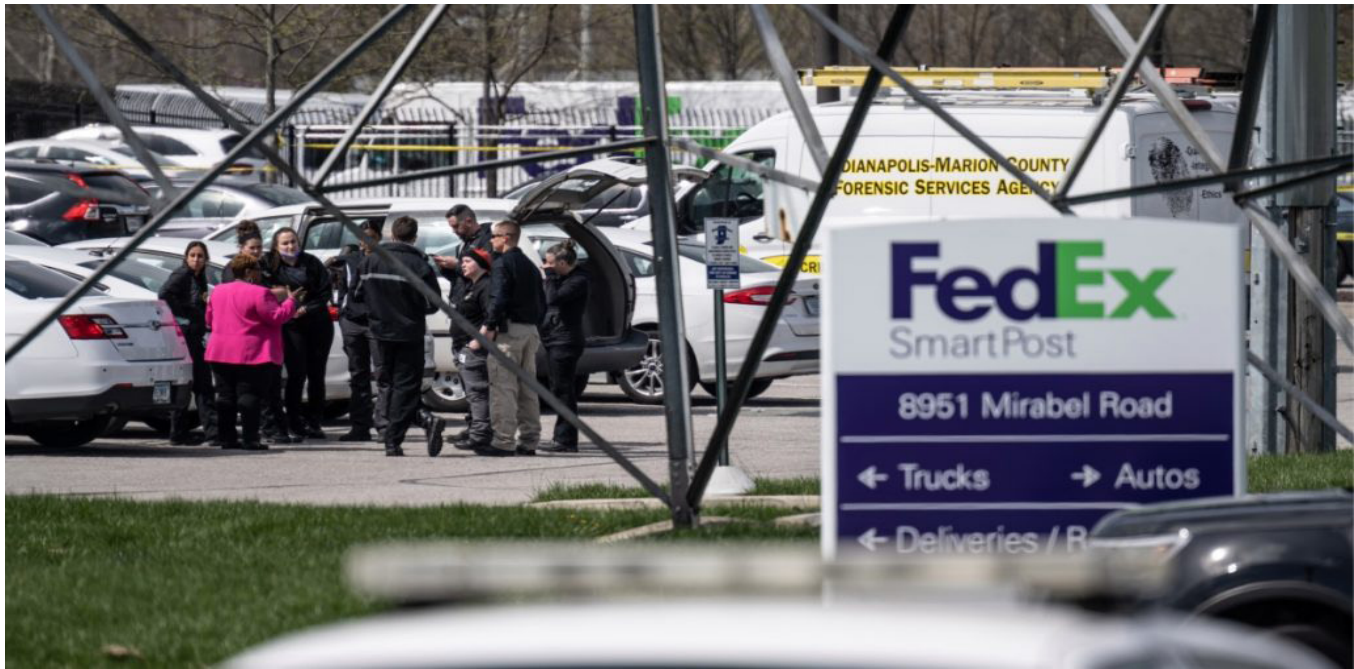
# 19-Year-Old Gunman At Indianapolis FedEx Facility Kills 8 Employees

By: TMO Staff

An Indianapolis police official told CNN that officers arrived late Thursday night “to a very violent scene, with casualties and witnesses fleeing around” at a FedEx Ground facility near Indianapolis’ main airport, where a former employee shot and killed eight people and injured multiple others before killing himself.

Officials said that four other people who were wounded and another person who was killed were rushed to hospitals and that both of them may have been privately transported. No law enforcement officers were hurt in the shooting that was carried out by a former employee who last worked at the facility this past fall, authorities said late Friday afternoon.

On Friday afternoon, Deputy Chief Craig McCartt named the shooter as 19-year-old Bran-



don Hole, who worked for FedEx until 2020. McCartt said Hole was found dead from a bullet wound that seemed to be self-inflicted.

In March 2020, the suspect’s mother contacted law enforcement to report he might try to attempt “suicide by cop,” said FBI Special Agent in Charge Paul Keenan,

who runs the bureau’s Indianapolis field office. Special Agent in Charge Paul Keenan said Hole was placed on an immediate mental health temporary hold by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. He also said a shotgun was seized at Hole’s residence. “Based on items ob-

served in the suspect’s bedroom at that time, he was interviewed by the FBI in April 2020,” the statement said. “No Racially Motivated Violent Extremism (RMVE) ideology was identified during the course of the assessment and no criminal violation was found. The shotgun was not returned to the suspect.”

This suspect came to the facility, and when he came there he got out of his car and pretty quickly started some random shooting outside the facility,” Craig McCartt, deputy chief of criminal investigations for the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, said during a news conference Friday morning.

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# Op Ed: Rationality And Quran

By Aiman Parvez

We have been sent down to earth to utilize this time to train ourselves into a totally submitting one to the Divine Command. The quality of life there is very much dependent on our actions here. Righteous deeds are a foundational step in qualifying for Jannat. Emphasizing how critical the right approach in life is, in Aayat 20:125-126 we see:

قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِيْ اَعْمٰى وَقَدْ كُنْتُ بَصِيْرًا

*They will cry, "My Lord! Why have you raised me up blind, although I used to see?"*  
- Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran

قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اَتَتْكَ ءَايٰتُنَا فَنَسِيْتَهَا ۖ وَكَذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنْسٰى

*Allah will respond, "It is so, just as Our revelations came to you and you neglected them, so Today you are neglected."*  
-----Ibid-----

You had the wrong attitude and you never cared to fix it and that lead to you ignoring our laws (your "self" didn't grow) and hence you don't qualify to be in Jannat.

If we are not open to being questioned, not open to self-introspection, not willing to revisit established ideas and evaluate them against Quranic principles, are stubborn and not able to consider other's point of view then we are leaving no room for growth for ourselves. The condition of no growth (stagnation) is defined as Jaheem by the Quran. Word Jahannam shares the same root.

Our life on earth determines the quality of our life in the hereafter. Any deficiencies developed have to be handled in this life only and the best way to "watch your six" is to live by Quran's directives. Quran contains a wholesome plan of development for each aspect of one's personality.

We don't have to worry about addressing thousand different growth avenues, we can focus on one thing and reap the rewards of whole-some growth. I see our "self" like a tree which we want to keep healthy. One excruciating way might be to check every leaf (just imagine how many leaves are there on a healthy tree) and make effort toward ensuring that it's green and healthy. The other approach is to listen to an expert who has all the knowledge, who says just focus on this one thing—nurture it properly as per botanical laws. Similarly, if we nurture ourselves with Quranic guidance, everything else would be taken care of by it.

Another incident from the Quran where it's shown how one's attitude in life can make all the difference between Eiman and otherwise is 20:70

فَالْقٰى السَّحَرَةُ سُجَّدًا قَالُوْا ءَاٰمَنَّا بِرَبِّ هٰرُوْنَ وَمُوْسٰى

*So the magicians fell down in prostration, declaring, "We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses."*  
- Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran

Looking at the Aayat, word magician is used for Arabic word السَّحَرَةُ (As Seheratu) This word has a root of س (s), ح (h), ر (r) and according to

Muheet, السَّحَرُ (as-sehr) basically means to turn, and figuratively it means to represent falsehood as truth.

Taj-ul-Uroos says it means such things whose origin is such that it becomes difficult to separate fact from fiction. It is used for a deception of a sort that one cannot find out how the deception has been made. Later this word started meaning commonly used techniques of cheating and deception {Ibn Qatebah}

(Muheet and Taj-ul-Uroos both are well known authoritative Arabic Dictionaries)

The majority of the translations use the word sorcerer, I am refraining from using it as it has a connotation of magic which is not only against the fundamentals of the Quran – which emphasizes finding answers and lays down laws for everything but also suggest that prophet Moses was a sorcerer too, which is simply unjust to the grand stature of a prophet.

The opposition of Moses was representing the unjust system of Pharoah and in order to make it appear constructive in front of the public they presented their case in such a manner that could deceive people in to supporting it and turn against Moses (in reality Pharoah's system was responsible for subjugating the Jews, killing any person with potential and leaving the "status quo" supporters alive. This system had destroyed the community from the very roots). Moses then by the support of Allah presented counter-argument in such a cogent manner that the opposition in spite of being flag bearers of the falsehood saw the value and submitted to Allah.

This tells us that Moses' opposition was educated in the true sense. In spite of being the best of their times, they did admit to the limitations of their argument and accepted that Moses' argument is better and they accepted Islam. This shows that you need to be always open to listen to new ideas and ponder over them, test them against the permanent values given in the Quran. As no one ever is 100% perfect, this attitude would always help you become a better human which in turn will make you a better Muslim.

Another takeaway point from this Aayat is the rational approach with which Moses presented his argument. God doesn't expect us to accept anything blindly, even in the case of acquiring Eiman on Him He asks us to go and study nature both outside and inside of us and once our heart, mind and eyes are convinced then only profess Eiman. 10:101

قُلْ اَنْظُرُوْا مَاذَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ وَمَا تُغْنِى الْاٰيٰتُ وَالْذِّكْرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ

*Say: "Consider whatever there is in the heavens and on earth!"*

*But of what avail could all the messages and all the warnings be to people who will not believe?*

- The Message of The Qur'an, Muhamed Asad

He asks his messengers to present a cogent argument which appeals to the minds of people and anyone who has the right mindset to listen and ponder rationally would certainly see the benefits in His plan and would acquire Eiman (become a believer).

Quran asks us to approach it with an open mind and without any backpacks. Every individual has baggage depending on his culture, upbringing, life experiences, etc.

When we reach out to Quran to understand the message of God we need to approach it like a clean slate and take every directive it presents with no pre-conceived notion. We must remember that this book is the ultimate source of truth. It's plausible that Quran challenges our long-standing misunderstood beliefs or beliefs which were not even part of the Quran

*Cont. on page 14*



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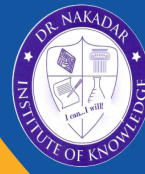
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# Johnson And Johnson Vaccine Put On Hold

By: TMO Staff

According to federal health officials, six women who received the Johnson and Johnson vaccine developed blood clots, one resulting in death, out of more than seven million doses administered across the United States. People who received the Pfizer and Moderna shots haven't reported the specific adverse event, according to officials, the Wall Street Journal reported.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Johnson & Johnson requested assistance from its three rival Covid-19 vaccine makers to investigate reports of blood clots, but Pfizer and Moderna both declined, according to people familiar with the situation. According to the Wall Street Journal, only AstraZeneca agreed.

J&J also wanted to form an informal alliance with its competitors, which it hoped would allow the industry to speak with one voice about the vaccines' safety and address any public concerns about the blood-clot cases., the



Journal writes.

In a statement to CNN on Friday, a Pfizer (PFE) spokesperson declined to comment on the specifics of the WSJ report. "Pfizer embraces opportunities for scientific exchange when we can make a meaningful contribution that is not being represented by other

groups or regulators," the spokesperson said. "We have and will continue to collaborate with other vaccine makers as appropriate as we all fight against this deadly pandemic." Moderna (MRNA) and AstraZeneca (AZN) declined to comment.

The news comes just

three days after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration recommended pausing the use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, following six reported US cases of a rare and severe type of blood clot.

All six cases were among women between the ages

of 18 and 48, the agencies said in a statement, and symptoms occurred six to 13 days after vaccination. The recommendation to pause comes out of "an abundance of caution," they added, and these cases "appear to be extremely rare."

## Recipe For Homemade Salmon Burgers

By: Noor H. Salem,  
Certified Holistic  
Health Coach

As fall kicks in, you might wrap up the season of nice weather with a few more barbeques or family gatherings, with social distancing precaution. Burgers are a typical food you would probably find at every barbeque, as well as on many restaurant menus. Perhaps you make them on a skillet for a quick family dinner too. Unfortunately, though, burgers generally are a menu item that can come along with plenty of unwarranted ingredients. Although there may be a scarce number of restaurants that now serve grass-fed and organic burgers, they are the exception, not rule. For that, be cautious of what you choose to eat, and recognize that the food you eat will eventually impact your physical and mental well-being in various ways down the road.



Instead of making the usual beef burger at your next barbeque, try these salmon burgers instead. Salmon is high in omega-3 fatty acids, which unfortunately most people lack in their diets today. It's an excellent source of healthy fats,

with cardiovascular and cognitive health benefits. Importantly, make sure your salmon is wild-caught, to ensure you're not getting the genetically engineered feed traces from the farm raised.

These scrumptious

burgers are loaded with vegetables and bursting with flavor due to the fresh garlic and onions. Atop being extremely flavorful and satisfying, these patties contain natural anti-bacterial properties, anti-inflammatory properties,

protein, and numerous vitamins and minerals. The tahini dressing adds a juicy touch to them, and an additional boost of vitamins and macronutrients, such as vitamin

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**Cont. from page 1.  
Ramadan Guide**

izes the time of the year in which Islam's prophet Mohammad (SAW or peace be upon him) received the revelation of the Quran. The month serves as a spiritual and religious time for practicing Muslims to reflect on the things they are grateful for and to dedicate an entire month to worship.

When is Ramadan? Why is it different every year?

The reason why the dates Ramadan falls on during the year are different each year is that Ramadan follows the Islamic calendar. Islam adheres to the lunar calendar, meaning the beginning of Ramadan is marked by a crescent moon sighting. Over the years, Muslim countries have dedicated committees that check and announce the date worldwide. This year, the first day of Ramadan began for some on April 12, with the first fast beginning on April 13. For those living in non-Muslim countries, the day one begins the fast varies based on a reputable Islamic authority or an announcement by a local or national mosque; some even follow the day a specific Muslim country begins it, such as Saudi Arabia.

What is the purpose?

Ramadan is not only the month in which the Quran was revealed, but it is the month in which Prophet Mohammad (SAW) reportedly said: "When the month of Ramadan starts, the gates of heaven are opened and the gates of hell are closed and the devils are chained."

Muslims believe that this month is one of the most important months of the year when seeking forgiveness from God. It is thus a month of reflection and for one to understand their individual relationship with religion and God through different acts, whether it be increasing charity, practicing good habits, or forming a habit of prayer.

What is fasting?

Fasting is defined as the act of abstaining from food and drink. In Islam, one who fasts abstains

from eating and drinking anything, including water, from sunrise to sunset.

Who has to fast?

Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam. Able-bodied Muslims are expected to fast from sunrise to sunset the entire month. This includes those without health conditions and who are able to complete the fast without hardship. The elderly, those who must take medications at particular times, children, and pregnant people are exempt from fasting. However, while not required, some children do fast. It's recommended that those under the age of puberty do not fast due to health reasons, but some do, just not for the entire month. As children, my siblings and I fasted, but not for all 30 days. Some people start later. My parents eased us into fasting by giving us breakfast at our usual time and having us fast for the rest of the day, essentially doing half-fasts until we were ready.

Because abstaining from eating or drinking for long periods of time can be dangerous to the health of pregnant people and those who are menstruating, people experiencing these states are not required or recommended to fast. Additionally, those who are traveling can miss up to three fasts in travel, so for example, if you go to a different state you do not need to fast while in transit, but when you arrive if you're staying for more than three days and are able, you're expected to fast for the remaining days of your stay after the first three.

But that doesn't mean they miss out on the benefits of Ramadan. Those who are unable to fast observe Ramadan in different ways. The fast is not supposed to cause harm to one's health, so in that case, some people feed charity to make up for their inability to fast. In my family in particular, for each day that a fast is missed, we feed a family. Meaning if you miss seven days, we commit to seven days' worth of food donations.

Why fast?

Muslims fast for a num-

ber of reasons, whether it be to practice self-discipline or to reflect on the privileges they have. For some, fasting and abstaining from food and drink is not a choice, and thus Ramadan helps to highlight the everyday privileges we have and may take for granted. Additionally, by not eating during the day, one practices the willpower of focus as you go about your everyday activities without food.

It isn't just about giving up food. Ramadan can be observed in many ways, from spending time with your loved ones to giving to charity. Its purpose is for you to decide how you will mark creating change, whether it be taking time to reflect on one's actions, being more thankful, or giving back to the community. The idea is to dedicate an entire month to doing good in order to make a habit of it.

How do Muslims break their fast?

The fast is broken by an evening meal at sunset. The meal is referred to as an iftar. Iftar literally translates to "the meal which breaks the fast." Pre-coronavirus, many mosques would host open iftars in which community members would take turns sponsoring meals for anyone who would like to come. Whether someone is Muslim, can't afford a meal of their own, or any other demographic or identity question is not asked. These meals serve to bring the community together.

While many jokes are made that Muslims "feast" at the end of each fast, the truth is after fasting your stomach actually shrinks, so people usually don't eat as much as they normally would. It's recommended to eat a meal as large as you would on a day without fasting as eating excessively takes away from the purpose of fasting itself, and can also make you sick.

The "feast" celebration in Islam is following Ramadan. This holiday is called Eid al-Fitr, and it can be compared to Christmas. Muslim families and friends come together to celebrate. There's usually a lot of

food involved, and thus people jokingly refer to it as the "Muslim feast."

What does a day of Ramadan look like?

To start the fast, one will have a pre-dawn meal called suhoor. This serves as your pre-fast breakfast and it occurs before sunrise. Your window is to eat it anytime before sunrise. Suhoor serves as your last meal before the fast.

Day to day after suhoor, one's Ramadan varies from family to family, person to person. Everyone has a different way in which they practice Ramadan.

In my family, we go about our days with work and whatever we have to do, but at night we come together to pray. We usually come together at least an hour before Iftar to share Islamic stories and listen to prayers, and also take turns cooking. After we break our fast with a date and some water, we first pray (Magrib, the Islamic prayer that occurs at sunset) and then return to eat our dinner.

During Ramadan, outside of the five prayers Muslims have daily there's a special optional nightly prayer called tarawih. During tarawih, parts of the Quran are read with the intention that by the end of the 30 days, the entire Quran will have been read during these prayers. These prayers occur after the last obligatory prayer and often continue into the morning. Tarawih can be prayed in the mosque or at home. With COVID-19 some mosques are hosting socially distanced prayers, while others have Zoom calls set up for individuals to pray together.

The last 10 days of Ramadan are seen as the most important because there is one day known as the "night of power." In Islam, praying during this day is seen as equivalent to praying over 1,000 nights. Prior to the pandemic, mosques would host special events throughout the last 10 days of Ramadan with specific programming for children and young adults. Because the day the "night of power" falls on is actually unclear,

mosques attempt to predict the night and have events daily throughout the last 10 days of Ramadan to ensure it's not missed.

Some Muslims even choose to live and sleep in a mosque during this period. This is known as i'tikaaf. It's meant as a time to separate yourself from worldly possessions and focus on increasing your religious knowledge. Some mosques have designated rooms or areas for people to observe i'tikaaf safely. One can even serve this time in their own home.

Outside of i'tikaaf, some Muslims observe Ramadan by not listening to music, watching movies, or going out. They do this to dedicate the time they would spend doing these activities to praying.

What if you accidentally eat or drink something while fasting?

It happens—we're all human. If you accidentally drink water or eat something, you just pray or ask for forgiveness and that your fast is accepted, and go about the rest of your day.

What happens at the end of Ramadan?

The end of Ramadan is marked by a three-day celebration known as Eid al-Fitr or Eid. As mentioned earlier, this day is filled with lots of food and celebrations. It begins with a prayer and is celebrated by communities differently depending on their culture.

How can you support someone who is fasting?

There's no one way to support a friend or loved one who is observing Ramadan. It all comes down to respecting their observances. If someone is fasting, please be respectful of their decision to do so. Do not judge them or make comments about losing weight. I have often heard people make comments about Ramadan being a weight loss strategy within the Islamic religion, and this is not true—Ramadan has nothing to do with losing weight or encouraging one to do so. Many Muslims actually gain weight during Ramadan!

You can also support

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Ramadan Guide

your friends by trying to fast for a day with them or even sharing an iftar meal, whether it be in person (if it is safe to) or virtually. Amid families and communities being unable to gather with one another during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual iftars have become very popular.

Additionally, please do not feel as though you

cannot eat in front of someone who is fasting. While of course this varies from person to person, in my experience no one really minds if you eat in front of them while they are fasting as long as you don't shove food in their face or constantly ask if they're hungry.

There are multiple ways to support your Muslim friends. Ramadan is a time of community. Feel free to think outside the box. Each community,

family, and person has their own traditions you can learn from. In my family, prior to the pandemic, we would drop off iftar meals to everyone in our neighborhood for at least a day, or invite some neighbors over to have a meal with us. Now with the pandemic, we've exchanged meals with friends and had virtual potlucks. While Ramadan is not the same as it used to be, we're making the most of it.

Ramadan reminds me that everyone makes mistakes, and everyone can receive forgiveness—even for the things we often struggle to forgive ourselves for. It isn't just a month of fasting but one of self-awareness, self-love, and forgiveness. I may not always be ready, but I await Ramadan each year because although it may not be a significant noticeable change, I change for the better. I use each Ramadan to reflect on the per-

son I am and the person who I want to be. Fasting isn't just a physical act of not eating—to me, it's much more.

Now that you know what Ramadan is, you may be wondering how you wish someone a happy one.

Wishing someone a "happy Ramadan" totally makes sense. Another way to wish it is by saying, "Ramadan Mubarak!" or "Ramadan Kareem!"

Cont. from page 1.  
Biden Wishes

ing a pioneering role in vaccine development and serving as frontline health care workers. They are creating jobs as entrepreneurs and business owners, risking their lives as first responders, teaching in our schools, serving as dedicated public servants across the nation, and playing a leading role in our ongoing struggle for racial equity and social justice," Biden's statement read.

He continued on to address the rise of hate crimes against the Muslim community and condemned the attacks as unacceptable.

"No one in America should ever live in fear of expressing his or her faith. And my administration will work tirelessly to protect the rights and safety of all people."

Biden even addressed the issues he focused on upon taking office and vowed to fight up against human rights violations of Muslims everywhere including Uyghurs in China and Rohingya in Burma.

"As we remember those who we have lost since last Ramadan, we are hopeful for brighter days ahead. The Holy Qur'an reminds us that "God is the light of the heavens and earth," who leads us out of darkness to the light. Although our White House festivities will be held virtually this Ramadan, Jill and I look forward to resuming the traditional White House Eid celebration in person next year, inshallah. We wish your families an inspiring and rewarding month," his statement ended.



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**CORONAVIRUS:** Ummah Relief International remains committed to providing aid, informational instructions, and basic medical supplies to those areas hardest hit by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Please consider making an additional \$25 donation to provide additional support to these Covid-stricken areas.

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CONTINUED STORY

Cont. from page 1.  
Mass Shootings

based in Washington. Of all homicides in America in 2019, 73% of them were gun-related, according to data from the FBI. That compares to an estimated 39% in Canada, 22% in Australia and just 4% in England and Wales. Here's another: The US averages 120.5 firearms per 100 resi-

dents, more than double the next country (Yemen, at 52.8 firearms per 100 people). And there were nearly 23 million firearms purchased in the US in 2020, a new record high. "Gun violence in this country is an epidemic," said President Joe Biden a week ago in announcing a series of executive orders on guns. "And it's an international embar-

rassment." There is little disagreement that there are steps we can (and could) be taking to solve this issue. According to a nationwide poll published this week by Quinnipiac University, 89 percent of Americans favor background checks on all gun owners. Three-quarters of Americans support so-called "red flag" legislation. A majority (51%)

also favors banning assault guns. And yet, despite all of that, Congress continues to drag its feet on passing any sort of gun control measures. "They've offered plenty of thoughts and prayers, members of Congress, but they have passed not a single new federal law to reduce gun violence," Biden said a week ago. "Enough prayers, time

for some action." No matter what party you belong to or whether you own a gun or not – what is clear is that 45 mass shootings in the span of a month means that we have a problem in this country. A problem that our government needs to find ways to address.

Cont. from page 6.  
Rationality And Quran

but made their way into our lives through our culture. It is in these situations that we need to make sure that we

this challenge we are missing out on an opportunity to grow as a Muslim, as a human and are no different than people for whom God says they won't listen irrespective of how well you explain

humans to not follow blindly and apply their mind to get convinced and then gain a conviction on His laws. Conviction on the unseen is a natural outcome of a rational mindset. With

site right now but will certainly happen – if we live according to the Quran. This belief in the unseen which is a critical part of our Deen can only be attained if we analyze what's given in Quran

starts with breaking the shackles of your baggage and approaching Quran with a clean mind. A mind which is eager to understand the message of God is open to entertaining ideas which are

وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِيَ مَنِ يَرِيدُ

And thus, have We bestowed from on high this [divine writ in the shape of clear messages: for [thus it is] that God guides him who wills [to be guided] - The Message of The Qur'an, Muhamed Asad

5:104 وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ

for when they are told, "Come unto that which God has bestowed from on high, and unto the Apostle" - they answer, "Enough for us is that which we found our forefathers believing in and doing." Why, even though their forefathers knew nothing, and were devoid of all guidance? - The Message of The Qur'an, Muhamed Asad

don't ignore what Quran has to say, not like the above-mentioned people who didn't reflect over it. If we don't have the right attitude to entertaining

22:16 Quran encourages a logical bent of mind where one is encouraged to ask questions and seek answers. God, Himself asks

the correct approach, one can see the benefits of the plan proposed in the Quran and understand that these benefits might be away from our

with an open and rational mind. In conclusion, we can see how relevant a reasoning-based mindset is. Entering into Eiman

presented by the Quran and lead us to the right path of spending life in accordance with the Quran.

Cont. from page 11.  
Salmon Burgers

B5, B15, B3, vitamin E, calcium, methionine, and magnesium. Tahini is a paste made of ground sesame seeds, which are an incredible seed to include in your meals more often. Tahini is very high in heart health benefits and carries unique amino acids that could enhance your health. Furthermore, it helps regulate high blood pressure level and cholesterol, while balancing your hormones as well. Add fresh garlic and lemon juice to the dressing, and you have an abundant health dressing loaded with vitamin C, natural anti-bacterial properties, protein, and vital nutrients. Undoubtedly, this dressing is incomparable to store-bought dressings, that come

along with genetically engineered oils, excessive amounts of refined salt, a myriad of unpronounceable chemicals, and health-detrimental preservatives. Have a theme of a seafood barbeque instead of the usual beef and chicken. Serve these patties aside organic basmati brown rice, on a bun, with grilled vegetables, or atop a bed of leafy greens. Drizzle it with the tahini dressing to enhance the flavor and health benefits as well. Feel free to add other vegetables or spices of your preference.

Ingredients:

Salmon Burgers:

- 3 pounds boneless salmon, wild-caught (fresh)
- 1 small red onion

- 2 cloves garlic, peeled
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced green bell pepper
- 1/8 cup organic corn, cooked
- ½ bunch parsley, washed and dried
- 1 teaspoon Himalayan pink salt
- 1 teaspoon ground mustard seed
- 1 teaspoon dill
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- Tahini-Garlic Dressing:
  - ¼ cup tahini (ground sesame paste)
  - 1/8 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
  - ¼ teaspoon Himalayan pink salt
  - 1 teaspoon fresh garlic, minced
  - 2 tablespoons fresh pars-

- ley (garnish)
- Directions:
  - Place the salmon, onion, garlic, parsley, and spices in a food processor and pulse until well incorporated. Transfer to a mixing bowl.
  - Add the bell peppers and corn. Mix well.
  - Mold into round patties. Grill the patties for about 5 minutes on each side. If cooking indoors: Heat a skillet on medium-high, and begin cooking the patties, about 4-5 minutes on each side. [If you prefer to use oil for grilling, opt for cold-pressed avocado oil.]
  - For the dressing ingredients, mix the tahini and lemon juice in a small mixing bowl. Add in remaining ingredients and stir.
  - Serve immediately for

optimum taste. Enjoy! Noor H. Salem is an author, speaker, and Certified Integrative Nutrition Health Coach, from Michigan. Noor works with clients in better understanding their bodies and healing with natural foods through her wellness practice, Holistic Noorritrition. She presents various workshops, school lectures, group coaching classes, and community lectures on the topic of holistic health. Noor recently published her book, SUNNAH SUPERFOODS, a culmination of life-changing recipes and remedies, with a foreword by Dr. Waleed Basyouni. Her book consists of prophetic hadith, modern research, and delicious recipes, and is in the process of being translated into other language.

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- ❖ Provided ventilators to hospitals in Gujarat.
- ❖ Provided shelter and clothing to families affected by the pandemic and economic distress.



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May these blessed days be a means for us to connect with our Lord and our community, & to share together in gratitude.

**Ramadan Mubarak!**





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