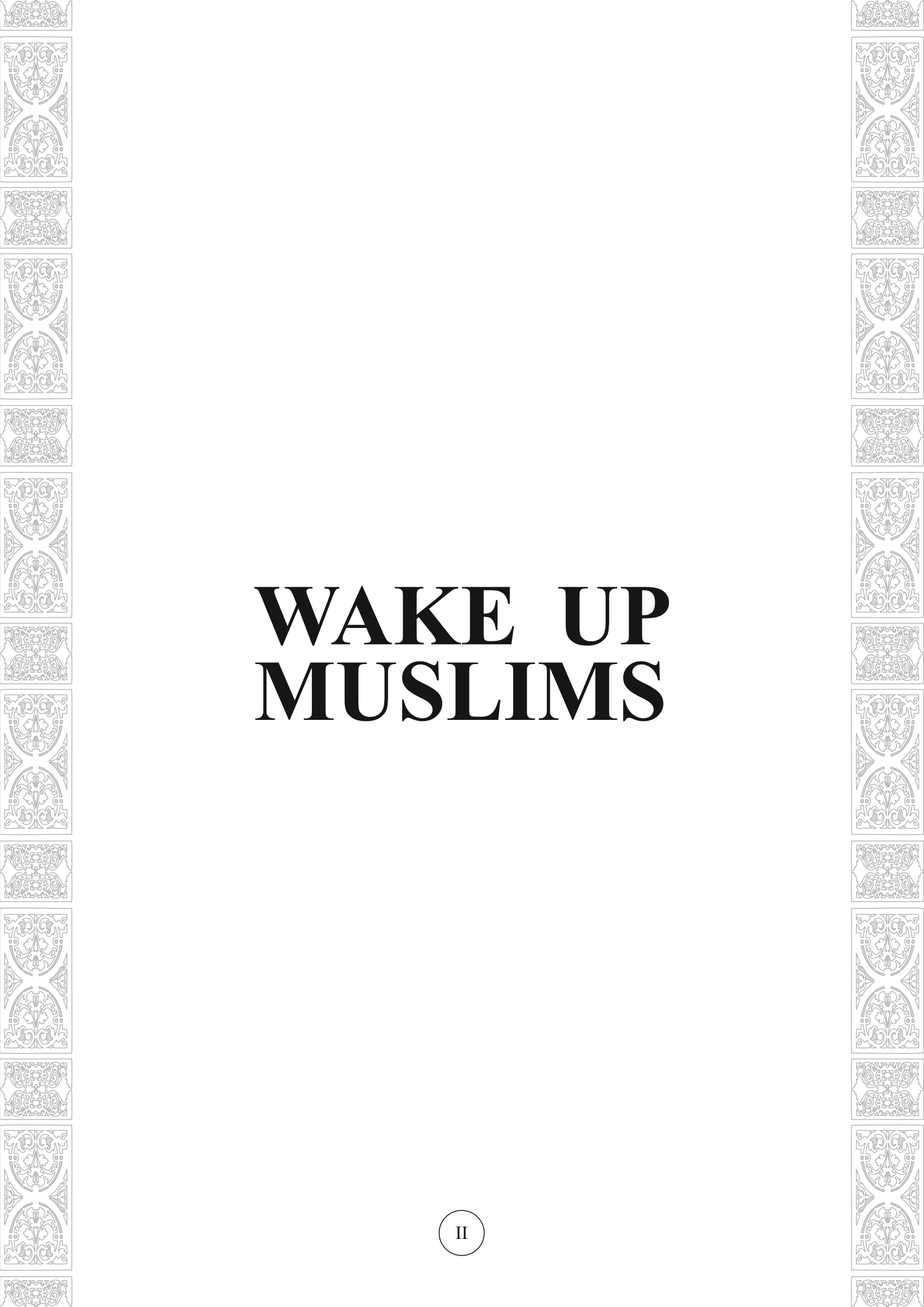


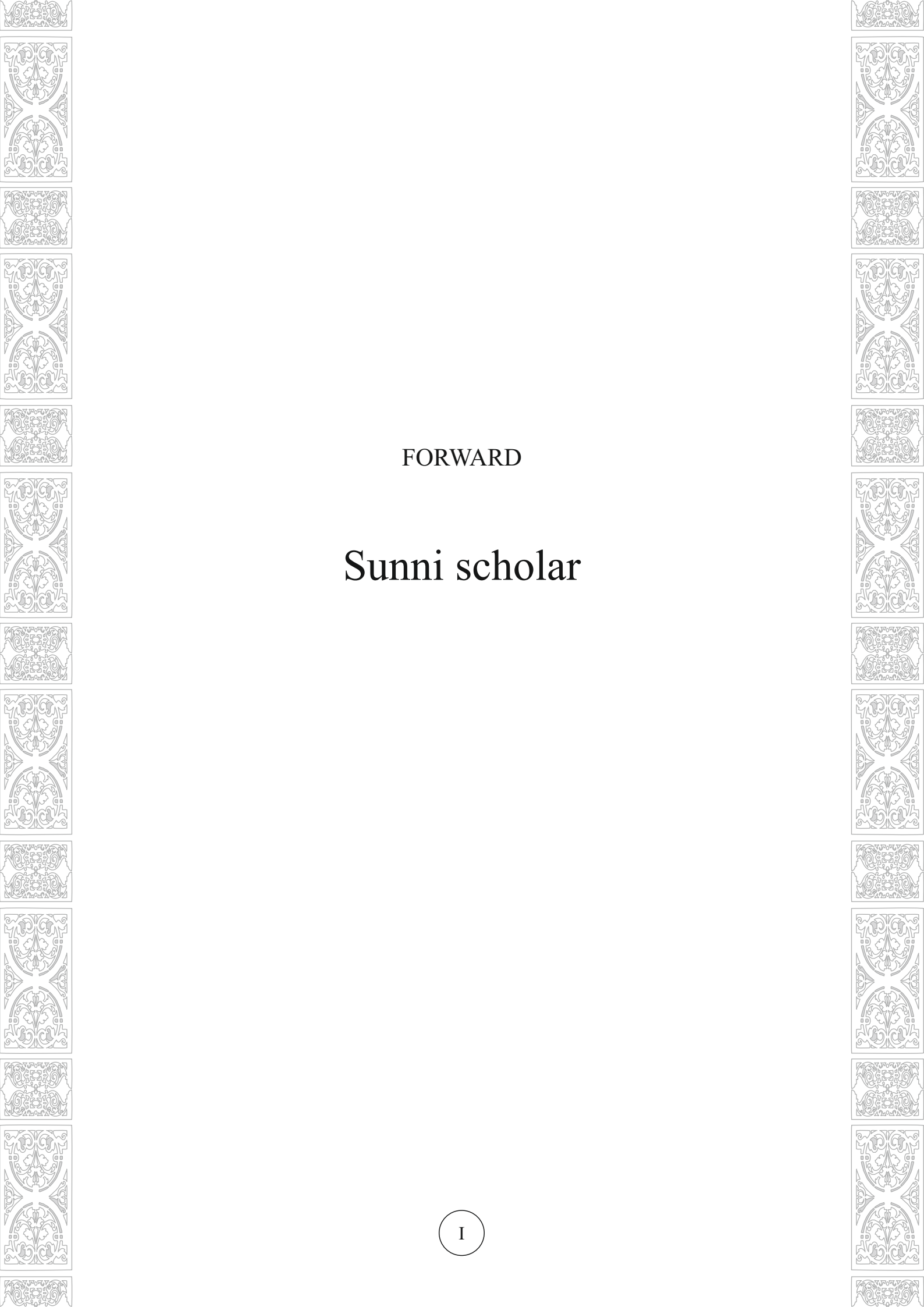
WAKE UP MUSLIMS



BY AGHA MOHAMED HUSSAIN

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WAKE UP MUSLIMS



FORWARD

Sunni scholar

FORWARD

Shia scholar

WAKE UP MUSLIMS

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Bismillahir-Rahmānir-Rahīm

This book, “WAKE UP MUSLIMS”, is the essence of my personal observations of the events that I witnessed and the interactions with people from India, my birth country, from North America where I am presently settled, and from a number of Eastern and Western countries that I have traveled to as well. In other words, each event I experienced has added to my knowledge and I become progressive knowledge wise.

This overall collection revolves around the tradition of the Prophet [sawa]:

“Man tasaawa yawm'mahu fa'huwa magh'boon”.

"One who does not differentiate between today and yesterday (and there is no progress) then he is in loss and misled”.

In the nations led by non-Muslims, we are regrettably found to be the most unchanging and stagnant community. Very rare a Muslim occupies the post of a councilor, mayor, court judge, governor or a senate member. It is extremely sad that we have intentionally chosen to ignore the call of the Prophet [s.a.w] towards progress in the hadith cited above which claims that, 'Man is misled and in loss if his two consecutive days are passed in the same state.'

In this book, “Wake Up Muslims”, I have shared the events that have awakened my spirit, with the hope that these will awaken others as well and uplift the community to be progressive, as is revealed in the referred hadith. A few themes that are significant and commonly applicable are repeated in different chapters.

Chapter 1

Isolation

During the transit at London Airport, in the early 1980s, I happened to pick up a newspaper left on the waiting bench. One of the columns in it included the yearly statistics presented by the Government or an organization (I do not remember the name now) indicating the status of the prominent communities in the UK. They were the Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Sikhs and Buddhists in the order of majorities. The statistics showed the position of each of them in the fields of education, economy and health. Unfortunately, the Muslims were not only trailing behind others, but by a very large margin. An explanation to this was provided by Haroon Siddiqi, a retired journalist of The Toronto Star, the largest circulated newspaper of Canada, who has also won a number of awards during his acclaimed career. His one-word answer was **“Isolation”**.

We are, of course, busy running in the triangle of Mosque – Job -- Home – // Mosque - Job – Home – dulled by our complacence and lack of exposure to the outer world. So much so that we have stopped discerning between who is other than us and who all are ahead of us. There is simply no motivation left for us to gallop a little faster to be ahead of others.

This fact reminds me of Ahmed, a mid-school student from a poor family in India. I had sponsored his school fee on the condition that he should score above 60% in order for the help to continue. I was upset when he barely passed by scoring only 35% in his exam. To my astonishment, his mom supported him by comparing him to Raza, his next-door neighbor who had scored only 30% while she did not know Govind a Hindu classmate, who lived right behind their home, had scored a 90%. This is also a kind of seclusion or isolation practiced by those who wish to stick close to their own small group or in this case, their community.

Despite the fact that this isolation is killing us, we still prefer to stay behind the four walls of the mosque, office, and home without making any progress. Whereas the Prophet [s.a.w] has warned us of a great loss if there is no purpose in our lives.

Our isolation allows Islamophobia to spread its wings as quickly and widely as it pleases. While we are too busy juggling our responsibilities at the mosque, office, and home to take out the time to remove it; and Islamophobia, encouraged by the biased media, keeps demeaning Islam and by calling us terrorists.

We will be, of course, answerable to Allah on the Day of judgment for our ineptitude in trying to uproot Islamophobia.

What needs to be done?

In order to defend Islam from biased presentations that denigrate Muslims, there are several ways to combat islamophobia. For example, we can encourage the next generation to pursue degrees in journalism, filmmaking, and other media-related fields. Being employed in TV channels they can influence and object to programs against Islam and Muslims.

Just how many lies the media professionals have to report is evident from the verbatim speech of the eminent journalist, John Swinton, from The New York Times-during a banquet held in his honor, he revealed, "There is no such thing, at this date of the world's history, in America, as an independent press. You know it and I know it would never appear in print. I am paid weekly for keeping my honest opinion out of the paper I am connected with. Others of you are paid similar salaries for things similar, and any of you who would be so foolish as to

write honest opinions would be out on the streets looking for another job. If I allowed my honest opinions to appear in one issue of my paper, before twenty-four hours my occupation would be gone. The business of the journalists is to destroy the truth, to lie outright, to pervert, to vilify, to fawn at the feet of mammon, and to sell his country and his race for his daily bread. You know it and I know it, and what folly is this toasting an independent press? We are the tools and vassals of rich men behind the scenes. We are the jumping jacks; they pull the strings and we dance. Our talents, our possibilities and our lives are all the property of other men. We are intellectual prostitutes.”

Reference: https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/John_Swinton

(The link of above Reference is on line as on today while this book is being written but may be withdrawn later)

Presenting the Truth as a reporter is like fighting a jihad. However, there still are a few TV networks that offer the truth, and our future journalists can work with them and strengthen their resolve.

The bottom line is to encourage our talented children to prefer to be TV reporters and journalists like Mehdi Hasan whose presentations uproots islamophobia each time it raises its ugly head. Thus, we need plenty of Mehdi Hasans but it is not possible unless we are ready to make certain sacrifices, which are shared as under.

Sacrifices

In our previous chapter, we spoke about how we should strive to encourage our talented children to be certified journalists, TV reporters and presenters to uproot Islamophobia every time it grows. This can only be accomplished if we sacrifice our desire to see our-kids pursue well-paid professions instead of directing them towards careers in media so that they can defend Islam and our future generation from the awful situation of Islamophobia. We need to protect our future generations by taking these necessary steps now or they may forever resent us for not nipping this hatred in the bud when we had the chance.

Every parent would like to see their children earn the maximum wealth. This is certainly not prohibited by Allah s.w.t, but we are missing the greater reward of Aaqirat (hereafter). By offering a sacrifice of choosing for the lesser-paid jobs in the media instead of highly-paid professions today, we are paving the way for

brighter and happier future.

What does the word sacrifice mean? It is letting go of our ambitions of preparing our children for careers with higher incomes, encouraging them to become media stalwarts instead. This is the sacrifice required from our generation. No doubt, they will not mint the worldly wealth as Physicians, Engineers and layers that will last a few years of this worldly life, but will Inshallah, earn the wealth of Eternal life and protect Islam and Muslims from being misrepresented at the same time.

Chapter 2

200 non-Muslim High School students knew nothing about Islam.

This event took place during 1998 in Spring Field, capital of Illinois State, USA which inhabited 50 Muslim families. The president of the small mosque was an Egyptian physician, a friend of my son. He phoned me at 8 PM and said, “Uncle, the twelfth-grade students of public schools have a lesson “Comparative studies of Religions” in social studies. They are supposed to be taken by their schools to the worship centers of various religions to know the different faiths through the respective preachers. So, they are to visit our mosque tomorrow. Since our mosque is under renovation, we are expected to introduce Islam to them at the Jewish Synagogue after the Rabbi presents to them Judaism. I am tied up with an unexpected commitment and will appreciate it if you please be at the synagogue by 8 AM and meet the Rabbi who is informed to receive you. You will present ISLAM for 15 minutes and there will be questions for 15 minutes.”

So I rehearsed and was there in time. The rabbi received me with utmost respect as if I was a great scholar. About 200 students arrived and the rabbi introduced Judaism and after answering the questions put forward by the students, he introduced me.

I was seated beside the schoolteacher of Social Studies and asked her exactly how much her students knew about Islam. Very politely and respectfully she

replied, “ZERO”.

My presentation was simple. After introducing the five prominent prophets, with a few lines about each of them, I mentioned about the five-time prayers, fasting and the important festivals in Islam.

The questions thereafter were simple. The last question was to show them how we pray? I explained to them about why we face Mecca while praying and started reciting Sura e Fatiha, verse by verse in Arabic with the English translation. When I came to the verse “*Māliki Yawmi Ad-Dīn - - The Master of the Day of judgment*” my voice choked up and I recited it weeping.

Finally, after completing the chapter, I thanked everyone and walked down the stage. They all stood up and applauded me non-stop. I became quite emotional to receive this response and came back to the stage to find out the reason for their appreciation. Many raised their hands to answer, and I asked one of them. She said that she did not know that Muslims believed in Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus!!! I then asked them to raise their hand if anyone already knew that Muslims believed in the prophets other than Prophet Mohamed? Not a single hand was raised. Thus, this event confirmed that none of the 200 students were aware of this fact. One of the students later told me that all she knew about Islam was what she had heard from her grandma, that Mohamed had copied a few parts of the Bible and added his own version to it and named it as the Quran, claiming it to be directly received from God (nauzubillah).

Who is at fault?

Of course, it is we who restrict our lives within the triangle of Home - - Job - - and the Mosque. We never engage with the outside world to show them what wonderful people we are because of our unique religion, Islam. How can we do this? By being a volunteer in our free time, at a school, hospital, or a library, especially the retired seniors among us. Our down to earth nature and modesty, together with our Niyyat (intention) to please Allah (s.w.t) will certainly remove Islamophobia which is our ultimate aim and objective.

Chapter 3

Beware of the Bombers Next Door

On the basis of my experiences with Americans, specially being the member of the Rotary club the only Muslim member among about 70 non Muslims I found them to be generally kind and loving people. They can be classified into two categories: They were either informed about Islam or misinformed, for no mistake on their part. You are welcome to make your own observations with the help of the events narrated below.

The Muslims in Buffalo, New York State, laid the foundation stone for the construction of a mosque during the early 1990s. The very next day, an American next door put up a board which read “**Beware of the Bombers Next Door**”. This was what he had learned about us from the biased media. Please keep in mind that the media today is the most powerful weapon; so much so that it can convince the ignorant that God is the devil and vice versa.

So, we MUST have our own MEDIA. A powerful MEDIA EMPIRE, which should certainly be as professional as BBC, CBS, CNN and many like them.

This is not going to happen in the twinkling of an eye, until the parents stop trying to make their children MD's, engineers and lawyers, to mint lots of money. Not until they make the sacrifice to send their kids to study media-related courses like journalism, theater, and direction to become film makers and secure jobs with national TV networks, so that they can ultimately launch our own channels which will require millions of dollars in donations. That will be another challenge to overcome, while we have many other cultural and religious priorities.

Of course, we have TV channels, but they are restricted to the Muslim audience, while our aim is to reach the uninformed non-Muslims.

Rise up brothers and sisters in Islam! Wake up and stop trying to push our children to become doctors, engineers and lawyers in pursuit of a comfortable life. Although all of these are very worthy professions, however, the need of the hour is to make a sacrifice to get some of them to study all **media-related courses** and ask Allah (s.w.t) to provide them the required zeal and funds to,

Inshallah, launch a secular, national TV channel that will inform the non-Muslim viewers about how wonderful people we are and how peaceful Islam is! Ameen.

Chapter 4

Sunday School Is Not Enough

Kamaluddin Akbar, also known as Jaweed Akber, a professor of history, at the University of Allahabad in India used to be invited by various centers in Canada to address the Muslim communities during the 1990s. After visiting various Sunday Schools, he concluded: “Sunday Schools are like over-the-counter vitamins, that are good and necessary; however, our children need antibiotics to be free from the virus of western culture. While most parents take it for granted that what their children learn at Sunday school is enough, however, Prof. Jaweed Akber said that this is not sufficient. The antidote, according to his study and conclusion, is that **Islamic lessons from the parents are a must**. But unfortunately, most of the parents themselves are not knowledgeable enough to teach their children!

Therefore, it is necessary to also set up a Sunday school for parents as well but with outstanding Ulma as their teacher. This forum should involve the study of The Glorious Quran, with its translation and tafseer (commentary).

Joint study of Quran together between the parents and children referring to the online tafaseer will encourage communication between parents and children which is already not at an expected degree among many of our families. I have had the good fortune of attending many lectures in mosques attended by a number of families. On one such occasion, I happened to share a ride back home with a family where father drove the van with his children in the back seat. I noticed that not a single word was exchanged between them about the lecture they had heard in the mosque. Even after they had reached home, there was no discussion or communication. The fact is that communication between parents and children develops a positive mindset, peace, affection and love, achieving miraculous benefits in both the worlds.

We must adhere to the hadith of Imam Ali (p), which states,—“*Provide knowledge to children so that it passes down from one to another till it reaches the seventh generation.*” This will also be their weapon to uproot

Islamophobia. Thus, lack of communication within families results in children being unprepared as to how they should disseminate and react to the different news they are being exposed to from the outside world. They will not know how to avail the benefit and profit from it, if the news is positive. Neither will they be able to respond to adverse news or how to counter it properly. Thus, the readers of this book should develop parent-children communication without delay. It could be as a brief conversation at mealtimes or as a deeper, meaningful chat during weekends.

Depending on the children's age, the subjects to be covered should not only be limited to religion but also social, economic, cultural, professional and political. Our approach should be as **thinkers** (mufakareen) trying to identify the community problems and finding the solutions.

As thinkers, we should ponder upon how we can contribute to the society, starting by occupying small positions like that of a municipal councilor and then progressing to the positions of mayor, governor and so on. Productive discussions amongst family will pave the way to achieve these goals which will enable us to let our voice be heard in the fight against biased media and Islamophobia.

Prophet Muhammad (p): *Get together and hold discussions. Such discussions refine your hearts. Hearts become rusted like swords and their refinement lies in academic religious discussions.*

This hadith refers to scholarly and theological discussions which could help us advance in various fields. To conclude, these discussions will refine the thoughts of both parents as well as children and allow them to focus on important matters relevant to our community, other than those covered by Sunday schools.

Chapter 5

Volunteerism

After sharing various events and conclusions alerting us to the need to wake up, volunteerism is the last but not the least virtue that we should try to adopt

for our success and for our progeny to succeed in the present life as well as in the hereafter.

We follow all the Sunnahs of our beloved Prophet (p), except the one he practiced before the introduction of Islam; wherein, Sunnah means the way Prophet Muhammad [sws] lived.

Before introducing Islam he first established his **credibility, amongst the Arabs** as 'Ameen' and 'Sadiq': both of which mean 'The Most Trustworthy'. He could do this by being the most active volunteer to help out the Meccans. Thus, volunteerism was the first sunnah of the Prophet which helped him to establish his reputation as an 'Ameen', a source which he later used to introduce Islam.

Similarly, we should also embrace volunteerism in order to reinvent our tarnished image and to build a powerful foundation to defeat the biased media and Islamophobia.

The data from numerous online sources reveals that Islamophobia is on the rise in U.S. In one year, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) received 6,720 complaints about acts of bigotry, discrimination, and hate speeches, including those that occurred in schools as well. According to Wayne State University law professor Khaled Beydoun, this growing racist attitude is continuing to fuel the widespread Islamophobia in the country.

In March 2022, a U.N. official had issued a warning that anti-Muslim hatred had risen to pandemic proportions because of widespread negative misrepresentations of Islam, leading to hostility and violence towards Muslim individuals and communities.

But Why?

Because we are caught in the triangle of Mosque - - Job - - Home, we do not have the time to make others aware that Muslims are such amazing people and how Islam is actually a very peace-loving religion. As I have mentioned in the very first chapter, is because of our isolation! Are we ready to be held answerable on the day of Judgement for this act of negligence in allowing Islam to be propagated as terrorism and taste a little bit of Hell-fire for it? I am not sure. You can ask the religious scholars, the Pesh Imams and the Moulanas!

One of the many ways to protect ourselves and the Ummah of our beloved Prophet [sws] from the day that will strike terror in every heart, when all will be wringing their hands in distress, is to opt to become a volunteer in your community/locality. To volunteer in your selected field of choice in the United States, one must visit the website of the Volunteers of America, VOA|ReST (<https://www.voatx.org/>). The website is self-explanatory and you can sign up to help out in whichever area is preferred by you. Of course, if your other family members and children were to join you as volunteers, it would have a greater impact. For every hour that you volunteer, large amounts will be deposited in your name for Al Qiyayaamah by Allah [swt], the most Beneficent and the Merciful.

It is important to acknowledge the fact that every community has “Good – Bad and the Ugly” good and bad individuals. While some Hindu extremists in India, my motherland may advocate against Islam, I've the privilege of knowing a number of Hindus who sincerely love and respect their Muslim brethren. Similarly, I've encountered some Jews and Israilis, who regard us with compassion and warmth and bear no animosity against us. In fact, some jewish families in the US consider me as their own elder and treat me with respect. Thus, engaging in volunteerism provides us an opportunity to connect with people from diverse backgrounds, even those with extremist views, ultimately giving us a chance to transform adversaries into friends.

Volunteering should be taken up only for the pleasure of God, only then it will have a positive impact. The main objective of volunteerism is to cultivate friendships. The volunteering landscape may differ all over the world, especially in India, where hospitals or schools will not readily accept volunteers. Therefore, we will have to find other opportunities to volunteer in India, where we will be able to demonstrate our kindness and goodwill to them. These could be the orphanage centers of Hindu children, or Home for the Aged with Hindu residents and so on. A particularly effective gesture would be to send gifts such as sweets, dry fruits or flowers on their auspicious days like Diwali which I do and receive their love and respect. They will trash you out if you say Muslims are terrorists.

Chapter 6

The first to start Volunteerism

Rather than waiting for someone else to take the lead, you should consider to initiate a positive action first yourself. Remember: those who pioneer to do any good deeds, will continue to get the rewards from their Lord, akin to receiving royalty till the end of the world, which will be deposited in the bank of Aaqirah. So, Inshallah, go ahead and start right away!

Once I went through the largest sacculated daily News Paper of US 'The New York Times'. It had published the names of over a thousand volunteers who were valeting the Public Schools in New York state. To my disappointment I came across only two Muslims among those over a thousand. In contrast is an event of Sr. Maryam in Spring Field the capital of the state of Illinois in US who volunteered one day a week at the Public School in her neighborhood. One fine day she came across a poster on the notice board announcing the date of the Film show of 'Not without my daughter' a movie with false story to abuse Islam. Sr Maryam requested the Principal not to show this movie since it carried a false story abusing her faith 'Islam'. The Principle immediately pulled out the poster and tore it in pieces.

This one event should be good enough to present the Power of Volunteerism that would easily uproot Islamophobia if every one of us spear whatever time we could to volunteer at schools, hospitals. libraries and so on.

Chapter 7

Politics

Some of us believe that politics equals corruption. They are oblivious to the fact that our Prophet [swas] was a perfect politician. He exemplified this by establishing a just government that-focused on the welfare of the people. He had brought this change to a decadent and ignorant society who, not long ago were following the tradition of burying their newborn daughters alive.

One of the reasons that we are not in politics especially in the western countries, is because it is not as paying as other professions like medicine, engineering and so on. It is not an easy task to be a successful politician. It is often observed that even the few talented ones who can succeed and reach high positions in politics do not attempt to do so, owing to the high costs and hard struggles involved.

The question is how long we will continue to ignore achieving high positions in government and society, enabling us to raise our voice against the injustices we face? The positions we could aim for, from the accessible to difficult are as follows:

City Council Member

Mayor

Judge in Courts

Governor

Member of the Senate in US and as Ministers in other countries.

It is essential to groom our talented youth to achieve these leadership positions, otherwise we will continue to be subjugated by others if we continue to prioritizing to make our children-MDs, engineers and lawyers. We are doing this in the hope of immediate financial gains but overlooking the everlasting rewards we shall receive during the eternal life of hereafter by making the sacrifices required for a career in politics. No doubt our children may earn less as scrupulous politicians in this life, but they will be the proud owners of castles under which the eternal rivers will flow in Paradise.

While some of us may be inspired after reading this book to guide their children to take up political careers, they may face financial constraints which will hinder their progress. In order to provide them a sound financial backing it is time to create funding organizations to provide scholarships, as well as to meet the costs for their political candidacy for achieving the required positions. This will empower our community to attain certain powers in the society, otherwise, as mentioned earlier, we and more so our progeny, will have to face continuous racial discrimination and bigotry. The time to this is the bud NOW forsaking our pursuit of wealth in favour of preparing our talented youth for leadership positions that should open the doors for them to become the future Presidents / Prime Ministers of the country. Inshallah.

The easiest way to bring about this change is by putting in practice the following two ahadith:-

The Prophet [swas] said : “Do such favors to people that they become your followers.”

Imam Jaffer al-Sadiq stated : “One of the signs of our followers is to be most popular in the city in friendship and courtesies.”

Votes shall pour in like the rain in our favor, if we stand for the election after practicing the above ahadith. Nothing will be able to stop us from succeeding, Inshallah.

Chapter 8

Progress

The Prophet [swas] said من تساوى يوماه فهو مغبون

" Who does not differentiate between today and yesterday (for whom each day is the same and there is no progress) then he is deluded, deceived ... that is he gives himself *Dhoka* (and in another translation such a person is a fool).

If we could reflect upon ourselves, we find that despite the passing of many Moharrams and Ramadans, most of us continue to remain stagnant. We lack representation as Municipal Counselors, Members of the County, Mayors, Judges in the Court, and Governors within the countries ruled by the non-Muslims.

People from other communities including the atheist sway over us, while we, the followers of the greatest prophet, trail behind. It is not enough to argue that we will succeed in the eternal life of the hereafter. As the followers of the greatest Prophet it is our moral duty to strive to also succeed in this world as well. I will never deny that some of us do strive to also succeed in this world as well but not in majority.

However, we can only achieve this if majority of us free ourselves from the

triangle of Mosque---Job---Home and be involved in all social and political activities and programs that are within our reach to achieve high positions in every field, may it be political, business, academic or sports with our Trust in God and exclusively **for the pleasure of God** as was the life style of our Prophet swas with reference to the following verse 162 of Chapter 6

Say O Mohamed "Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds".

So should be our life style exclusively for the pleasure of God, out of the love of God and out of the fear of God in every fraction of the second giving up the fear of others. It is not easy to clean out heart with every fear and fill it only with the fear and trust in God alone.

It is always good to quote an event for a better understanding. Following is a true event I heard from Dr. Sayed Moustafa Al-Qazwini during one of his discourses that he met a female American court Judge who revealed her most emotional event of the sleepless night in deciding to start wearing hijab after being a non-hijabi for ten years as the judge of the court. She believed the proof of love to God is by sacrifices and trust in Him and the next day she went to her job with the hijab and while walking from the parking lot to the court she was bit nerves as to how her staff will react seeing her all of a sudden in hijab. She revealed that **she felt as if God walked with her holding her hand** and she felt strong in entering the court and took her seat as its judge with hijab. It must have confused her associates but she remained relaxed as if she was wearing the hijab from her childhood. It was her trust in God that made all the difference.

So, my dear Muslims let the ignorant waste their time and wealth under the umbrella of Islamophobia in propagating against us and our Islam as long as we get out of the triangle putting our trust in God and walking with confidence as if He is holding our hand and leading us to our destination.

Chapter 9

A Grave Sin We Are Committing

There is no end to drawing guidance from the Book of Allah 'The Glorious Quan' to counter Islamophobia. One such example are verses 163–166 of surah Al-A'raf — The Heights.

It reveals an event about the community of Bani Israel who were fisher men living beside a river. Allah swt commanded them to stop fishing and spent their Saturdays in prayers referred as Sabbath. This community of Bani Israel were always trying to be cunning in converting the commands of Allah to match their won whims and fancy. So, they prepared a large net and set it in the river on Friday night to trap the fish from the running water on Saturday and get them out of the water on Sunday. Thus, they managed to make sure that they did not miss the fish on Saturdays and benefited by selling them on Sunday. Allah swt punished them for their cunningness and deception, by converting them into apes. What actually is amazing is that even those who did not participate in spreading the net were also converted into apes!!!

The simple and clear conclusion is that those who play the mischief and those who remain quite without objecting or at least trying to speak a simple word of request or advice are alike in the view of Allah and this concept is referred as "*Amer Bil Maruf and Nahianal Munkar*"

which means to encourage good behavior and deeds (Maruf) while discouraging bad or forbidden acts (Munkar) with reference to the following verse:

[7:163] And ask them about the town which stood by the sea; when they exceeded the limits of the Sabbath, when their fish came to them on the day of their Sabbath, appearing on the surface of the water, and on the day on which they did not keep the Sabbath they did not come to them; thus, did We try them because they transgressed.

Let me repeat again for our remembrance and as well to act rightly that this commandment of Allah to Bani Israel referred as Sabbath that they should do nothing on Saturdays except prayers while they were the fishermen catching and selling fishes all the week. They were cunning to have fixed a large net

across the river by Friday evening and get the fishes out of the net by Sunday morning caught during the entire Saturday. In other words, they were cunning and mischief to somehow not to miss their regular Saturday business and devoting it only for prayers.

Allah punished them for their mischief by converting all of them into apes that included the women and all others who though did not participate in spreading the net into the river but **watched the mischief without objecting it**. Thus this command of Allah referred as "*Amer Bil Maruf and Nahianal Munkar*" is now binding upon us to play our role to deface and counter Islamicfobia or else we will have to taste the Hell Fire on the day when no one will help us.

Let it be further clear about the importance of "*Amer Bil Maruf and Nahianal Munkar*" that it is repeated about 15 time in The Glorious Quran and is obligatory (Wajib) upon us.

How do we perform this act of "*Amer Bil Maruf and Nahianal Munkar*" to counter Islamaphobia?

Each one of us may find the source available to mix with non-Muslims and display our Iqlaq (character) that should give them the feeling of how peaceful is Islam and how friendly are the Muslims. In my case I chose to join Rotary Club in my neighborhood in Chicago and be a Rotarian attending the weekly meetings of an hour with about 80 Americans. I am the only Muslim member and believe it or not the love and respect I am enjoying is as if they and me are from one family. They are convinced of Islam a religion of peace and Muslims as wonderful friends - - all because of the display of my Iqlaq (character). Following is the comment about me by the president of my club when I called her to wish "Happy Christmas" and left the message.

"Thank you, for thinking of me on this Christmas day!! I heard your lovely telephone voice message. "You are a kind gentleman, with much thoughtfulness".

The brotherhood among the members and the '**Service Above Self**' as the Motto is the unique feature of the club.

Go online and you should find a club in your neighborhood. Phone its president and request to mail the application form to become a member. The monthly fee is negligible to meet the cost of the Vegetarian / Non Vegetarian food during the meetings. The meetings are of an hour with a speaker from various professions

and walk of life to speak for 20 minutes and then question-answers and social greetings. In these meetings right across your table may be an antiIslamic member who will change his view from 'Islam is Evil' to 'Islam is Peace' because of your Iqlaq (character). To be a member of Rotary club or similar clubs such as Lions Club is more than enough to uproot Islamicfobia.

The primary motto of these clubs is to tackle community needs and support international humanitarian efforts.

Activities include improving health/sanitation, providing education, promoting peace, fighting disease, and protecting the environment in the backward countries.

Clubs provide a venue to meet professionals, develop leadership skills, and foster lifelong friendships.

Members are typically local business, professional, and community leaders expected to attend weekly meetings and take an active role in community service projects. The clubs collect donations from the members to support the projects being organized by the clubs in the developing countries. Recently my club received a request from Rotarian Zinab from Pakistan for funds to build small houses for the poor in a village. A donation of twenty thousand dollars was sent to her club. So to say the Rotarians are very charitable people.

Total Rotary Clubs world over are 36, 670 and total Members World over = 1,169, 480 = One million, 169 thousand and four hundred Members World over.

Go online “Rotary Club International” for further information.

Chapter 10

Triangle

We, the most Muslims, especially in the West, are caught up in a kind of ***Triangle of Home – Mosque - Job***, regardless of what is happening to our community all around us. No matter how many Palestinians are killed each

day, or how many Yemenis perish from starvation due to famine, or how honest governments are overthrown and-replaced by despots in various Muslim countries:-

One of the ahadith advises us that our foremost duty after Fajar (morning) prayers is to become aware and show concern for the conditions of our Muslim brethren around us! But sadly, we cannot escape the deadly labyrinth of the TRIANGLE of the **Mosque - - Job - - Home**.

How can I illustrate this for you?

One small example should be enough for the wise. I visited the International Book Fair in Chicago during January 2021. Thousands of visitors attended this event from within and outside the USA. After spending the entire day there, I was deeply saddened to observe that out of the million Muslim population in Chicago itself, not a single one of them seem to have visited the book fair. When the first commandment of Allah in the Holy Quran is "*Iqra be isme rabbika...*" (**Read**, in the name of thy Lord...), why do we then openly rebel against this and choose ignorance over knowledge?

Many would counter this point with the argument, "Allah has commanded us to read His Book, "The Quran", which we do regularly."

But, do we reflect upon and understand the in-depth meaning of every word we read? No, we do not while the Quran insists to reflect upon such as in verse 50 of chapter 6 'Anaam ' . . . **do you not then reflect?**' Then we need to take the help of "*tafaseer*" the commentaries by scholars. Trust me, that these books are already collecting dust, locked in the bookshelves in most of our houses and I hardly see anyone referring to these books. But why? Because we are not in the habit of reading books. This is the only reason that I could not find a single Muslim among the thousands in the International Book Fair.

Another tragedy was that out of the 1200 book stalls at the fair, not one was represented by a Muslim publisher. The reason for this is that our publishers knew that none of the Muslims would attend these fairs. However, they are mistaken because many non-Muslims come here to quench their thirst for information and knowledge pertaining to other religions as well.

Another disturbing fact is the absence of our Muslim scholars such as the imams and moulanas at such events. Maybe they are not aware of these book

fairs happening in their own city. Do these facts not lead us to the conclusion that we Muslims are not book lovers: Shouldn't we have tried to at least collect the books that talked about the Muslims and Islam written by the non-Muslims, that were displayed in some of the stalls in this fair?

The answer to the question why was not a single Muslim seen in this International Book Fair is because it is outside our Triangle of **Mosque -- Job -- Home**, despite the fact that there was information in some of the books about the rapid growth of Islamophobia as a warning to Muslims, yet we will never read books.

All of this is a result of our restrictive lifestyles, which consist of running within the triangle of **Mosque -- Job -- Home** without interacting with people who value and practice **reading**. Will it be appropriate to refer to this triangle as unfortunate, inauspicious or doomed? In any case, it serves as a warning to Muslims to become avid readers, arm themselves with the correct knowledge and information to fight the rising Islamophobia more.

Some claim that religious and racial intolerance is growing in Chicago too, where I live, and yet our mosques do not provide any advice as to how to safeguard ourselves against it. If we think for a while our future generation will despise us and even curse us, if they are left to face the wrath of Islamophobia. **So, wake up dear Muslims** and get out of the triangle of **Mosque -- Job -- Home** and share life with non-Muslims as well to let them know how loving people we are and how peaceful is our Islam. **Inshallah Islamicfobia will by itself get uprooted.**

Chapter 11

Triangle Smashed

I do not know which saint prayed for our deliverance from the limiting “Triangle,” but Allah (SWT) granted the Muslim community a remarkable example in Zohran Mamdani—a young leader from New York who showed the world how such a confining mindset can be shattered. Although he regularly attended the mosque, he also visited Hindu temples, Christian

churches, and Jewish synagogues—not as a participant in their religious rites, but to extend a warm handshake. His purpose was to nurture human brotherhood and to assure every community that, if elected as their Mayor, he would serve them with sincerity and care.

He did not merely break the Triangle; he reduced it to dust, never to rise again. He achieved this by reaching out personally to every passer-by—every “Tom, Dick, and Harry”—introducing himself with humility and openness. He approached cars at traffic signals, handing out flyers that highlighted not flashy promises but the values instilled in him by noble parents—values that kept him free from the scandals and corruption often seen in public life. His message was simple yet powerful: to serve every New Yorker with love and respect, irrespective of caste, creed, or colour. In doing so, he transformed the Triangle into a vision of a world without boundaries.

Let us engrave in our minds that we belong not only to the Lord of New York, nor to any one community, but to the Lord of all humanity. Thus each of us should strive, in our own way, to become a “Mayor of the Earth”—a leader in kindness, justice, and unity. Zohran Mamdani's example should remind us that true leadership transcends the narrow confines of identity and division. When compassion becomes our guiding principle and service our mission, we rise above man-made boundaries and move closer to the world that Allah (SWT) intends for us—a world built on dignity, harmony, and universal brotherhood. Let this chapter inspire us to step beyond our own Triangles and contribute meaningfully to the greater human family.

Chapter 12

Interfaith

One of the many ways to counter Islamicphobia is also to get ourselves rightly introduced to the non-Muslims by the non-Muslims themselves. This program referred as 'Interfaith' is organized by the Muslim mosques inviting the non Muslim friends to share the iftari (dinner) during one of the evenings of Ramadan where in two speakers, one will be a Cristian priest or a Jewesh rabai or a Hindu swami from the local Church, Sanigog, Temple to speak about the

common factors between their religion and Islam for world harmony and peace.

This interfaith program is on a large scale inviting the non-Muslims to the number equaling to the space in the mosque but we should hold **mini interfaith** project inviting the neighboring non Muslim families at our house during the days of festivals or on weekends to share the dinner together on one table to let the non-Muslims get to know how loving people we are that will positively smash Islamicfobia little by little and we win the precious award during our eternal life hereafter.

A true following event in support of **mini Interfaith** is well described in one of the lectures by Moulana Syed Qazwini.

A Syria Muslim refugee decided to share the delicious Arab Iftari food with the family of the neighboring nonMuslim American. He took it in a large dish and rang the doorbell of the neighbor American. The American opened the door. The Syria greeted and offered the dish to the American explaining him about the month of Ramadan wherein they fast the whole day and break the fast after sunset but are advised by the prophet to first share this delicious food with the neighbor. So to say **Nabour first** was his slogan. The American was very impressed about the importance of a nabour and asked him to come in and wanted to know about Ramadan that he heard the Muslims starve the whole day even with out a drop of water. The Cyrian walked in and was offered the main chair to be seated to explain about Ramadan. What impressed the American most was **“First the Neighbour”**. The Cyrian further shared about the importance of neighbour irrespective of cast and creed. He further quoted a tradition (hadith) by the prophet that affectionate relations between the neighbour keeps the nabouhood in peace.

The American was highly impressed about the importance of neighbour in Islam. There after he tried to know more about Islam.

The bottom line is that we the Muslims should look around sharing our day to day life with non-Muslims may be inviting them for a lunch or dinner during the weekends with least interest to convert them but to erect an everlasting social bridge which will hammer Islamicfobia and built the bridge of universal brotherhood by sharing the food jointly on one table.

Sadaq Allahu Al-'Aliyyul-Azeem



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