

al-talib 
THE MUSLIM NEWSMAGAZINE AT UCLA the student

December 2000 ◉ Ramadan 1421



MIRACLES

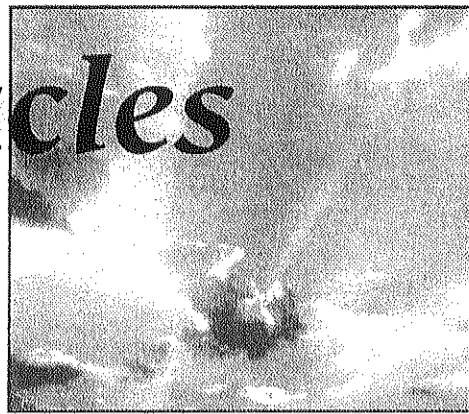
beyond the national

Mercy of Miracles

increasing our certainty,
testing our faith

"Even if We did send unto them angels, and the dead did speak unto them, and We gathered together all things before their very eyes, they are not the ones to believe, unless it is in Allah's plan. But most of them ignore (the truth)."

— The Holy Qur'an, 6: 111



As we conclude production of another *Al-Talib* issue on the 21st of Ramadan, one of the nights that could very well be *Laylat al-Qadr* (the Night of Power), we are left to consider what the true worth of this work really amounts to. As dawn approaches and the realization hits that we have not been spending much time in the *masjids* (Muslim places of worship), nor seen much of our families during this blessed month, we have to ask ourselves where our priorities lie.

What is it all for? Does anyone even read *Al-Talib*? Will we ever make our Ramadan deadline? We haven't slept, we're far from home, and many of us are pre-occupied with other concerns. Nobody cares anymore. The struggle is over. Panic. Desperation. Defeat.

Just as our fatigue begins to get the best of us and we are ready to lay down arms, we receive a phone call, "As-salamu 'alaykum. Guess what? At the masjid tonight, my father met a formerly incarcerated Muslim brother who converted to Islam while in prison." Silence. Then, "He converted through the influence of *Al-Talib*."

Subhan Allah (glory be to Allah). Tears well up in our sleep-deprived eyes, our enthusiasm is revived, and we return to work with a renewed vigor. This is why we're here. Not for credit or recognition or entertainment – but rather, for that one chance to possibly affect even one life through our words: revolution by the pen. This is our *Qiyam al-Layl* (night vigil) on the Night of Power. The Creator is Generous.

Is this not a manifestation of the Most Merciful? Rather than punishing us for our ingratitude and waning enthusiasm, He instead strengthens us with a story that strokes our bruised egos, uplifts us from despair, and – no matter how silly it may seem – makes us feel appreciated, a miracle of Allah's Mercy.

A scholar was once being harassed by his students, "Show us a miracle."

Finally, he stood up, danced around the room, and sat back down. His students waited in anticipation. "Is it not miracle enough that the very earth didn't swallow me for doing such a ludicrous thing in the Sight of my Lord?"

This material world, in which the laws of science are esteemed more than the faith of individuals, blurs our comprehension of the beautiful signs of Allah Most High. The Qur'an is our impeccable reminder that there was once a time when angels fought alongside the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and his companions in battle, that by the mercy of Allah Most High, people witnessed the splitting of the moon, and that Angel Jibril took our Beloved (peace and blessings be upon him) to meet Allah the Exalted, Himself.

But how many are willing to believe in the signs of Allah Most High today? The very fact that the believer is forgiven for his sins with every hardship he faces – even if it is something as slight as being pricked by a thorn – is the most taken-for-granted miracle of all. The birds flying above us, whom "none can uphold except the Merciful" (The Holy Qur'an, 67:19); our mothers, who bore us "in travail upon travail" (The Holy Qur'an, 31:14) and who continually sacrifice themselves for our sakes; Allah's ocean of generosity, which would not diminish by a single drop even if all of *jinn* (unseen beings mentioned in the Qur'an) and mankind were to gather together and ask of Him – all are miraculous signs for man to reflect upon.

Aside from the Prophet's (peace and blessings be upon him) countless other miracles, he brought the Holy Qur'an, every *ayah* (verse) of which is a miracle in and of itself. Unlike the miracles we hear about from eras past but cannot witness for ourselves, we are still graced with the beauty of the Qur'an's arrangement, its inimitability and eloquence, and the power it has to break our hearts.

Allah Most High chooses at will when or how to bend the laws of nature

in order to honor His friends and servants; for the scholars of traditional Islam, issues of supernatural feats were of material concern. Imam al-Shafi'i was once told by a student, "If you see a man walking on water but who follows his desires (instead of following the *Shari'ah*, Islamic Law), avoid him." Imam al-Shafi'i replied, "You have understated the point; if you see a man flying through the air but who follows his desires, avoid him."

And supernatural miracles are still vibrant today. In the Afghan *jihad* (physical struggle in the cause of Allah Most High) against the Soviets less than 15 years ago, for example, Allah's *mujahidin* (freedom fighters) were granted victory against impossible odds, witnessing the most amazing miracles on the battlefield; even today, *mujahidin* in Chechnya, grossly outnumbered in soldiers and weaponry, report of otherworldly occurrences which save their lives in seemingly hopeless situations. Yet our *Din* (Islamic way of life) is not built on miracles; rather, it is built on Truth – the very Word of Allah Most High and the superior example of His Messenger (Allah bless him and grant Him peace). The *sababab* (companions of the Prophet, peace be upon him) did not need to witness the parting of the sea, nor did they request to behold Allah Most High before they would believe and march forth in His cause. The simple purity of Islam is what contributes to its finality as the *Din al-Haqq* (Religion of Truth).

Miracles, in their physical as well as supernatural manifestations, serve as a reminder that we must trust in the *nasr* (divine aid) of Allah Most High and that we have no cause to despair. They remind us that we live in a fragile *dunya* (transitory world), which we will one day imagine was only a dream, and to Him is our final return. •

Jazakum Allahu khayran,
— The *Al-Talib* Staff

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Al-Talib is devoted to expressing the views, concerns and ideas of the American Muslim. It seeks to promote and achieve community empowerment and the worldwide success of Muslims by instilling the Ummah with the spirit of jihad, the love of the Qur'an and the example of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. It also serves to correct the mainstream media's misinformation about Islam and Muslims, and seeks to provide non-Muslims with accurate information about Islam. Furthermore, *Al-Talib* is committed to remaining an independent forum for a diverse spectrum of views and concerns.

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This magazine contains
the name of Allah.
Please treat it with respect.
Jazakum Allahu khayran.