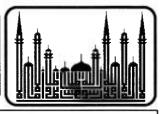


بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ Perspectives



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Editorial

The successful landing of the pathfinder spacecraft on Mars on July 4 (see the photo on page 7), will likely keep the Mars program on track, and intensify NASA's efforts to search for the origin of galaxies and stars, as well as, for signs of extraterrestrial life.

According to the Qur'an, life is not confined to humans, animals, and plants on Earth. Other forms of life do exist in the vast and spacious universe. A number of Qur'anic verses refer to living creatures scattered throughout the universe (see Perspectives vol. 2, No 5, pages 1 and 7).

A brief synthesis of the phenomena that constituted the basic process of the formation of the universe, is described in the following two verses of the Our'an:

مُمَّ اسْتَوَى إِلَى السَّـمَآءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ . (سورة فصلت - من آية ١١)

"Moreover, He (Allah) comprehended in His design, the sky, and it had been smoke." (Our'an 41:11)

أُولَىمْ يَرَ الَّذَينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّهَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَثْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا . (سورة الأنبياء - من آية ٣٠)

"Do not the unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before We clove them asunder."

(Qur'an 21:30)

These two verses are in agreement

see Editorial / page 7

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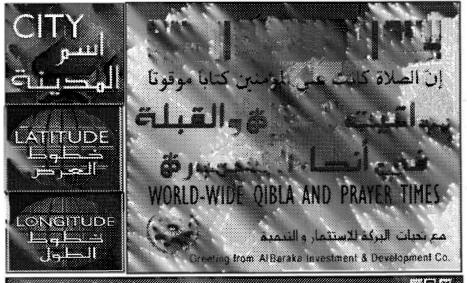
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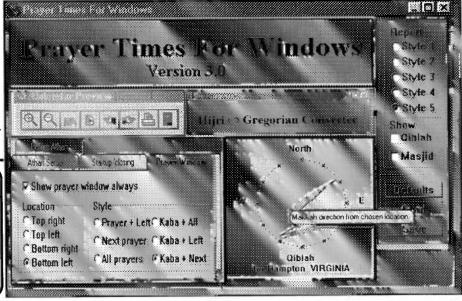
Internet Facilities for Obtaining *Qibla* Direction and Prayer Schedule

With the grace of Allah, a number of facilities are now available on the internet for calculating the prayer times and *qibla* direction anywhere in the world. Some of these facilities can be down loaded. Two of the facilities are listed subsequently.

The first facility calculates the *qibla* direction and the weekly prayer schedule for any city in the world. For U.S. residents, the input can be either the zip code, name of the city/town, or the latitude and longitude. The facility is provided by *Al Baraka* Investment and Development Company, and the URL address is: (http://www.arabia.com/prayer.html).

The second facility is a program for calculating the prayer times and *qibla* directions for over 2000 cities in the world. The program has elaborate graphics and works with windows 3.1/95/NT. The program is developed by **Islamsoft**, **Inc.**, **Tel.** (412) 343-6284. The URL address is: (http://www.islamsoft.com/).





Reflections

Dr. Ahmed K. Noor

The World of Angels عالم الحالا فاكة

Who are the Angels? Do they really exist? What do they look like? What do they do? These are among the many questions that are often asked about angels. Since angels are part of the unseen worlds created by Allah (SWT), any information about them should be sought from the authentic sources: the Qur'an and Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet). Belief in the angels is the second pillar of Iman (faith) in Islam. In this article, some facts about the angels are presented, based on the Qur'an and the authentic traditions of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

The Nature of Angels

The Arabic word (angel) literally means a messenger, especially of Allah. The word (angels) and its derivatives are mentioned 88 times in the Qur'an. Angels are not mere abstract powers without any personality. They are beings with personalities and are, so to speak, the agents of Allah, Who employs them for the administration of His kingdom. As mentioned by the Prophet (PBUH), the angels are created from light.

The angels are honorable and pious servants of Allah. They exemplify the qualities of perfection, obedience and dedication. They are endowed with the necessary (and extraordinary) powers needed to perform the tasks assigned to them (see the figure at the bottom of page 3).

"(Allah) Made the angels messengers with wings, - two, or three, or four

بِسمِ اللّهِ الرّحْمنِ الرّحِيمِ اللّهِ الرّحْمنِ الرّحِيمِ اللّهَ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمُلَآئِكَةِ رُسُلاً وَمِنَ النّاسِ إِنَّ اللّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيـرٌ اللّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمُلَآئِكَةِ رُسُلاً وَمِنَ النّاسِ إِنَّ اللّهَ سَمِعيعٌ بَصِيـرٌ (سورة الحج - آية ٧٥)

"Allah chooses messengers from Angels and from humans, for Allah is He who hears and sees (all things)." (Qur'an 22:75)

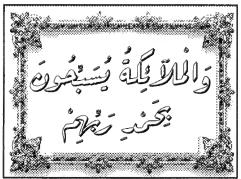
(pairs)." (Qur'an 35:1)

The angels are capable of changing form to assume various appearances. At times, they appeared in human form, as the angels who went to Prophet *Ibrahim* (Abraham) - to give him the glad tidings of a son, and then they went to prophet Lut - to assist him.

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَآ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَى قَالُوا سَلاَمًا .

(سورة هود - من آية ٦٩)

"There came Our messengers to Abraham with glad tidings. They said, (peace)". (Qur'an 11:69)



"And the angels celebrate the praises of their Lord" (Qur'an 42:5)

قَالُوا يَا لُوطُ إِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ لَن يَصِلُوا إِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ لَن يَصِلُوا إِلَيْكَ .

(سورة هود - من آية ٨١)

(The angels) said: "O Lut, we are messengers from your Lord, by no means shall they (the wrong doers from your people) reach you."

(Qur'an 11:81)

The angel *Jibreel* (Gabriel) came to *Maryam* (Mary), in the form of a man, to inform her that she would miraculously give birth to Prophet *Issa* (Jesus).

فَأْرْسَلْنَا ٓ إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا .

(سورة مريم - من آية ١٧)

"Then We sent to her Our angel, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects" (Qur'an 19:17)

Jibreel also came to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and his companions, and asked the Prophet specific questions aimed at teaching the companions certain facts about the deen (Islamic code of life).

Angels were not given, by Allah (SWT), the faculty of choice; they execute all the commands of Allah (SWT), and never disobey Him.

لاً يَعْضُونَ اللهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ .

. (سورة التحريم - من آية ٦)

"They flinch not (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what they are commanded."

(Qur'an 66:6)

Materialists doubt the very existence of angels, while ignorant people at various times have set them up as partners to Allah, or His daughters.

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ الْبَنَاتِ سُبْحَانَهُ وَلَهُم مَّا يَشْتَهُونَ . (سورة النحل - آية ٥٧)

"And they assign daughters for Allah!-Glory be to Him!- and for themselves what they desire (sons)."

(Qur'an 16:57)

أَفَأَصْفَاكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِالْنَبِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنَ الْمُلَائِكَةِ إِنَاثًا إِنَّكُ لَتَقُولُونَ قَوْلاً عَظِيمًا (سورة الإسراء - آية ٤٠)

"Has then your Lord (O Pagans!) preferred for you sons, and taken for Himself daughters among the angels? Truly you utter a most dreadful saying" (Qur'an 17:40)

وَجَعَلُوا الْمُلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبَادُ الرَّحْمَن إِنَاثًا .

(سورة الزخرف - من آية ١٩)

"And they make into females angels who themselves serve Allah."

(Qur'an 43:19)

Duties of Angels

Angels have various duties, with each having a well-defined role. Among the tasks assigned by Allah (SWT) to angels, and referred to in the Qur'an, are the following (with examples from the Qur'an - see the figure at the bottom of page 4)

1. Bringing divine message and revelations of Allah to the messengers, including prophet Mohammad (PBUH):

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنزيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالِمَينَ . نَـزَلَ بهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ . عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ

(سورة الشعراء-آبات ١٩٢ إلى ١٩٤)

"Verily this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds: with it come down the spirit of faith and truth - to your heart and mind, that you may admonish." (Qur'an 26:192 to 194)

2. Guarding, and keeping strict watch

over, human beings.

"and He sets guardians over you." (Qur'an 6:61)

"But verily over you (are appointed angels) to protect you."

(Qur'an 82:10)

3. Recording everything we utter and do, as well as our secrets and inner thoughts.

"Or do they think that We hear not their secrets and their private counsels? Indeed (We do), and our messengers are by them, to record."

(Our'an 43:80)

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيانِ عَنِ الْيَهِينِ وَعَنِ الشَّهَالِ قَعِيدٌ . مَا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلِ إِلاَّ لَدَنه رَقِب عَتيد .

(سهرة ق - آبات ۱۷ ، ۱۸)

"Behold. two (guardian appointed to learn (his/her doings) learn (and note them), one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he/she utter but there is a sentinel by him/her, ready (to note it)." (Qur'an 50:17,18)

Celebrating the praises of Allah (SWT) and begging His forgiveness for the people on earth.

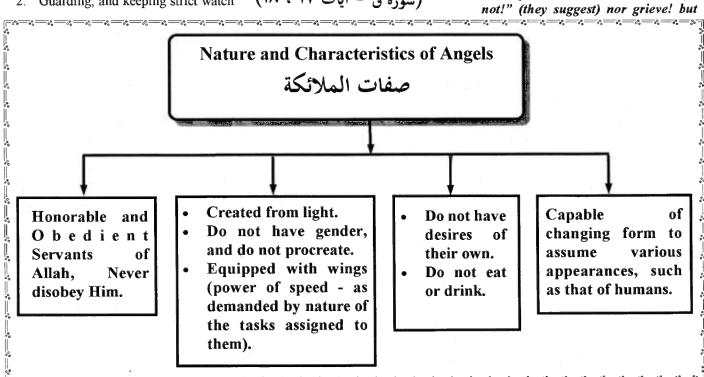
"And the angels celebrate the praises of their Lord, and pray for forgiveness for (all) beings on earth."

(Qur'an 42:5)

5. Giving comfort, support, and glad tidings to the believers, who are steadfast in their belief.

إِنَّ الَّـٰذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَـامُوا تَشَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهُمُ الْمُلَائِكَةُ أَلاًّ تَخَافُوا ولاَ تَحْــزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّـةِ الَّتِي كُنتُـــمْ تُوعَدُونَ ٠ (سورة فصلت - آية ٣٠)

"In case of those who say, "our Lord is Allah", and, further, stand straight and steadfast, the angels descend on them (from time to time): "Fear ye



receive the glad tidings of the garden (of bliss) the which ye were promised!"
(Qur'an 41:30)

6. Providing support to the believers, who are fighting in the way of Allah (SWT), as happened during the battle of Badr

"Remember ye implored the assistance of your Lord, and He answered you: I will assist you with a thousand of the angels, ranks on ranks." (Qur'an 8:9)
7. Punishing and destroying the unbelievers, as they did for the people of Lut:

"They (the angels) said: We are indeed

going to destroy the people of this township (Sodom and Gomorrah); for truly they are (addicted to) crime."

(Qur'an 29:31)

8. Separating our spirit from our body at the time of death.

(السورة السجدة - من ايه ۱۱) "Say: the angel of death nut in che

"Say: the angel of death, put in charge of you, will (duly) take your spirits." (Qur'an 32:11)

For the righteous - the angels greet them and give them the glad tidings at the time of death.

"Those whose lives the angels take in a

state of purity, saying (to them): Peace be on you; enter you the Garden, because of (the good) which you did (in the world)."

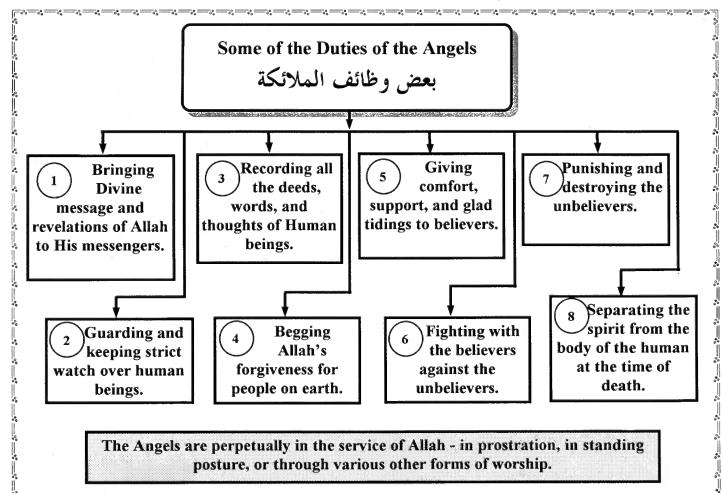
(Qur'an 16:32)

For the unbelievers - the angels smite their faces and their backs and inform them about the grievous penalty awaiting them after death.

"If you could see, when the angels take the spirits of the unbelievers (at death), (how) they smite their faces and their backs (saying): Taste the penalty of the blazing fire." (Qur'an 8:50)

Names and Roles of Some Angels

Among the angels mentioned in the Qur'an and the authentic traditions of



the Prophet are:

1) Jibreel (Gabriel), who is also referred to in the Qur'an as the Holy spirit روح القدس and the honest, trustworthy spirit الروح الأمين He relayed the Divine message to the Prophets, including Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

"Say: whoever is an enemy to Gabriel - for he brings down the (revelation) to your heart by Allah's will."

(Qur'an 2:97)

"We gave Jesus the son of Mary clear (signs) and strengthened him with the holy spirit." (Qur'an 2:87)

"With it came down the spirit of faith (Qur'an 26:193) and truth."

- 2) Mika'eel (Michael), the angel entrusted with the sustenance of the creations of Allah.
- 3) Ridhwan and Malik, the custodians of heaven and hell.

"They (the dwellers of hell) will cry: O Malik! would that your Lord put an end to us."

(Our'an 43:77)

Hell has nineteen angels who watch over it.

"Over it (hell) are nineteen (angels)." (Qur'an 74:30)

protect us from whatever evil Allah

wills to save us from.

"For each (person), there are angels in succession in front of him/her, and behind him/her, who guard him/her by Allah's command."

(Qur'an 13:11)

- 5) The recorders (scribes) the two angels who accompany every human being and record his/her deeds.
- 6) Harut and Marut, the two angels that set up an institution in Babylon to teach magic to the people.

"And such things as came down at Babylon to the angels Harut and Marut." (Qur'an 2:102)

7) The blower of the trumpet on the day of resurrection (Isra'feel)

"The trumpet shall be sounded; when behold! from the sepulchers (people) will rush forth to their Lord."

(Qur'an 36:51)

- 8) The angel of death (Azra'eel), together with his assistants, separate the spirit from the body at the time of death.
- 9) Munkar and Nakeer the two angels in charge of questioning people in their graves about their faith.
- 10) Angels who will welcome the believers into heaven and greet them with Peace.

And angels shall enter unto them from every gate (with the salutation) "Peace unto you for that you persevered in patience. How excellent is the final (Qur'an 13:23,24) 11) Eight Angels who will carry the

throne (the greatest creation) of Allah on the day of judgment.

"And eight (angels) will, that day bear the Throne of your Lord above them." (Qur'an 69:17)

Among the other tasks assigned to the angels, which the Prophet (PBUH) informed us about, are:

- Breathing the spirit in the fetus in the womb of the mother, at the beginning of the fifth month of pregnancy.
- Witnessing every good deed and every prayer. The Fajr and Asr prayers are witnessed by a large number of angels (the angels assigned to the morning and night shifts). The recital of Qur'an in the Fajr prayer is mentioned in the following verse:

"And the recital of the Qur'an in the morning prayer, for the recital of dawn is witnessed"

(Qur'an 17:78)

- surrounding those who study the book of Allah in the Masjid.
- Guarding Mecca and Medina from the Dajial (antichrist).

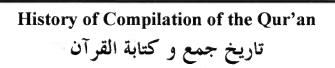
As to the number of angels, the Prophet (PBUH) informed us that there is not a foot of space in the seven heavens that does not have an angel performing an act of worship. The Prophet (PBUH) also informed us that the angels will not enter a house in which dogs reside, or statues are kept.

I pray to Almighty Allah to grant us the guidance and strength to be among His steadfast servants, who receive the support and comfort of His angels.

Ameen 🔁



4) The Guardians - the angels who



During the life of the Prophet (PBUH)

في عهد الرسول صلى الله عليه و سلم

Each verse received was recited by the Prophet, and its location, relative to other verses and surahs, was identified by him.

The verses were written by scribes, selected by the Prophet, on any suitable object - the leaves of trees, pieces of wood, parchment or leather, flat stones, and shoulder blades.

Scribes included Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Mu'awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan, Ubey Ibn Ka'ab, and Zayed Ibn Thabit.

Some of the companions wrote the Qur'an for their own use.

Several hundred companions memorized the Our'an by heart.

During the time of Abu Bakr في عهد أبو بكر

Umar Ibn Al-Khattab urged Abu Bakr to preserve and compile the Our'an.

Reason:

Heavy casualties suffered among the reciters, who memorized the Qur'an, during the battle Yamamah.

Abu Bakr entrusted Zaved Ibn Thabit with the task of collecting the Our'an.

Reason:

Zayd was present during the last recitation of the Qur'an by the Prophet to Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) .

Zayed, with the help of the companions who memorized and wrote verses of the Qur'an, accomplished the task and handed Abu Bakr the first authenticated copy of the Qur'an. The copy was kept in the residence of Hafsah, daughter of Umar, and wife of the Prophet.

During the time of Uthman

فی عهد عثمان بن عفان

Uthman ordered Zaved Ibn Thabit, AbdullahIbn AlZubayr, Saeed Ibn Al-Aas, and Abdur-Rahman Ibn Harith Ibn

Hisham to make perfect copies of the authenticated copy (kept with Hafsa).

Reason:

Expansion the Islamic state and concern about differences in recitation.

Copies were sent to various places in the Muslim world. The original copy returned to Hafsa, and a copy was kept in Medina.

Three stages of Dotting and Diacritization المراحل الثلاثة

للنقط والتشكيل

a) Dots were put as syntactical marks by Abu Al-Aswad Doaly, during the time of Mu'awiya Ibn Abi Sufian.

> علامات الإعراب على شكل نقط

b) The letters were marked with different dotting by

Nasr Ibn Asem and Hayy Ibn Ya'amor, during the time of Abd Al-Malek Ibn

Marawan. النقط

لتمييز الحروف مثل ب،ت،ث

c) A complete system of diacritical marks (damma, fataha, kasra) was invented by Al Khaleel Ibn Ahmad Al Faraheedy.

علامات التشكيل

الضمة ، الفتحة ، الكسرة

The Prophet (PBUH) used to recite the Our'an before angel Jibreel (Gabriel) once every Ramadan, but he recited it twice (in the same order we have it today) in the last Ramadan Before his death, Jibreel taught the Prophet (PBUH) the seven modes of recitation.

Prayer for Seeking Allah's Guidance in Decision Making (Istikharah) صلاة الاستخارة

Seeking Allah's Guidance making a decision (choice) between permissible alternatives.

Purpose

Any time day or night

When

Nature and number of Rak'at

After making the Supplication (Immediately, or later on)

- one performs ablution (wud'u) and performs two rak'at (sunnah required for this purpose)
- In each raka'h, after reciting alfatihah, one recites whatever one wishes of the Our'an.
- After the prayer one praises Allah, sends salutations to the Prophet (PBUH), and then makes the special supplication (du'a) recommended by the Prophet (PBUH), and given below.
- One may feel more favorably disposed towards one choice or another.
- One should not insist on doing what he/she had desired to do before making Istikharah.

Special Supplication (du'a)

"O Allah! I seek Your guidance (in making a choice), as You are All-Knowing, and I appeal to You to give me ability as You are Omnipotent, and I ask You for Your great bounty, for You have powe, and I have none. And You know, and I know not. You are the knower of hidden matters.

O Allah! If You know that this matter (then he should mention it) is good for me - in my religion, my livelihood, and for my life in the Hereafter, (or he said: 'for my present and future life') then make it (easy) and bless it for me. And if You know that this matter is not good for me - in my religion, my livelihood and my life in the Hereafter (or he said: 'for my present and future life') then keep it away from me and take me away from it, and choose the good for me wherever it be, and make me content with it".

دعاء الإستخارة

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّى أَسْتَخُيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِــن فَضَلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلاَ أَقْدِرُ ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ ، وَأَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ .

وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي (أو قَالَ : عَاجِل أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ) فَأَقْدُرُهُ لِي وَيَسِّرُهُ لِي ثُمُّ بَارِكَ لِي فِيهِ ، وَإِنَّ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أُنَّ هَــذا الأمر شرّ لى في ديني وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرى (أو قَالَ : عَاجِل أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ) فَاضِرفْهُ عَنِّي ، وَاضِرفْني عَنْهُ ، وَاقْدُرْ لِيَ الْجَنْدَ حَنْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ ارْضِني به .

Continued from page 1 **Editorial**

with modern scientific knowledge, which point to the throwing off of planets from vast quantities of diffused nebular matter, of which the central condensed core is the sun (the nebular hypothesis).

What future space missions will disclose concerning extraterrestrial life,

will only be realizing the scientific miracle of the Qur'an, and a proof that it is coming from Allah (SWT)

سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفْسِاقِ وَفِي أنفُسِهمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ . (سورة فصلت - من آبة ٥٣)

"Soon will We show them Our sign in the (furthest) regions (of space), and their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth." (Our'an 41:53)

I pray to Almighty Allah to make us benefit from His signs, and appreciate His divine guidance provided to us in Ameen 📮 the Qur'an.

