celebrating the joys of submission!

rackonce

LIVING AND LOVING THE YOUNG MUSLIM LIFESTYLE

The true meaning of Freedom

Comic: The real ball-game

The pure and wise youth





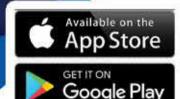


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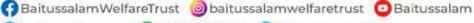
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The pure and wise youth

Assalam u Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaatuhu,

At more than one places in the Holy Quran, we come across the story of the family of Imran; his daughter Maryam , her son Prophet Isa and her uncle Prophet Zakariyah .

There are many striking features about this beautiful story that make it abound with inspiration for us. Like, for example, the pure and chaste young girl called Maryam miraculously being provided with exotic out-of-season fruit all year round without moving out but sitting right inside her worship quarters in the Bait al Maqdis, or, for example, Isa being miraculously born to his mother without having a father, or, him being able to converse with the people like a regular adult human being while he was only a new-born baby. Wow. Ain't that awesome!? It sure builds up and strengthens one's trust in the might and power of Allah .

Allah & can do just anything!

At a point in time in this wondrous story, Allah draws our attention towards when Hazrat Zakariyah witnessed the divine food present with Maryam, he asked her how come she had that. Her reply was simple that it is Allah 's's provision and He had sent it for her because He is capable of doing whatever He wishes. Hazrat Zakariyah was an old man then and there he was witnessing a young child who was not only blessed with extraordinary food, but also extraordinary wisdom and connection with Allah .

This became such an inspiration for him that he instantly started asking Allah & for a child.

Can you imagine! Seeing this blessed youth Maryam , made a Prophet of Allah wish he had one of his own too. He didn't care if he and his wife were very old then. He just had to have such a child. So he asked Allah with all his

heart and guess what! Allah blessed him with a son, Yahya, who was blessing personified. So yeah, there's a lot to learn from this story but I want you, the young Muslim sons and daughters of today to just stop and ponder for a while; are you the kind of youth that could make people around you envy your parents because of how fortunate they are to have a child like you? Does your purity and wisdom inspire others to wish they had a child like you?

You see, we are not talking about bragging here! It is not that you need to show off to people some impressive stuff about you so they'd envy you and your parents. No. That's ostentatious and it doesn't work like that and that's an inappropriate focus to have.

All we are trying to imply is that when you try being good for Allah by developing the attributes that He likes, your presence becomes an automatic inspiration. It's like you become a walking talking admirable sign of Allah that attracts Allah's creation towards Him. How beautiful is that really!

Allah's Messenger said, "If Allah loves a person, He calls Gabriel, saying, 'Allah loves so and so, O Gabriel love him'. So Gabriel would love him and then would make an announcement in the Heavens: 'Allah has loved so and-so therefore you should love him also.' So all the dwellers of the Heavens would love him, and then he is granted the pleasure/acceptance of the people on the earth." [Bukhari]

Sounds too much work, does it? Let's remember that we only need to make an intention, start taking baby steps and then start asking Allah with full conviction that: Allah can do just anything!

Wassalam,

Zawjah Zia



Zaina had her life sorted. She woke up early, stretched for twenty minutes, got ready for school. This was her final year so Zaina was determined to get into the best college and then the best university in the city. After all, she had a big shelf of glistening trophies and a thick file of certificates to keep adding to. In life, she wanted to shine, rather outshine everyone else.

So when her parents told her on the day of her last exam - "Zaina, your cousins are all gathering at your grandmother's place to spend the summer. She's sick so they want to spend some quality time with her. You should go along as well." - Zaina did not take it easy.

"For two months straight?"

Her father nodded. "You'll enjoy with the girls." Her brows went up. "You want me to spend two months away from home in a different city just to spend time with my cousins and look after Nano as she's sick?"

Zaina's mother gave her a stern look. "And why exactly does that sound so demeaning to you?"

Zaina put down her spoon midway through dinner. "I just gave my O Level exams, Mama. I need to get in the best college."

"And you've already applied to all."

"But that's not enough. I need to do some community services, some voluntary work and some internships to gain more exposure and credit for my applications. For college, for university and then my career life ahead."

Zaina's father cleared his throat. "That's a very long term plan-"

"-and trust me when I tell you, it's still not enough!" Zaina raised her hands in the air, face red with exasperation. "People don't just make it big in life by doing nothing, Baba. We have to really struggle and work our way up the stairs to success. And I want to be successful. I want to make you both proud."

Zaina's father fell silent at that. He knew how hard Zaina worked, how she did not waste a single minute in time wasting activities like watching movies or endless scrolling on social media. Zaina was all about work and no play. He did cherish her hard work.

Her mother on the other hand still had one more shot to fire. "We know you have ambitions, Zaina, and there's absolutely nothing wrong about that. But there's also family that deserves your time and balance is crucial. Besides, your Nano is sick. She needs your love and care."

Zaina scoffed. "Nano needs rest. She needs

Zaina scoffed. Her cousins were around her age but seriously, such immature child's play?

peace and quiet. What good would we cousins do by gathering at her place? We'd create a lot of chaos and in my personal opinion that would do her more harm than good." Zaina's mother pursed her lips, disheartened. "You really don't want to be there for her?" It's just a sickness. Zaina sighed. Old people get sick all the time with joint pain and stuff like that. She hated emotional blackmail. "I'll visit in the last two weeks, alright? But please not more than that. I really do need a lot more certificates to get my admission plus a scholarship." Zaina pushed back her chair as she got up from the table. "And who knows, I might actually get one at a foreign university too."

She walked away to her room where books and planners awaited her. Zaina's parents met each other's eyes rather shamefully. They valued their daughter's potential but they were also concerned about her lack of balance. There was much more in life that Zaina ought to give her time to but neglected immensely.

Two weeks before summer break ended, Zaina's parents drove to the city where Zaina's Nano lived. Getting out of the car, Zaina slung her bag pack across her shoulder, looking up at the giant haweli her grandmother lived in. She heard merry laughter. In the gardens, she saw her grandmother on a wheelchair surrounded by young girls running around chasing after little colourful choozay.

Zaina scoffed. Her cousins were around her age but seriously, such immature child's play? And yet however— as Zaina watched little Faria pick up the chick and run after her older sister who screamed loud in fear— a part of Zaina's heart tugged. She wanted to laugh and be carefree like them.

Most of all, Zaina felt left out from being the cause of her Nano's sunny smile who laughed watching the girls play. Zaina noticed how frail her grandmother looked, hollow cheeks and tired eyes and sunken shoulders now defining her physical health.

Walking behind her parents, Zaina reached her grandmother and waited for her turn to shake hands and say salaam. When it was finally her turn, Nano's eyes clouded with confusion and her head turned towards the eldest girl, Nadia. Nadia hurried over and whispered, "It's Zaina, Nano. The golden girl in our family, remember? She won the Urdu declamation with the speech you wrote for her once and also the English one that Nana wrote back when he was alive."

Zaina's heart swelled with pride. Zaina. The Golden Girl. It felt like all her hard work had paid off.

But when Nano blinked blankly at Zaina, brows furrowed together, Zaina's mind was filled with rage. Is this some sick guilt game? Is everyone here trying to make me feel ashamed for not being around often?

Zaina bit her tongue and kept the smile on her face in check. "It's me, Nano, your Zaini. Don't you remember?"

At the nickname, Nano's eyes lit up. She pulled Zaina down towards her on the wheelchair and kissed her forehead. She didn't let go until very much later to which Zaina's heart swelled even more. No doubt, she was the favourite granddaughter.

"Nadia," Nano called. "Go inside and get the cake for ..." she trailed away, looking back at Zaina.

Zaina's heart skipped a beat. When Nano didn't complete her sentence, Nadia did it for her. "Zaini, your favourite."

Nano nodded. "Right, right, Zaini."

Zaina's heart was thudding really hard now. Nadia gestured with her head and Zaina followed her inside to the kitchen where Nadia gave her an apologetic smile. "Sorry about that. Nano gets confused all the time. It's more distressing for her than it is for us."

"Because of her heavy medication?" Zaina gulped down the spikes in her throat.

"Because of her Alzheimer, Zaina. The incurable disorder of forgetting everything. Surely you knew."

But Zaina didn't know. And her heart nearly stopped at that. So this was her Nano's sickness. And she had ... forgotten Zaina? Zaina felt something in her stomach twisting hard. She could not digest the news.

Nadia took out a large chocolate cake from the fridge. On it was written congratulations. She looked up at Nadia, desperate to shake out of the misery of being forgotten. "What's this about?"

Nadia smiled. "I got into medical university. On merit! The best one in the country."

Zaina's brows furrowed at that. "How? Did you do a lot of voluntary work? How many hours of community service? You got Bs and A grades, not A stars, then how?"

"Don't be silly." Nadia laughed. "You are smarter than me but really, I didn't do much community service or voluntary work, not any more than what my college had me do." "Then how?!"

"I don't know actually. I've been here with Nano most of my time, I don't even think I could study much when she was diagnosed but somehow, Allah got me where I couldn't imagine being. He got me beyond better than my own expectations." Zaina didn't understand anything. No hard work, no struggle, not even proper studying and yet Nadia got what Zaina was working so very hard for.

Zaina jolted out of her thoughts when Nano's voice called from the gardens. Nadia hurried over upon hearing her name. Zaina overheard her Nano's voice, "Oh Nadia, you brought my medicine too! I had forgotten it was time. May Allah bless you dear and may He reward you all that you wish for and much much more."

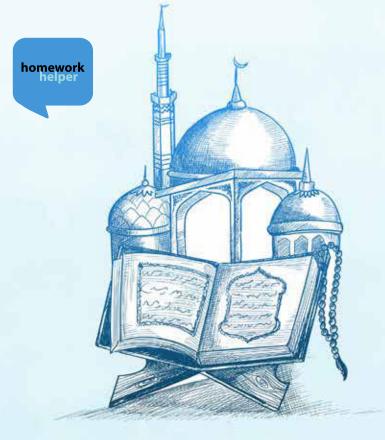
Zaina's heart came to a skidding halt. Her Nano remembered Nadia's name so easily despite the forgetfulness. Nano did not remember Zaina's name, did not even recognise her face. Nadia spent her time looking after Nano. Nano gave her so many duas.

Suddenly, Zaina did not feel like a golden girl at all. Zaina felt horrible about herself and as she looked towards the garden where Nadia sat by Nano's feet cleaning the garden dirt that had accumulated between Nano's toes, Zaina realised Nadia's caretaking (that came along with no glorifying certificates) was much more golden than all Zaina had achieved in her life. For after all, not all that is gold glitters.

Zaina shut her eyes tight. She took on a new ambition in life. In this ailment of her Nano's, she would be there as much as she could be. She would visit as much as she could. A tear slipped from her eyes. She should have done so long before her Nano's condition came to such a level. She should not have wasted so much time chasing after the world when really, the key to all that treasure lay with her Nano all along.

Zaina wiped her tears, prayed to Allah for her Nano and then stepped out into the garden with a renewed heart. She would not be defied by the glitter in this world again.

This time, her Nano did recognize her and smiled fondly. "Come have cake, Zaini. It's your favourite!" And indeed, it was. Her Nano had remembered



Quran Quiz-Who said it?

Compiled by Ayesha Khalid Lakhani

Some time back we had a quiz similar to this and masha'Allah everyone loved answering and learning from these questions that ask us about the narrator of some interesting dialogues from the Holy Quran. So once again we bring you more of such dialogues and let's see how well you know your Quran... Later you may also check out the exact places and contexts in which theses dialogues were said and to whom.

1. "Do not kill him, perhaps he will benefit us."

- A. Wife of Firawn
- B. Wife of Qaroon
- C. Wife of Nuh

2. "Shall I guide you to a household?"

- A. Sister of Yunus
- B. Sister of Musa
- C. Sister of Haroon

3. "Aid us with some water."

- A. People of Paradise
- B. People of Firawn
- C. People of the Fire

4. "O our Lord, pour patience upon us and cause us to die as Muslims."

- A. People of Yunus
- B. People of Shuaib
- C. Magicians of Firawn

5. "If he does not do what I order him."

- A. King of Egypt
- B. Zulaikha
- C. Women of the city

6. "I did not do it from my own accord."

- A. Khadir
- B. Musa
- C. Taloot

7. "And I have been given from everything..."

- A. The hoopoe bird
- B. The bee
- C. The ant

8. "We have found that which our Lord has promised to be true."

- A. People of Paradise
- B. People of the fire
- C. People of Makkah

9. "This is what myself tempted me into doing."

- A. Iblees
- B. Samiri
- C. A worshipper from Banu Israeel

10. "There is no rescue today from the order of Allah."

- A. Musa
- B. Son of Nuh
- C. Nuh

11. "Peace be upon you strange people."

- A. Hud
- B. Lut
- C. Ibrahim

12. "The All knowledgeable and All Aware informed me."

- A. Musa
- B. Prophet Muhammad
- C. Shuaib

13. "It guides to that which is good and we have believed in it."

- A. The jinn
- B. People of Paradise
- C. Magicians of Firawn

14. "What my Lord has provided for me is far better."

- A. Dhul-Oarnain
- B. Khadir
- C. Taloot

15. "Alas! I wish I had never associated anyone with my Lord (in worship)."

- A. People of the fire
- B. Shaytaan
- C. Companion of the garden

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Silent tears rolled down Nuha's cheeks as she stared at the lifeless body of her friend. Liya was wrapped in the plain white shroud, to the extent of her face also being covered as it was unbearable to witness. Her features had been severely defaced due to the excruciating car accident. Nuha felt an agonizing pain rush through her soul as Liya's mother thumped to the ground. Reality had truly dawned upon her. She had lost a daughter, a piece of her flesh. Liya's sister sat dumbstruck against the wall, while other family members sat dispersed, some reciting, some wailing, some whispering in hushed voices.

Nuha ran her eyes around the living room and registered the fact that none of the riches and luxuries could bring Liya back. The newly-designed sofas and daybeds, both upholstered in raw silk were grouped with vintage acrylic armchairs and a cocktail table. Apparently all of this was pushed against the Spanish arte-crafted wall to create space for the funeral. The studio light furniture meant to give lightness was only making the atmosphere of the room even gloomier no matter how bright it lit.

"Don't be proud of your position, looks, vigor, and money. Allah does not like pride. That handsome peacock could never fully fly, nor could that wealthy wick ever freely die. The greatness of a man is not in how much wealth he acquires but in his integrity and ability to affect those around him."

Nuha had timorously reminded this to her friend but... Alas! She was always ridiculously

spurned.

It was only through the mercy of Allah that Nuha was saved from that horrendous accident, succumbing to minor injuries; such as breaking her neck bone and calf.

Nuha's mind was struck with flashbacks of that day...

It was a bright sunny morning. The rising sun cast a rosy hue across the morning sky. Golden fingers of sunlight lit up the scene. Nuha rubbed her bleary eyes and walked to the window. There was a pearly glow in the sky, however she felt something was amiss.

Nuha picked up the phone from her drawer and dialed Liya's number. "Assalamualaikum, Liya, remember we need to go to the library and study for our upcoming exam sessions?" Nuha said in a soft tone.

"Oh Nuha! Why do you take these 'things' so seriously? I need to go to the party then to the GUCCI store; they have the latest fashion bags out." Liya replied while applying the bright red shade of lipstick. "Listen Li.." Nuha said, however, Liya cut her off and kept on bragging, "you know what, I am practically going to throw away my GUCCI bag I bought last month. You know how up to date I am with the brands, it's out of fashion! Who wants old scrap anyway? By the way, if you want then we both can go together and later on go watch a movie." Liya's voice rang from the other side of the phone.

"Look Liya I need to focus on my studies and please for heaven's sake you know this is a waste of time. Hanging out with friends and partying around is not my cup of tea. My aged father

"As a friendly suggestion I still feel that you should be coming with me to the library and prepare for exams rather than loafing around."

works very hard and I can in no way afford to be a source of disgrace to him or anger Allah You know I only need you to drop me off to the library if you not coming with please... and I'd suggest the same to you." Nuha said with deep concern in her voice. "Ok! ok! ok! I'm coming, will drop you off but won't be going to the library. See ya in thirty mins," Liya announced and hung up.

Nuha heaved a sigh and went to the bathroom. An hour and half later Nuha jolted up from her short slumber, as she heard the doorbell ring in her ears. She had dozed off while waiting for Liya and apparently it seemed that Liya was now at the door.

Nuha opened the door and greeted her. "Hey, Nuha lets go. Sorry for the delay, I couldn't decide on what to wear," Liya said. Nuha kept her cool and sat in the passenger seat. Liya was wearing a pink designer dress accented with black diamond shaped buttons at the hem and across the boat neckline of her dress. There was a new change to her appearance; she was wearing green contact lenses and the labret piercing on her lips were clearly visible. Her black tresses were highlighted a warm blonde and was cut in layers. She paired up her look with Jimmy Choo black platform heels and a black Louis Vuitton handbaa.

"So what do you think of my new ride? It's the latest Ferrari that my dad bought for me last month!" Liya said.

"Good, as a friendly suggestion I still feel that you should be coming with me to the library and prepare for exams rather than loafing around." Nuha said.

"Oh, Nuha, just a few wads of notes up the principal's nose and I'm all set; actually you are my best friend and I can find a way for you as well," Liya said as she pushed her hair away from her nose.

"No not at all, I believe in making an effort as the fruits of patience are always sweet," retorted Nuha, all the while turning pages of her notebook.

Liya looked at her, rolled her eyes and remarked, "Ok goody two shoes, let's listen to music," Liya leaned forward, gave Nuha a sly smile and turned on some blazing music. Nuha was about to intervene when she suddenly screamed. Liva had instantaneously lost control of the car due to leaning forward for absolutely no reason and due to her driving at a speed of 140 kmp/h.

"Liya please be careful!" Nuha screamed. The road was filled with little hills. Liva pulled the wheel to the right, the car swerved back to the left, to the right, to the left again.... each time Liya pulled the wheel! Their bodies jolted with the sporadic movements of the car. Suddenly the car hit a telephone pole, and skidded a hundred feet into a tree. The crash drove the engine through the dashboard and then rolled three times before coming to a halt. Liya was not wearing a seatbelt. Due to the abrupt impulse Liya was thrown few miles away from the car through the windscreen. The moment her head hit the ground her soul flew off, as her skull had burst open.

On the other hand Nuha squeezed in pain as the seatbelt stopped her but did not stop her head from hitting the door several times. She was covered in blood but was still conscious. At that moment, as the first sirens sounded, as the first voices were heard, the first numbers were dialed, Nuha silently muttered the Kalimah and also fell unconscious

Continued on pg 21





COVID-19!

by Shanzeh Faisal

Hey! Hey! why do I sigh,

Misery, trauma, loneliness, agony

What's all this?

What did you just say?

COVID-19; what's that perversity? That it's just a conspiracy!

I bet, it will fly over,

Over our heads without touching us!

Oh no! What is happening?

Really, this is taking lives,

Look there!

People are dying on the roads,

No one presumes to hold them or bury them,

Ahhhh!! What a cold-blooded virus.

I miss my friends and teachers,

I want to go back to School!

How? Will my friends and teachers,

Be endangered if we gathered at school?

I want to go for shopping!

But, look! What do I perceive?

What? I should not shake hands!

Nor hug my loved ones!

But how's that possible?

I love them!

I will show them my affection!

Hugging, shaking hands can kill them?

Ok! Then I won't touch them!

Yes! I realized now,

The rules and regulations are there

To prevent the deadly virus coming our way

No hand shake, no hugging,

No school, no gatherings,

All so that we are safe!

So how do we stay in touch then?

So what that the world has stopped!

So what if millions died!

Why do we think so?

And not care for our loved ones?

Maintain social-distancing,

Everyone says so,

How to meet friends?

How to stay connected?

The charm of meeting friends at parties has become just a dream,

My parents, my kinsmen,

All are getting miles apart from our hearts,

Connected through gadgets with no life in it!

Robots, technology is taking the place of people,

A piece of cloth has become the identity of a safe man!

The menace of this pandemic stalks us in our dreams,

Ravishing school's studies turned into boring, sleepy online lectures!

Youth became bone-idle,

Gadgets are becoming their obligatory partners!

World has been reshaped!

From a sphere,

To a round ball with poisonous spikes,

Thus, apprising people from peril!

Being deduced positive is dangerous!

But thinking positive is worth life!

We are facing it together,

Consequently, we will combat the virus together

Stars can't shine without darkness

COVID-19 is giving a dark time!

We will soon shine and dissipate the darkness away!!!

TURN YOUR LEFTOVER CHICKEN INTO THE CREAMIEST, MOST TASTY
CHICKEN FILLER FOR HOWEVER YOUR CREATIVITY FLOWS,
JUST ADD 8-WELLIM CANOLA MAYONNAISE! AND THIS IS A SURE CROWD
PLEASER TO UTILIZE ALL YOUR LEFTOVER SUPPLIES, KEEP HUNGRY
MOUTHS AT BAY AND SAVE SOME TIME. WINNING!



- 1 cup Thick & Creamy Mayo
- ¾ cup fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- ¼ cup fresh dill, finely chopped
- ½ tsp apple cider vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp mustard
- ½ tsp fine red chilli powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- a couple cracks of pepper

FILLING:

- 2 ½ cups leftover rotisserie/ © roasted chicken, pulled/roughly chopped
- 1 cup halved seedless red grapes or ½ cup dried cranberries/raisins
- 2 large celery sticks, finely chopped W
- 1 large red onion, finely chopped (v)
- ¼ cup pecans/walnuts, almond slices, roughly chopped
- green leaf lettuce
- 6 footlong sub rolls
- cheese, arated (optional)

HOW TO MAKE:

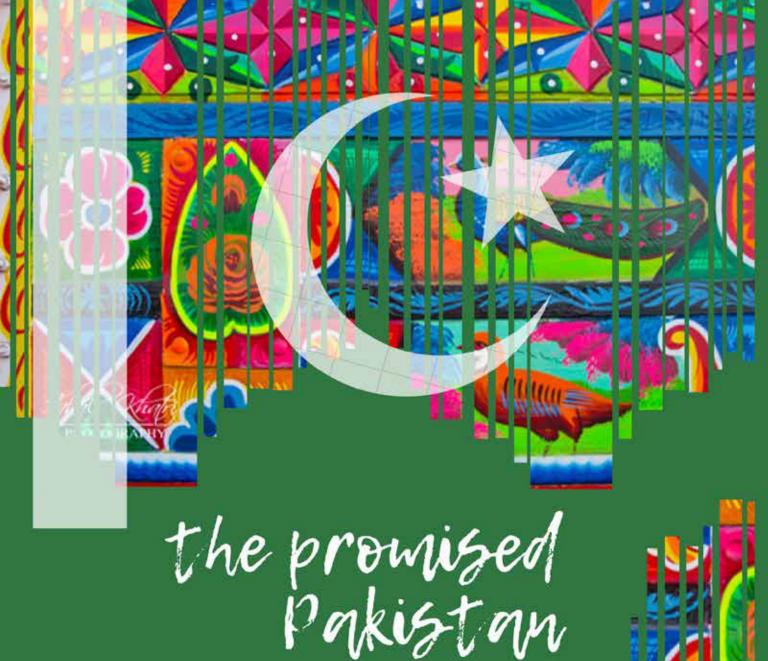
- In a medium bowl, add the Thick & Creamy Mayonnaise with all the dressing ingredients. *Little fingers: mix until well combined*
- In a large bowl, add the chicken, grapes, celery, onion and nuts.
- Now combine the dressing mixture into the salad mix and gently stir until mixed.
- Cover bowl and refrigerate for an hour to allow flavours to soak in.
- Remove from fridge and rest until room temperature. Fill each footlong sub and serve with fresh lettuce leaves, or grated cheese over and stick in the oven at 200°C for 5 min until cheese melts! Cut in half/thirds. Easy, simple and oh so yummy.

The filling freezes well for your convenience and easy-prep.

Can be frozen up to 1 month, allow to thaw to room temperature before serving.

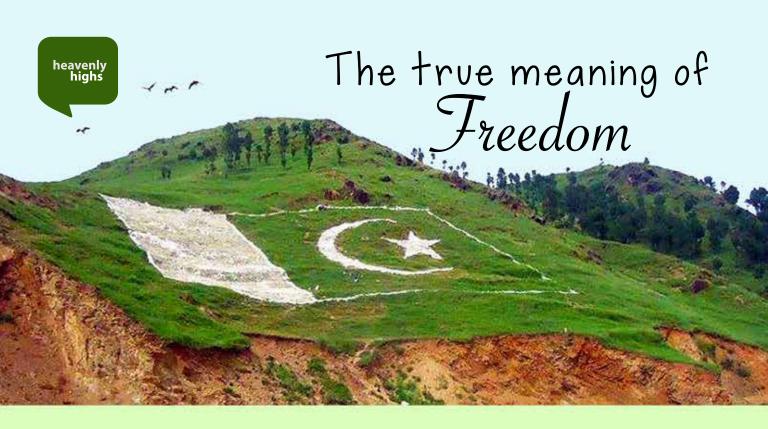
Salad items are only by suggestion, play around or use what salad items you have in your fridge. Think: tomatoes, grated carrots, apple pieces, avocado, mushrooms, cabbage, peppers, etc. perfect for fussy eaters.

radiance August - 2021



This Independence Day, we remember the martyrs, the thousands who sacrificed themselves so we can breathe today in a pure and free land. Now it's time to play our part and make Pakistan the land of our ancestors' dreams and promises: the land of the pure. The land of La ilaha ill-Allah.





Ayesha Muneeb's story looks at how we are so mistaken to not be proud of our motherland

"Fahad! Stop acting like a stubborn child and try to understand my point. It is true that we are wrongly confined in some areas but there are a lot of people who are living under larger number of restrictions than us. So, don't take this freedom for granted and stop complaining about your country."

"Oh come on Hashir! Don't start counselling me on patriotism again. I have made up my mind that as soon as I get enough money, I will leave this so-called-free country for good." Fahad stomped up the stairs and slammed the door. It was pretty obvious from his tone that his decision was final.

It was one matter in which the two's opinions differed and also the only topic of discussion when Fahad couldn't stop himself from lashing out, otherwise he had a calm and well-behaved nature. However, Hashir tried hard to make him alter his mind but he always failed to do so and then one day he completely got out of touch with his soul

mate.

5 years later...

Hashir was aimlessly flicking through the TV channels when he came across a familiar figure. It was a renowned talk show and the guest was undoubtedly his long lost friend Fahad who was delivering an ebullient speech to the young generation urging and motivating them to love Pakistan. Hashir was thunderstruck, seeing such an incredible change in his friend.

After days of continuous struggle, contact between the duo was finally restored and they were sitting face to face in their favorite restaurant. Immediately after the formal conversation, Hashir asked the one question which had shaken him all over. Initially Fahad tried to avoid it, but when forced to tell, he started narrating his story:

It was at that place and moment when I realized what a paradise my country is.

"As soon as I got the scholarship, I left for Turkey to continue my higher studies. To meet the expenses, I started a part-time job. There I got on good terms with my co-worker Aban. Just like you, he was always giving me lectures on faithfulness to the country and I, forced by my nature, always turned a deaf ear to his sincere advices." He paused for a moment, thinking of appropriate words to continue.

"What happened then? Don't you dare stop and test my patience!" Fahad smiled at Hashir's restlessness and went on:

"Years flew by and the time for returning to Pakistan had already arrived. I got intensely irritated over the idea of coming back to the place which I hated the most. My feelings were not hidden from Aban. So he tried to convince me to go and work voluntarily in Palestine with him. After quite a few efforts, he was finally able to persuade me." His expressions tensed as he recalled all the unforgettable moments.

"There I got to know what a free country really meant. I felt the difference between imprisonment and freedom. I still remember that day when we went on the survey. Not a single person was there who hadn't lost his loved ones in the bombing and severe brutality of the troops. They are not allowed to celebrate their national events or worship freely. Tear gases as well as the poisonous gases are shelled every now and then leaving nu-

merous screaming innocent people helpless. Due to their tyranny, countless citizens are either killed or paralyzed daily." His voice cracked as he unfolded the truth behind his change. Hashir forced him to drink some water and said: "OK. Now forget all this. Don't put too much strain on your brain. Let's order something to eat."

Although he tried his best to stop Fahad, but it seemed like he wasn't even listening anything at that time. He burst out, hiccupping: "No my friend! Let me pour out my heart today please. It was at that place and moment when I realized what a paradise my country is. Here we can wander off as per our wish and without any fear. But in Palestine, everyone tie the shroud when leaving the house because they are uncertain whether they will come back alive or not. We certainly have some social and governmental restrictions but still we are free Hashir, WE ARE FREE!!!! I wish I could make my country folks believe that despite the shortcomings, one's homeland is one's own and that we are fortunate enough to be living here. Our Pakistan is one in a million. How do I explain to them? Tell me how...??"

Not able to hold back his tears anymore, Fahad started weeping bitterly. He hugged Hashir tightly whose eyes were also wet but he was thankful to Almighty Allah that the blindfold of mistrust and hatred had finally been removed and that his dear friend has understood the true meaning of freedom



The Righteous Choice

Adeen Ahmed's remarkable story will help all young girls perceive the beauty and prestige in hijab

After serving everyone the delicious chicken curry

she had made, Mrs. Hamid smiled at Eraj and her mother. "What a lovely daughter you have," she praised. "So unlike in dress and manner than the other girls one meets. May Allah bless her!"

Part 2 of 2

Comments like these were being showered down on her. Cold guilt was flowing through her veins. Oh, she thought, I wish this horrid feeling would stop! I oughtn't feel awful at such a happy occasion.

But it wouldn't stop. The guilt nor the praises would stop their flow. After serving dinner, she collapsed onto a sofa, head spinning. Suddenly a lilting voice floated into her ear.

"Eraj? You here?"

She whipped her head back. It was Lila! Lila tall in red clacking high heels, Lila wearing a dress barely covering her knees and trousers well over her ankles, Lila covered in makeup and an elaborate hairstyle.

"As-salaam elikum, Lila," stuttered Eraj, half in surprise and half in horror. Lila? Here?

Lila said, as if she knew what Eraj was thinking. "Aunty Maryam is my mother's second cousin on the father's side," she said. "She made me come here, you know, even though I didn't want to." And if matters could get worse, Eraj's

mother actually came and sat down next to her, never knowing

her daughter was being engulfed in agony because of her very presence.

Before Eraj could say anything, Lila carried on, "I hardly recognized you! Oh my god, you look so different in that dress! And, like, you're wearing a hijab! Why?!"

Eraj's mother piped up, "Yes, of course. My daughter always wears the hijab, everywhere she goes. Even in college!" She finished proudly.

Lila laughed her tinny, lilting laugh. "Um, actually, no," she said, spearing a piece of chicken on her fork. "I've never seen her wearing it, actually. Yesterday in college she had that pretty puff hairstyle - hadn't you, Eraj? You looked so glamorous! My word! You'll be acting in the movies before we know it. I don't ever remember you with a silly scarf on - except that first day."

And now you can very well imagine what was the state of poor Eraj. Of course, on the outside it wasn't much – just wide eyes, and her spoon halfway to her mouth. But inside, it was a storm of fear raging. The truth had been out in the most unpredictable way. She had been so swift, so secret, so fortunate, and now this had happened. What would her mother think? Eraj glanced to look at her mother, but she never got the chance, as her grandmother from the kitchen called out, "Amna! Come here,

The guilt nor the praises would stop their flow. After serving the dinner, she collapsed onto a sofa, head spinning. Suddenly a lilting voice floated into her ear.

I need you to take out the dessert!" Her mother got up and headed towards the kitchen, not looking behind her at the guilty face of her daughter.

A week had passed since the ill-fated incident. Eraj's mother had not scolded her, she kept on acting normal as though nothing had happened. Eraj was thankful that the winter break was here, otherwise she did not know how she was going to manage at college, as Lila would've probably spread the news. She was at a complete loss of what to do. Was is wrong what she had done? Or was it right? Why wasn't her mother scolding her? And what was she going to do when winter break was over? Again, she knew in her heart that what she had done was utterly wrong. Eraj became depressed and saddened, and one day, she gave it up. When her grandmother called her down for lunch, she refused, saying in a tiny voice that she was not hungry. She sat in her room, contemplating her deeds. The door opened and in entered her mother. "Why are you not eating, Eraj?" she asked.

"I don't feel like it," mumbled Eraj.

"Why?" asked her mother. "But I think I know why you're feeling that way."

Suddenly, Eraj burst out sobbing. Tears of remorse and regret poured down her eyes as she wept. "Mama, I'm sorry. I'm sorry! I'm really sorry. I know what I did was wrong. I shouldn't have deceived you -"

"Deceived me?" cried her mother, stroking her daughter's head. "Yes, well, dear, you deceived me, but you do know that Allah was watching, didn't you? He is the All-Seeing, He sees into even the deepest hearts alive. You may have deceived me but you could not have deceived the Almighty. But I forgive you. And I pray and hope that Allah also forgives you. My dear, tell me: why do we wear the hijab?"

"Because you do it," said Eraj, raising her drooping head. "And because it is part of our culture."

"Oh, dear me, no!" exclaimed her mother. "Absolutely not! No, my dear, wearing the hijab is not part of our culture, a fashionable costume or a trendy choice. Wearing the hijab is an obligation from Allah - and all for our own good." "How?" asked Eraj, sitting up straight and wiping her tears away.

"In Surah Al-Noor, there are special verses dedicated to hijab," explained her mother. "They are called Ayat-Ul-Hijab. In those verses, Allah explains that He has bestowed the hijab on us for protecting us from various evils. A girl wears the hijab to conceal her beauty, to be discreet about it. Allah has done it all so we can be protected by Satan. These verses were revealed when Hazrat Aisha 🚵 lost her necklace - I assume you know about that part."

"I see," mused Eraj slowly. "Mama, I was wrong. I was wrong to get involved with those girls. I will never be friends with them again. I do not care if they single me out as different."

"Being different is part of us," said her mother. "Allah has created all of us different, with different tastes and such. Just ignore them, and pray for them that they go on the right path." "I know," smiled Eraj. "JazakAllah khairun kaseera, Mama, for showing the right way to me. I will never listen to anything that ignites me to leave the hijab, which is Allah's obligation on

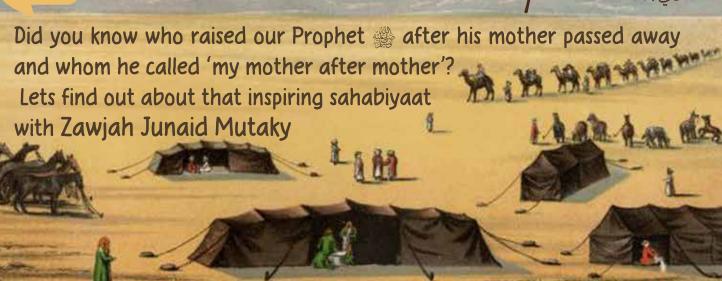
"That's my daughter!" smiled her mother, hugging her.

Eraj looked out of the window. She knew that she was going to fix it all, put it all behind her. Never again was she going to listen to those girls. She was going to repent to Allah for her deeds and pray that she stayed on the right road

leading lights

Hadhrat Umm Ayman





Barakah bint Tha'alaba or Umm Ayman 🙈 was an Abyssinian plain looking slave of Prophet's parents and it is to be noted that when Allah & wishes to raise a slave in position, no one can stop Him. She knew every aspect of Hadhrat Muhammad's @ life as she had been with him since his birth till his death. She was the first person to touch him when he was born and took care of him as a child when his parents left this world one after the other and then never stopped caring for him all her life. Prophet 🎡 was born as an orphan while his mother, Hadhrat Amna, died at Abwa, a place between Makkah and Madinah, during their return journey to Makkah. She was visiting her family in Yathrib with her six year old son and her young slave girl, Barakah also known as Umm Ayman. Barakah brought the little boy back to Makkah and handed him over to his elderly grandfather, Hadhrat Abdul Muttalib.

This pair of young Hadhrat Muhammad @ and Barakah got close to each other like a mother and her son. His grandfather had appointed her to take good care of him as many of the Ahl al Kitaab (People of the Book) predicted that he will be the awaited Prophet and the ways of the little orphan boy were also very different from that of the other children. She was

immensely fond of his gentle manners and a relatively mature behaviour for a child. Therefore when Prophet Muhammad @ declared his prophethood, she was amongst the first ones to accept Islam.

Marriages

Prophet freed her after his marriage to Hadhrat Khadija 🚕 and arranged her marriage with one of his companion, Hadhrat Ubaid bin . This couple had a son named Ayman through which she got her name, Umm Ayman. Her husband received his martyrdom in the Battle of Khyber while son was martyred in the Battle of Hunain. Prophet @ paid special attention to her needs because he used to call her "O My Mother" and "Mother after my Mother" thus he arranged her marriage to Hadhrat Zaid bin Haritha , his beloved adopted son. From him she bore a son, Hadhrat Usama bin Zaid, who turned out to be a noted companion of Prophet

The account of her marriage with Hadhrat Zaid is interesting. Once, the Prophet @ was sitting amongst his companions when he asked, "Who wants to marry a woman of Jannah?" Hadhrat Zaid quickly responded to this offer

Her keen mind and far sightedness could see many things which were unclear to others

and agreed to marry Hadhrat Umm Ayman though she was older to him, married once, had a son and a woman with ordinary looks but he knew that what Prophet @ mentioned himself as a Jannati would be valuable.

As a Mother

Spending most of her life in the household of Prophet , she herself had become rational and mature. Allah had bestowed upon her the responsibility of bringing up the last Prophet , consequently she was of high moral character. Then she was married to Hadhrat Zaid who was also raised in Prophet's @ presence so ultimately their son had to have some unique qualities; he had parents who spent their lives so near to Muhammad . She paid special attention to her sons to be brave and learned. She bore into them the love of Allah and His Messenger and to live and die for them. She showed immense patience when her elder son, Ayman, was martyred while protecting Prophet and felt proud of it.

Bravery

Hadhrat Umm Ayman was like any other brave Arab Muslim woman. She is known to protect Prophet when the infidels were plotting against him. She brought to him all the detailed information which would help the Prophet to plan his next action. In the Battle of Uhud, she tended the wounded and when the calamity rose she called out the disappointed Muslims to be brave and herself jumped in the battlefield with a sword, wherefore, she got injured by an arrow thrown by Hebban bin Araga. She also accompanied Prophet in the Battle of Khyber.

Virtues

Her keen mind and far sightedness could see many things which were unclear to others. She was optimistic and one who made others feel peaceful in her presence. Prophet @ often visited her. When he passed away, Hadhrat Abu Bakr and Hadhrat Umar also visited her like Prophet and inquired how Prophet cared for her. She started crying. The companions tried to console her saying that Prophet is at a better place than this world. She responded by saying that she agrees but she was crying because the chain of revelations which came from Allah had stopped. Both Hadhrat Abu Bakr and Umar were deeply touched by this answer and started crying.

Death

There are two different narrations about her death; one says that she died a few months after the sad demise of Prophet @ and the other reports that she saw the era of Hadhrat Usman 🧠.

May Allah rest her in peace and shower his blessings upon her. Aameen

Continued from pg 11

The men entered the room to take Liya's body to fulfil the final rites. Nuha jerked from her memory and her eyes were raining with tears. She walked towards Liya's body, kissed her friend and made du'a to Allah to grant her friend jannatul Firdous and forgive her sins. Liya's voice was echoing in her mind ("I am so up to date with the brands...") now the shroud that she was wearing had no brand.

A lesson is a reminder for the believer. Death is a bitter reminder.

The world is temporary, and everything within it is a mirage.

Oh traveller of this world, Your destination is the grave

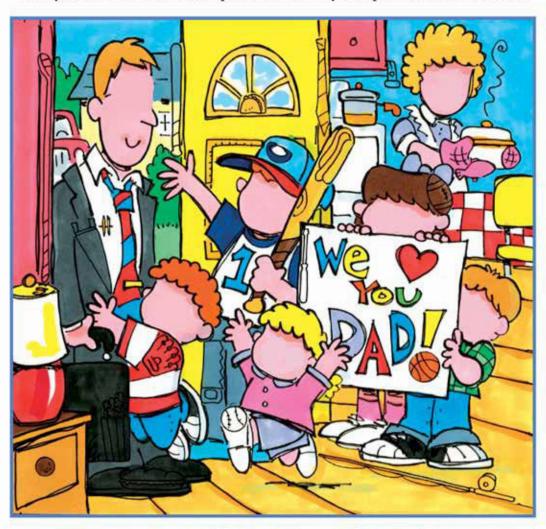
The sleepers of the palaces are now sleeping in sand





Hidden Picture

Can you find the hidden surprises this family has planned for their dad?

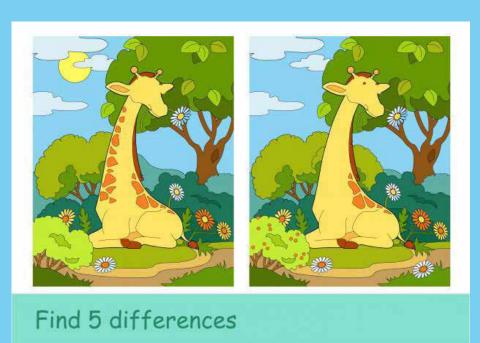






Let's learn about our beloved Prophet !!! Join the qualities of Rasullullah ﷺ to help Ahmad find his way to Masjid e Nabwi





science nugget

Circuit Flowers



What you need:

Coffee filters (you can also use tracing papers)

Washable markers

Plates

Water

Water dropper or syringe

LEDs

Wire

Clothespin

Battery

Scissors

Electrical tape (green)

Mini solo cup or mini clay pot

Chromatography Science to Create Art

This activity definitely falls into a full STEAM activity. The first step is to make your beautifully coloured papers using a technique called chromatography. This process works the best if you use secondary and tertiary colours, as they will separate as they spread, creating gorgeous patterns on your paper.

Start by flattening a coffee filter on a plate or other easy to clean surface. Using a washable marker draw a thick lined circle about half way between the middle and edge. You can use one colour, alternate colours, or even create a few circles (leave a wide space in between). There are no rules, except to ensure lots of white space is left to allow spreading of the colours.

Now add about a teaspoon of water to the middle of the coffee filter. As the water moves through the paper it will spread the colours out, and depending on your colours, may cause them to separate. You should end up with a beautiful water coloured papers. Let dry completely.

Circuit Time

First step - we always test the LED! The last thing you want to do is build your flower only to discover your LED doesn't work. Simply slip your battery between the legs of the LED. If it doesn't work, turn the battery around. If it still doesn't work you need a different LED.

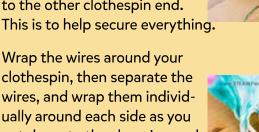
Cut your wires and strip the ends. You need two wires, approximately 8 inches in length. Strip about half an inch from each end to expose the wire. These are your contact points with your battery and LED.

Take your coffee filter paper and grab it in the middle, roll and bunch it to gather it up and form your flower. You should have a small "stalk".

Push the legs of the LED bulb through the paper just off to the side of the stalk in your paper. Now wrap one wire tightly around the first leg. Repeat with the other wire around the second leg.



Slide the legs of the LED onto the end of your clothespin, so one leg is on each side. Tape into place. Now tape your stalk to the other clothespin end. This is to help secure everything.



ually around each side as you get down to the clamping end of your clothespin. You want to end your wrap with the stripped part of your wire on the inside of the clothespin.

Now slide your battery into the clothespin so it makes contact with the wires. If it doesn't work, turn your battery around.

Your Flower Has Come To Life!













Hannanah, 7 years



Maryam, 5 years

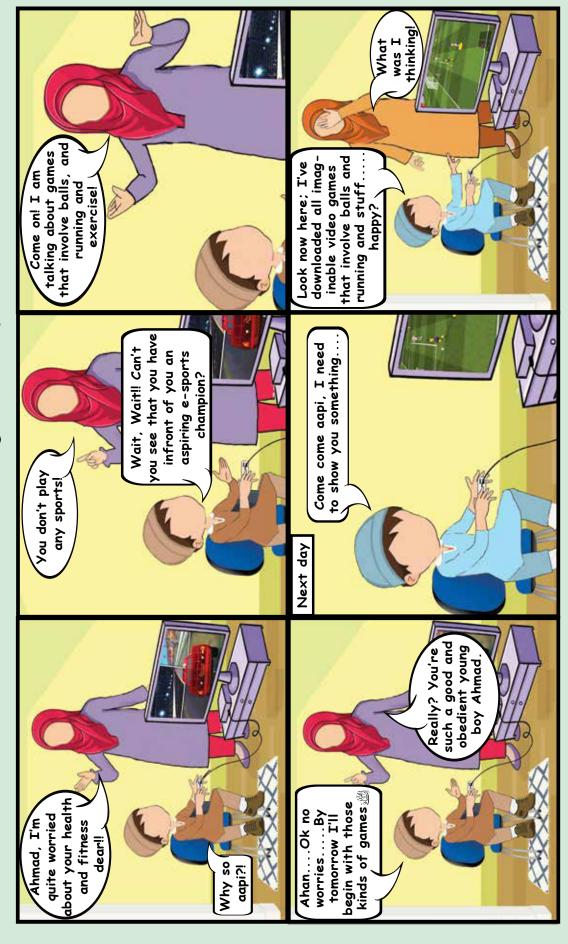


Muhammad Safeer, 8 years



The real Ball-Game

Concept by Zawjah Zia Artwork by Zawjah Jahangir





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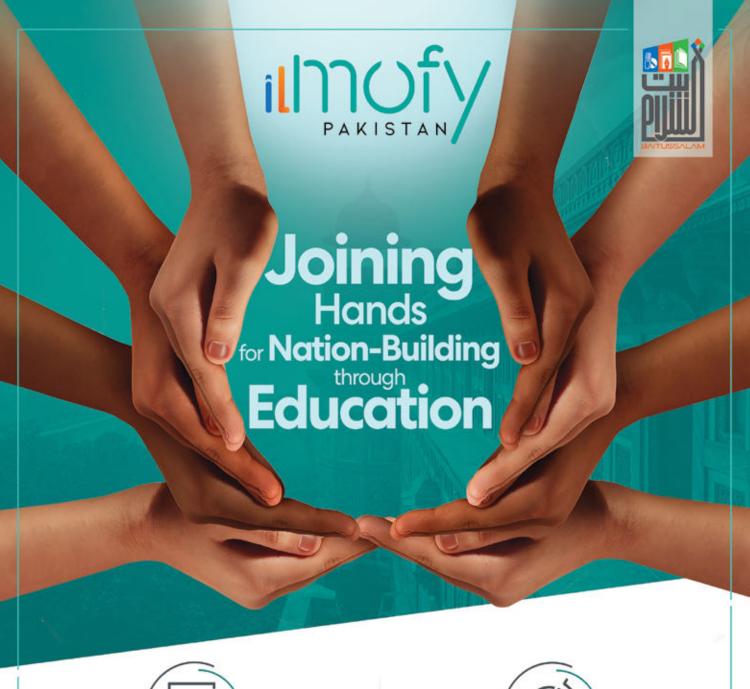
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