



FARAH

ISSUE 3

THE MAGAZINE GUIDE TO MUSLIMS

MEDICINE IN THE HISTORY OF ISLAM

A peak into the golden age

HARD HEARTS

A few remedies to soften up the heart

FOOD BITES

Shahin delivers the recipe for a simple & quick 3 course meal

8 THINGS TO DO

BEFORE RAMADAN

It's never too early (or late) to prep for the holy month!

FOUNDER & HEAD OF THE
FARAH SAEED TRUST

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FARAH WITH ME ISSUE 3

Introduction

(Bismillah Al-Rahman Al-Raheem (in Arabic))

Asalamu alaykum wa rahmatu allahi wa barakatuh (in Arabic)

Ramadan Mubarak to all of you and may this month bring us closer to our Lord. Ramadan is a month of reflection, forgiveness, unity, charity and improving ourselves for this month and beyond.

Farah Magazine is an annual magazine that is filled with inspirational articles written by buzzing writers. It is part of Inspire Me project that itself is one of the projects under the Farah Saeed Trust, a UK-based charitable trust is an umbrella of many projects in Farah's name as a sadaqah jariya (continuous charity) that was setup on April 1st 2014.

Who is Farah?

Farah is a daughter, sister, wife, friend, doctor and teacher who had been diagnosed with gastric metastatic cancer in March 2014 at the age of 27.

She fought bravely with treatment, patience, prayer, courage and determination. She passed away on 8th September 2014.

We hope you enjoy and benefit from this issue.

Keep us and Farah in your duas

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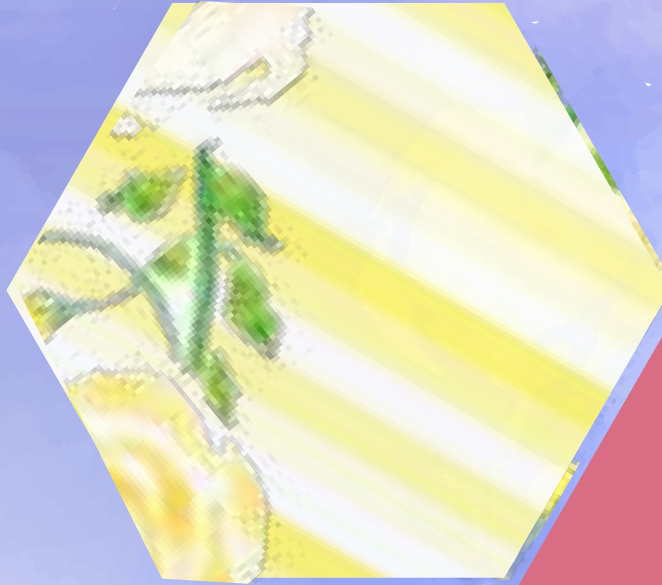
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 Farah With Me

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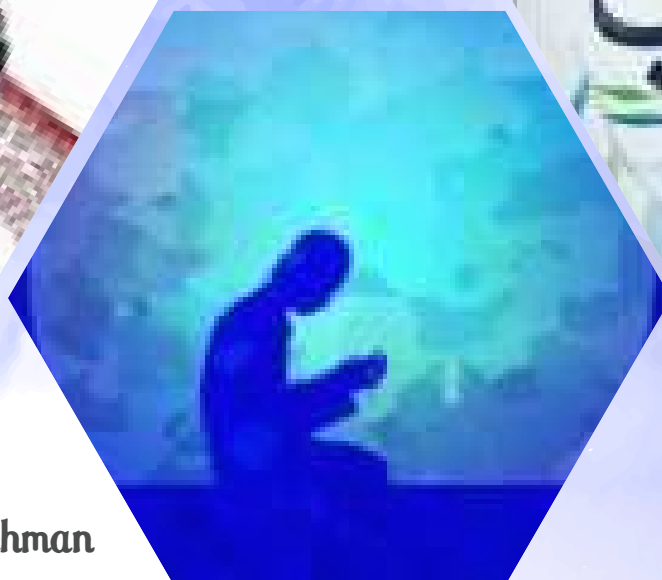
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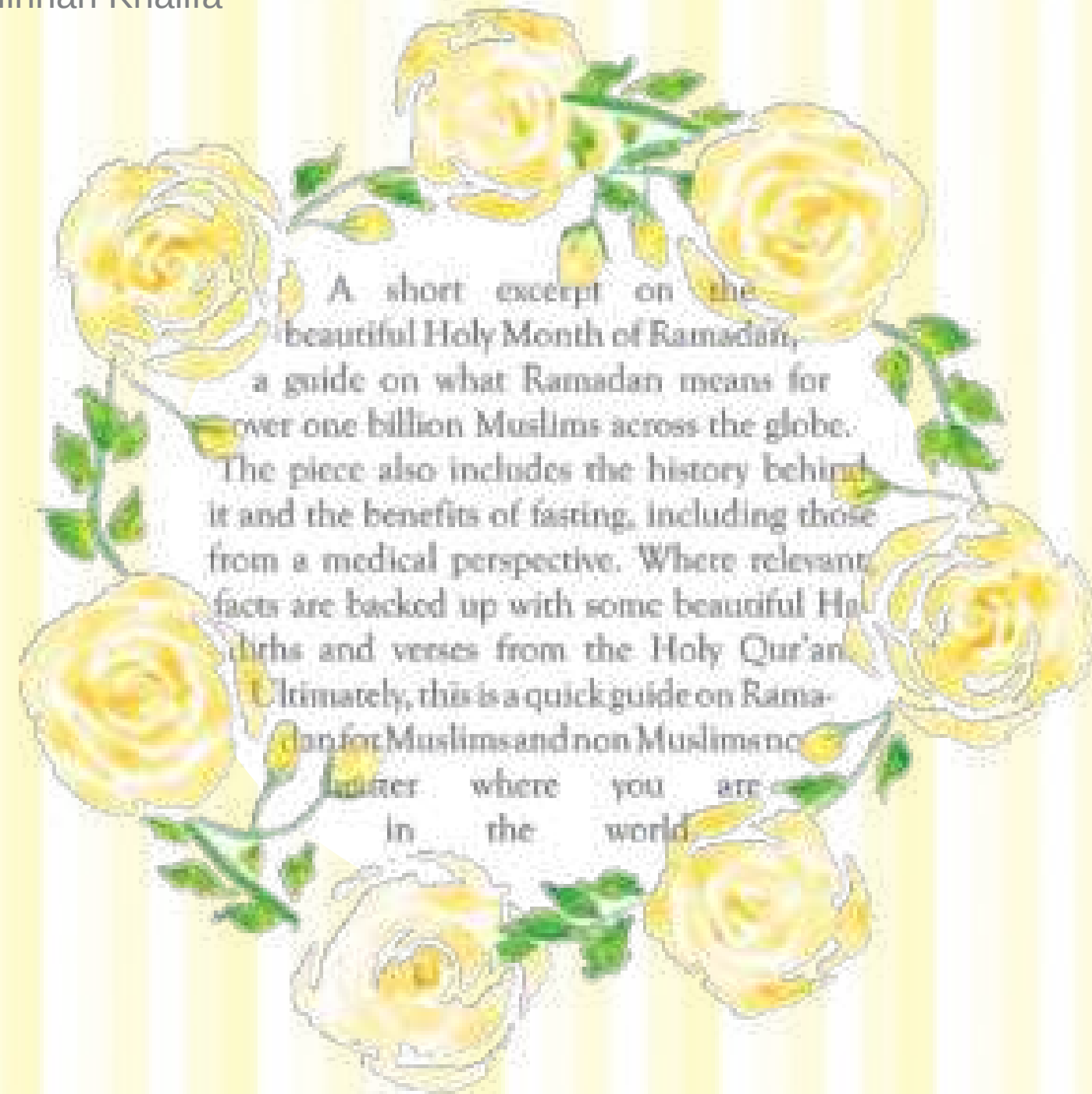


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THE BENEFITS OF RAMADAN

by Hinnah Khalifa



Hinnah Khalifa is a hard working, optimistic and creative London born enthusiast, now living in the heart of Leicester with a passion for writing and expressing her opinions and views through the use of words. A qualified professional in the banking industry by day, she is an avid beauty blogger and freelance writer in her spare time, a hobby in which she thoroughly enjoys. She prides herself in doing everything she does with absolute perfection and 100% commitment, amongst many of her achievements, the proudest is being a wife and a mother.

What is Ramadan?

(Also known as Ramazan, Ramadhan, or Ramathan)

It is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and is observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting (Sawm) to commemorate the first revelation of the Quran to Muhammad according to Islamic belief.

Wathila ibn Al-Asqa reported:

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "The scriptures of Abraham, upon him be peace, were revealed on the first night of Ramadan. The Torah was revealed after six nights of Ramadan had passed. The Gospel was revealed after thirteen nights of Ramadan had passed. The Criterion was revealed after twenty four nights of Ramadan had passed." [Musnad Ahmad 16536]

Ramadan is indeed a special time of the year for over one billion Muslims across the world. It is a time where Muslims engage in a declaration of faith and abstain from eating, drinking, smoking, and marital relations from dawn until dusk which lasts 29-30 days depending on a visual moon sighting. Muslims are also instructed to refrain from sinful behaviour that may undo the reward of fasting, such as insulting, backbiting, cursing, lying and fighting.

The Holy month is a time where there is complete devotion, self control and inner reflection and many Muslims think of it as a spiritual cleanse and bringing themselves closer to their Lord. It is also believed that rewards (Thawab) for fasting and good deeds are multiplied during the holy month.

Oh you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may learn piety and righteousness" (Q 2:183)

Ramadan is the third fundamental pillar of the Islamic religion or a religious obligation which is fardh (obligatory) amongst all Muslims alike after the age of puberty provided they are healthy and sane. There are some Muslims that are exempt from fasting, those suffering from an illness, travelling, are elderly, pregnant, breastfeeding, diabetic or going through menstrual bleeding.

It is also a time of intense worship which includes reciting the Qur'an, praying salah, engaging in good deeds, purifying ones behaviour as well as giving to the needy. In addition to this, the goal of fasting is also to experience hunger and think of the less fortunate as well as being thankful and appreciating all of Allah's (Gods) blessings.

In the Arabic language, fasting is known as sawm. Muslims arise early in the morning during Ramadan to have a pre-dawn breakfast meal, known as suhoor. At the end of the day, the fast is completed by taking the iftar meal, which usually includes dates, fresh fruits, appetizers, beverages and dinner. Later in the evening, Muslims attend special nightly prayers (called tarawih) at their local mosque. Each night during Ramadan, approximately 1/30th of the Qur'an is recited in the tarawih prayers, so that the entire scripture is recited in the course of the 29 or 30 days of the month.

THE BENEFITS

It is no doubt that Ramadan is a month to reap up rewards. During this holy month, it is believed that sins are forgiven and that the doors of Heaven are wide open whilst the gate of Hellfire is closed.

Allah is the reward of fasting: It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (S): "The Almighty Allah says:

'For every good deed there are ten to seven

hundred times rewards, save fasting. For fasting is for Me and I am the reward of it

It in all fasting helps Muslims feel compassion for the less fortunate; it builds self control and will power for use even after Ramadan. It is also a time of self reflection, to become a better human being, to eliminate bad habits and to be grateful for the little things in life. The benefits of fasting are manifold. Fasting has personal, social, hygienic and best of all spiritual benefits.

Fasting in fact has many other special benefits; although it is mainly associated with Ramadan, there have also been reports about its benefits health wise. Studies have shown that fasting has shown to improve blood pressure, lower cholesterol as well as improve insulin sensitivity and of course shed some pounds.

In June 2014, for example, Medical News Today reported on a study suggesting periodic fasting - defined in the study as 1 day of water-only fasting a week - may reduce the risk of diabetes among people at high risk for the condition.

Another study, conducted by Dr. Valter Longo and colleagues from the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles, found longer periods of fasting - 2-4 days - may even "reboot" the immune system, clearing out old immune cells and regenerating new ones - a process they say could protect against cell damage caused by factors such as aging and chemotherapy.

RAMADAN FOR NON MUSLIMS

So what does Ramadan actually mean for non Muslims? It is clear that non Muslims are aware of what the holy month is and are not completely oblivious to it. It becomes apparent when their Muslim friends, neighbours or work colleagues do not eat during the typical lunching hours yet joins them. Or that



they are less chatty than usual and are not standing around the coffee or water machine at work discussing last night's TV, or do not go to the gym at all that month as they partake in the nightly prayers. If anything, they are admired and impressed by their willpower and courage. Some non Muslims have even gone as far as fasting during Ramadan out of curiosity, for the sense of 'togetherness' as well as from reading up on Islam and its cultural traditions.

Dale, a British student in Dubai, said he was encouraged to join in because he found Ramadan a "noble" occasion.

"I feel that the ability to surrender one's food and drink for the day, every day for a month in order to truly understand how privileged one is, is a fantastic thing to do, irrespective of religion or beliefs," he said.)



COVER PHOTOGRAPH PAPER BATTER BANTER

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HUMANITY

Hafsa Rahman

A NATION SO DIVERSE
MANY PEOPLE OF FAITH
AND DIFFERENT COLOURS WE CAN SEE,
MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR US
TO STAND UNITED AND BE FREE
COS THIS IS WHO WE ARE
AND THIS IS WHO WE WILL EVER BE
SO WHEN DOORS CLOSE UPON US
WE MUST STAND TOGETHER IN UNITY

FREE FROM ALL OUR WORRIES,
FREE FROM ALL OUR FLAWS,
IT'S TIME WE STAND ALTOGETHER,
SO ALTOGETHER WE CAN'T FALL
STRONG AND UNDIVIDED
IF WE CHOOSE TO BE.
DESPITE ALL OUR DIFFERENCES
THAT SEPARATES US,
FROM BEING HUMAN BEINGS

WE ARE DIFFERENT IN OUR COLOURS,
TO THE RELIGIONS THAT WE PREACH
WE CAN SPREAD LOVE
FROM OUR ACTIONS
ALL THE WAY DOWN TO OUR SPEECH
WE CAN BRING BACK OUR VALUES
AND THE WAY WE LIVE IN HARMONY,
SPREAD THE PEACE ALL AROUND
AND THE POSITIVITY.

WE CAN CONSISTENTLY
SHOW DIGNITY
TO THOSE ARE DIFFERENT FROM ME.
NO MATTER HOW DIVIDED WE ARE
NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE FIGHT
IT'S TIME WE COME TOGETHER
AND IT'S TIME WE UNITE

BECAUSE THIS IS WHAT WE LIVE FOR
IT'S TIME WE OPEN UP NEW DOORS
HAND IN HAND
TOGETHER WE SHALL STAND
AND SLOWLY SLOWLY
OUR HUMANITY WILL RESTORE
TO THE HUMANS WE ARE TRULY WITHIN
IT'S OUR DUTY NOW
SO WE MUST BEGIN



image courtesy:
<http://combiboilersleeds.com/>

8 THINGS TO DO IN RAMADAN

Yusra Naeem

RAMADAN IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER AND EVERYBODY WANT TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE MONTH TO COME. THIS IS A POWERFUL TIME TO NOURISH YOUR BODY, YOUR SOUL AND PURPOSE. WE ALL WANT TO DO ALL THE NECESSARY THINGS THAT ARE HELPFUL IN SAVING TIME BEFORE RAMADAN. RAMADAN IS A MONTH IN WHICH WE WANT TO DO AS MUCH GOOD DEEDS AS WE CAN BUT SOMETIMES WE JUST DON'T FOCUS ON LITTLE THINGS THAT SHOULD BE DONE BEFORE RAMADAN SO THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO SAVE TIME TO OFFER MORE PRAYERS INSTEAD OF DOING ROUTINE WORK. I HOPE THIS POST IS HELPFUL FOR YOU ALL. TRY TO FOLLOW THESE STEPS AND TRUST ME YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SAVE ALOT OF TIME FOR RAMADAN. GET ORGANIZED AND THEN YOUR LIFE WILL BE MUCH MORE EASIER THAN NOW.

LET THIS RAMADAN MAKE US A BETTER MUSLIM AND MAY WE BE ABLE TO CORRECT OUR MISTAKES.(AMEEN)

SO I WILL TELL YOU HOW YOU CAN MANAGE THOSE THINGS BEFORE RAMADAN. I HOPE THIS WILL HELP YOU INSHAA ALLAH.

1 BUY ALL THE NECESSARY THINGS FOR THE ENTIRE MONTH

Yes this is the most important part and is time consuming as well. So why not do all the planning of meals and grocery shopping for the entire month before Ramadan? Trust me this will save a lot of time and energy as well. Make a list of things that will be needed and do this before going to the grocery shop. Now go and shop all those things you mentioned in the list and hey you are done with this, see now you don't have to go to shopping and feel frustrated and tired while fasting.

2 CLEAN THE ENTIRE HOUSE THOROUGHLY OR HIRE HELP

As you are done with the kitchen, now it is the time to clean the entire house. You have to take help in this case because I know how tiring it is to clean the whole house but the result is so good. So start with washing Curtains, bed sheets, cleaning carpets, sofas and all the furniture. Then change the curtains, bedsheets and Clean the floors, walls etc. By doing this you will save a lot of time as you don't have to do all the detailed cleaning in Ramadan. When you are done with all this, take some rest and then come to next step. Yes guys there is still a lot more to do! No worries, you can do it all!

3 GET ALL THE EID SHOPPING DONE NOW

I have seen so many people including my family doing Eid Shopping in the last days of Ramadan. No it is not good because last days of Ramadan are so important and we should pray as much as possible in those days, why to waste time? You have to be so conscious in spending time in Ramadan because each and every second is so important. Make the most out of it. Do all the Eid Shopping for you and your family before Ramadan. Even if you have to buy gifts for your relatives (you should

4 CLEAN AND ORGANIZE THE KITCHEN AND FRIDGE

As you have done all the shopping, now it is the time to put all the things in their right place and organize all the stuff you know so that there will be no difficulty in finding things in Ramadan. You have to save time and this is what you should be more concerned about. So start with cleaning the shelves and cupboards. Put the crockery after washing in its right place (wherever you put all the crockery). Now come to vegetables and fruits and after cleaning put them in their right place. When you are done with this, the next step is to clean the fridge. I know you will get tired in the end but guess what it will be so easy for you in the whole month of Ramadan and you will perform your tasks easily. Now that's what we should keep in mind 'No pain no gain' haha.

5 DECORATE THE HOUSE FOR RAMADAN

Well this is an interesting thing to do. Ask your children to help you out in this. By decorating I mean, you can put Ramadan calendars on the walls of rooms, one in the kitchen. It will help you a lot and you will be aware that when is the time for iftaar and all. Place different paintings with different Duas written on them that we use in our daily routine. Ask your children to make these charts (it is a fun idea and also helpful in learning too). And there are a lot more ideas, whatever comes in your mind that you think will be able to prepare you and your family for Ramadan, do it. Don't just

6 MAKE A TARWEEH SCHEDULE

Hold on! You are done with all the tiring stuff. Now it is the time to make a Tarweeh Schedule specially when you have young children. It will be easy to get in the routine of praying

7 SPEND LESS TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA

A lot of time while fasting or preparing for Ramadan is spent telling other people about that. It is not necessary to tell people and upload a status every day about what are you doing, are you praying or not etc. People don't want to know what you are gonna prepare for first iftaar. Spend less time on social media so that it will be easy for you to adjust in Ramadan.

8 LISTEN TO ISLAMIC LECTURES

This is another way to use your time productively. It increases your knowledge and helps you to do better. You will get to know more about what are things you are doing wrongly or the things that need to be fixed before Ramadan. It will increase your faith also. We also know how important learning is, especially when it comes to Islamic Knowledge.



PREPARING FOR RAMADAN

Suad Kamardeen is a British Nigerian studying Chemical Engineering at the University of Birmingham, UK. She has an immense love for babies, trigonometry, writing and reading whilst sipping beautiful coffee (preferably, chai latte). She hopes to inspire people through story-writing, teaching and mentoring. She currently runs the blog, The Millennial Muslim (themillennialmuslim.org), with the aim of drawing hearts closer to Allah and helping them cultivate a loving and personal relationship with Him.

What is the purpose of Ramadan?

In Qur'an 2:183, Allah says, "O you who believe, Fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqun (of those who have attained Taqwa)."

Ramadan is a time for us to become better people, improve our relationship with Allah and most importantly to attain Taqwa.

What is Taqwa?

Taqwa is having the consciousness of Allah in everything you do. Having awareness of your deeds will either bring you closer to Allah or take you further away from Him depending on your perception.

For example, if you do something wrong/commit a sin and you're aware that it's wrong, you could either feel bad and seek the forgiveness of Allah through repentance or you could justify what you've done. May Allah protect us from being among the latter. Ameen.

How do we attain Taqwa?

Hadith Al-Bukhari [6502]

Narrated Abu Hurayra, the Prophet, sallallahu alayhi was-salam said, "Allah says, 'Whoever takes a close friend of mine as an enemy, I will declare war on Him. My slave does not draw closer to me by anything more beloved to Me than that which I have made obligatory upon him, and My slave continues to draw closer to Me by supererogatory deeds until I love him and if I love him, I will be his hearing with which he hears, his vision with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his feet with which he walks. If he were to ask of Me, I'll surely give him, if he were to seek refuge with Me, I would surely grant him refuge. I do not hesitate about anything that I want to do as I hesitate to take the soul of a believer for he hates death and I hate to hurt him.'"

In order to have a productive Ramadan, we need to set specific goals. Take some time out to write down what you want to achieve this Ramadan and how you want to achieve it. We are not promised the next Ramadan so it's important to make the most of this one. May Allah preserve our souls and make up among those who witness this Ramadan. Ameen.

Goals to consider for Ramadan:

1. To be in a state loved by Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alayhi was salam) at all times.
2. Seek to attain Allah's pleasure to strengthen your connection with Him by constantly engaging in dhikr (the remembrance of Allah) and doing all acts loved by Him (as mentioned in Hadith above).
3. Reciting the Qur'an but also striving to understand it and act on its rulings.
4. Choose a few good habits to cultivate or improve and continuously strive to cut out bad habits.
5. Besides abstaining from food, drink and sexual activities, strive to guard your ears, eyes, tongue and limbs from disobedience. [Be very strict with what you expose yourself to and if you notice a gathering steering off into the wrong direction, try to change the topic of conversation or leave.]

That being said, it is important to have a solid intention behind any deed to avoid being amongst those who fast but attain nothing from it except hunger and thirst.

Umar ibn Al-Khattab reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: Verily, deeds are only with intentions. Verily, every person will have only what they intended. So whoever emigrated to Allah and His Messenger, then his emigration is for Allah and His Messenger. Whoever emigrated to get something in the world or to marry a woman, then his emigration is for whatever he emigrated for. [Sahih Bukhari 54]

Note: Any act, including making du'a is inseparable from intention. Before you undergo any task, ensure that the task is being performed with Ihsaan (to the best of your abilities) for the sake of Allah and not personal gain.

Know that your ability to do anything comes from Allah. If your intention is to please Allah and obey Him, then He will grant you the ability to do what everyone thought you were incapable of doing.

However, we can start off with strong intentions but slowly begin to slack, which leads to a shift in focus and reduction in effort.



How to do we maintain consistency?

1. Before any deed, check your intention and set goals. For every goal, write the reason why you want to do it, what you intend to achieve and where you hope to be when Ramadan is over.
2. Whilst performing the deed, it is important to revisit your intentions. This could be in form of a weekly review where you ask questions such as: Why did I begin what I'm doing? Am I on track? How can I stay on track or get back to being on track?
3. Once the deed is done, revisit it. At the end of Ramadan, ask yourself: "Did I achieve my goals?" "How can I ensure I keep up these good practices after Ramadan?" And seek forgiveness from Allah for your shortcomings.

Hadith to emphasise the importance of intentions: [Related by Sahih Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

On the authority of son of Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both), from the Messenger of Allah, sallallahu alayhi wasalam, among the sayings he related from his Lord, is that He said: Allah has written down the good deeds and the bad ones. Then He explained it (by saying that) he who has intended a good deed and has not done it, Allah writes it down with Himself as a full good deed, but if he has intended it and has done it, Allah writes it down with Himself as from 10-700 times or many times over. But if he has intended a bad deed and has not done it, Allah writes it down with Himself as a full good deed, but if he has intended it and has done it, Allah writes it down as one bad deed.

Let's strive to make active intentions for all acts regardless of what they may be. May Allah forgive us all for our shortcomings and accept our deeds. Ameen.

Remember me in your prayers. Thank you for reading!

the **millennial muslim**
ON THE PATH TO INSHAAH



Noorain Fatima's Calligraphy



LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM AYUB AS

BY FAIZA DEAN OMAR

Just over two months ago, I lost my baby boy after I went into spontaneous labour at 30 weeks pregnant.

It felt as though my world was crumbling around me. Nothing made sense and I was looking for answers, for some sort of explanation. I questioned but I knew the truth: we cannot question the will of Allah. It is true that He tests us, not to punish us, but to bring us closer to Him. As human beings, we tend to view trials and tribulations as a punishment from Him; on the contrary- Allah tests those whom He loves most.

Patience and contentment with Allah's Decree

When Ayub (peace be upon him) was tested by Allah, it was no ordinary test; his wealth, his children, everything he owned, were taken away from him. Over and above that, Allah tested him with regards to his health. Various tafseer narrate that there was not a single body part of Ayub (peace be upon him), that was not riddled with disease, save his heart and his tongue, which were in constant Dhikr (remembrance) of Allah. But he never complained. In fact, it is narrated that as worms and pus oozed from leprosy sores on his body, he would pick up those worms and praise Allah for creating them – Allahu Akbar! He remained in this condition for almost seventy years without a word of complaint.

Understanding that everything belongs to Allah alone

During his times of trial and tribulation, Ayub (peace be upon him) he never questioned why he was being tested. All his worldly possessions and his children were taken away from him, but his belief that everything is from Allah and everything will return to Allah, held true. It is even mentioned in the Bible about Job (Ayub, (peace be upon him), that he said: **"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the**

name of the Lord" [Job 1].

Belief that only good comes from Allah

As previously mentioned, Ayub (peace be upon him) remained in a state of poverty and illness for almost seventy years, until one day, his wife suggested that he make Duaa to Allah to be relieved of his affliction, and so he (peace be upon him) supplicated to Allah:

"Verily, distress has seized me, and You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."

[Surah al-Ambiya verse 83].

Ayub (peace be upon him) was certain of Allah's Mercy, and so Allah cured him and restored to him his wealth and replaced him with more children.

When things go wrong as they often do, and when we make plans or make Duaa for something that we really want, and it doesn't happen as we'd planned, let us consciously draw upon the story of this beloved prophet of Allah, who has epitomized the meaning of Sabr (patience). Allah was so pleased with Ayub (peace be upon him) that He has praised him for his patience:

"Truly! We found him patient. How excellent (a) slave! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance (to Us)" [Saad 38:44].





Noorain Fatima's Calligraphy



Noorain Fatima is an upcoming artist whose main goal is to give dawah through her art.

Each piece is carefully designed to please Allah. She did her masters in chemistry but later was inspired to do calligraphy and since three years she has been practicing it. Check out her Instagram and Facebook page to know more.

[f](#) [i](#) CLICK TO Like & Follow Noorain's work!



were muslims the first to interact with the native americans?

nafisa kara

Sister Nafisah Kara is an aspiring historian, founder of **Islamic History project** (www.islamichistoryproject.wordpress.com), a passionate advocate for animal rights and green issues in Islam, as well as a full time mother.

“Take a trip around the world and ask anyone who was the first to ‘discover’ America and one name usually comes to mind”
– CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

But what if I told you this ‘historical fact’ was actually a historical myth?

There is sufficient historical evidence to prove that Muslim explorers visited the America’s 6 centuries before Columbus was even born. In 889 AD Ibn Saeed Ibn Aswad of Cordoba sailed West from Delba (Palos) – the exact port that Columbus would eventually sail from in famous journey to ‘discover’ America in 1492.

In fact Mandinka explorers of West Africa travelled to the Americas in 1312 with 400 boats to trade with the Natives. This particular story was narrated by Mansa Musa on his famous journey to Hajj where he spoke of his Brother, King Abu Bakr who sent two fleets West towards the America’s – a total of 2400 ships filled with gold, provision and men to look for opportunities in distant lands. The Mandinka made

numerous journey’s to America successfully. Leo Weiner, a historian and linguist of Harvard University, writing in his book ‘Africa and The Discovery of America’, claims Columbus was fully aware of the West African Muslims who had spread throughout the Caribbean, Central, South and North American territories, including Canada, where they were trading and intermarrying with the Iroquois and Algonquin Indians. Linguists of today have found words originating from the Mandinka language within Native American dialects showing there was a sustained relationship between the two

Ash Sharif Al Idrisi – adviser to the King of Sicily wrote in ‘the excursions of the longing ones and crossing horizons’ of an incident where 8 Muslim sailors set out from Lisbon,

Portugal and reached an ‘unknown Island’ – America. Upon reaching they were captured by Natives and held captive for 3 days, on the 4th an indigenous translator arrived and spoke in fluent Arabic to arrange and secure their release. This indicates Muslims were frequent travellers to the America’s sharing language and culture with the Natives way before Columbus set sail.

Archaeologists have now discovered stones dating back as early as the 9th century engraved with Arabic words for ‘Muhammad, Jesus and Satan’ in Arizona, Nevada, Colorado and California. In recent times many Cherokee tribal members have outwardly stated they have clear links to Islam.

The chief of the north-eastern band Mahir Abdal-Razzaq El made a statement declaring his family had been Muslim for hundreds of years. The Cherokee traditional dress is also very similar to Muslim attire – a long modest dress for women and a turban for men- the famous Cherokee Sequoyah always wore a turban – much like Middle Eastern Arabfolk.

Muslims and Native Americans shared a harmonious relationship based on trade and commerce. They would both enjoy frequent interactions with one another and shared their culture in

a respectful manner. It’s important to note Muslim had a sustained relationship with America – but didn’t colonize the land.

In 1521, Spanish explorer Cortes conquered Mexico City, the Aztec Capital at the time and wrote, ‘in this great city there are many mosques, houses of idols and many beautiful buildings’, making a clear distinction between a mosque and an indigenous temple. This further proves Muslims had established communities in parts of the America’s and lived among the Natives centuries before European colonizers and conquerors reached.

The Mandinka tribe is a nation unfortunately that has been written out of the history books. Originating from Mali, their civilization was one of the richest kingdoms in world history. Their tribal society represented strength and honour and they were devout Muslims and warriors. The Mandinka would travel using the ocean currents to carry them to distant neighbouring lands and were excellent tradesmen.

Today historians are trying to determine if Muslims were the first to have a sustained relationship with the Americas. Here is an image of Mandinka Muslims meeting Native Americans at the shores.



The Heart is a small organ in the human body which changes constantly. However, one of the greatest problems an individual could face in this world is having a hard heart. He may have a good-looking face, a healthy and a fit body, but inside himself he could be the possessor of a hard heart. Malik ibn Dinar (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "A slave is not afflicted with a punishment greater than the hardening of the heart."

When the heart hardens, the eyes become dry and cannot cry due to the fear of Allah (Subhanahu wa ta'ala). If the heart hardens, a reminder or an advice would not benefit the individual. For indeed, a hardened heart is far from Allah (Subhanahu wa ta'ala), and away from the mercy of Allah (Subhanahu wa ta'ala).

HARD HEARTS

Sahla Nayyar

Sahlah is a young Muslimah who aspires to inspire today's youth with her writing. She loves spending her time reading about Islam, mental health, and psychology.

A FEW REMEDIES TO SOFTEN UP THE HARDENED

Move away from sins and evil.

If you are committing a sin constantly, try your best to stay away from the sin by avoiding going even close to the sin.

Know Allah through His names and attributes.

When an individual gets to know Allah through learning and understanding His names and attributes, he will be provided with love and fear for Allah (Subhanahu wa ta'ala). So he will love Allah, thus hoping for His mercy & he will fear Allah, so will fear His punishment.

Increase in the recitation of the Qur'aan.

The Glorious Qur'aan are the words of the Almighty, and its extremely powerful. Reciting it frequently with understanding will soften a hardened heart. Listen to reminders of scholars which will draw you closer to Allah.

Sitting with righteous company and righteous friends.

And last but not the least, ask Allah to keep you steadfast on the deen, and guided upon the straight path.

15



*Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said,
"Whoever says,*

'Subhan Allah wa bihamdihi,'

*one hundred times a day, will be forgiven all
his sins even if they were as much as the foam
of the sea."*

PHOTOGRAPHY: SHUMAYSA FARUQI





Noorain Fatima's Calligraphy

MEDICINE IN THE HISTORY OF ISLAM:

The golden age

Zaynah Farak

There is never a good time or place to be ill, but ill we will be at some point in our lives^[1]. In fact, as a result of our visits to the GP, hospitals & more, the NHS deals with over 1 million patients every 36 hours^[2]! We use every tool at our disposal to keep healthy today, but over 1000 years ago, where was the best place to be ill?



There existed an empire. So vast that it covered a third of the world at its peak^[3], and so progressed that major scientific discoveries were made years before western successors began to consider them^[4]. This was the Islamic golden age. An era of discovery and invention that shone through the Dark Ages of the west. An era often overlooked, but never overshadowed, as we cannot fail to see the contributions it made shaping the world as we know it today

Perhaps one of the most significant contributions to the modern world is in the field of medicine. From founding the first apothecary shops^[5], to discovering the spread of

disease through soil, water and air [6-ibn sina], the golden age of Islam was the age to be sick. With the opening of new lands and a huge influx of knowledge, coupled with the obligation to ponder on the human body and seek knowledge^[7], the perfect conditions were created for scientists to arise.

Medical scientists and physicians were in no short supply. Muslims have known since the time of the Prophet (saw) how important it is to take care of our bodies and seek cures for our illnesses^[8]. In fact, outside of Madinah Masjid, the Prophet (saw) allowed a tent to be set up in order for the first muslim nurse, Rufaidah bint Sa'ad, to treat the ill and



train other women[9]. What better way of achieving reward than to combine seeking knowledge with treating the sick?

Many muslims took this great task on, and impacted modern medicine as a result. Al-Zahrawi, known as the “father of modern surgery”, invented surgical instruments that modern instruments today mimic, and was also the first person to describe an ectopic pregnancy [10]. Ibn Al-Haythim, a pioneer in visual perception, was the first person to successfully combine the theories of Aristotle, Galen and Euclid and come to a conclusion on how light enters our eyes, allowing us to see[10a].

Perhaps most famous is Ibn Sina, author of Qanun al Tibb (canon of medicine), a medical encyclopedia that for over 6 centuries

Usamah ibn Shuraik narrated: “... ‘O Allah’s Messenger! Should we seek medical treatment for our illnesses?’ He replied: ‘Yes, you should seek medical treatment, because Allah, the Exalted, has let no disease exist without providing for its cure, except for one ailment, namely, old age’.” medical treatment, because Allah, the Exalted, has let no disease exist without providing for its cure, except for one ailment, namely, old age’.” - Tirmidhi

was the go to text book for anyone wanting to study medicine[11]. The canon went beyond merely providing ailments and cures, it covered the details of; causes and symptoms of diseases, the uses of simple and compound drugs, and the anatomy of human organs. The book contained descriptions of anaesthesia, ulcers, kidney disease, tuberculosis and even breast cancer[12]!

The importance of mental health also wasn’t overlooked. Ibn sina was one of the earliest physicians to write about the connection between mental and physical health. He believed negative thinking, or thoughts, can cause real illness in the same way that physical factors can[13]. Ibn Sinas work was not the only display of understanding between illness and mental health, in 872 C.E, the ruler of Egypt set up a hospital, which included a mental health ward, providing free healthcare for the poor[14].

The inability of the weak and poor to afford treatment made it necessary for the government to provide it, and so the Caliph

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and his Amirs built huge institutions in major cities[15]. We often take for granted the thorough and free healthcare that we receive without giving it a second thought. But the origins of a free healthcare system stem from the first hospitals built in the Islamic world. In fact the first hospital was built in Baghdad, in the early 9th century, and used zakat money to provide affordable or free healthcare to those in need[16]. It was not seen as a burden on the economy, but a legitimate expense of zakat tax.

In deciding the location of the hospital, another great physician and researcher, Al-Razi, was consulted. The author of over 200 books he was known for his experimental methods. When he was deciding the location of the hospital, he hung slabs of meat around the city, his theory was that the most untouched and maggot-free piece of meat indicated the best site for the build[16]!

But among them is he who says, “Our Lord, give us in this world [that which is] good and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.” (Quran, Al-Baqarah:201)

The hospital soon grew to resemble our modern institutions as we know them today. It included an out patients services, surgery centres and psychiatric wards, in fact, the biggest difference could be that all the services were completely free to those who needed it[17]. The healthcare system was not fuelled by the need for money, there were no patents on medication and research wasn’t funded by charities. It was viewed as an obligation to provide for those in need, and that obligation was fulfilled.

This was the accountability that people felt, to the extent that when some physicians made some mistakes and a patient died as a result, the caliph ordered that physicians be tested. He said that they were not allowed to start practising medicine until they obtained a diploma. In Baghdad alone, during this time, 860 diplomas were issued[18]! The popularity of medicine and the concern for life is clear.

From all these examples of education and medical advancement, one thing is consistent throughout-Islam. It was the determining factor in every decision and achievement. There was no material incentive, organisations weren’t company run with the aim of

income, no patents were allowed to restrict the access to medication, all they wanted was to strive for the best. Discoveries and inventions were for the Ummah, for advancement, not personal benefit. People wanted to achieve the best in this world, for the best in the hereafter.

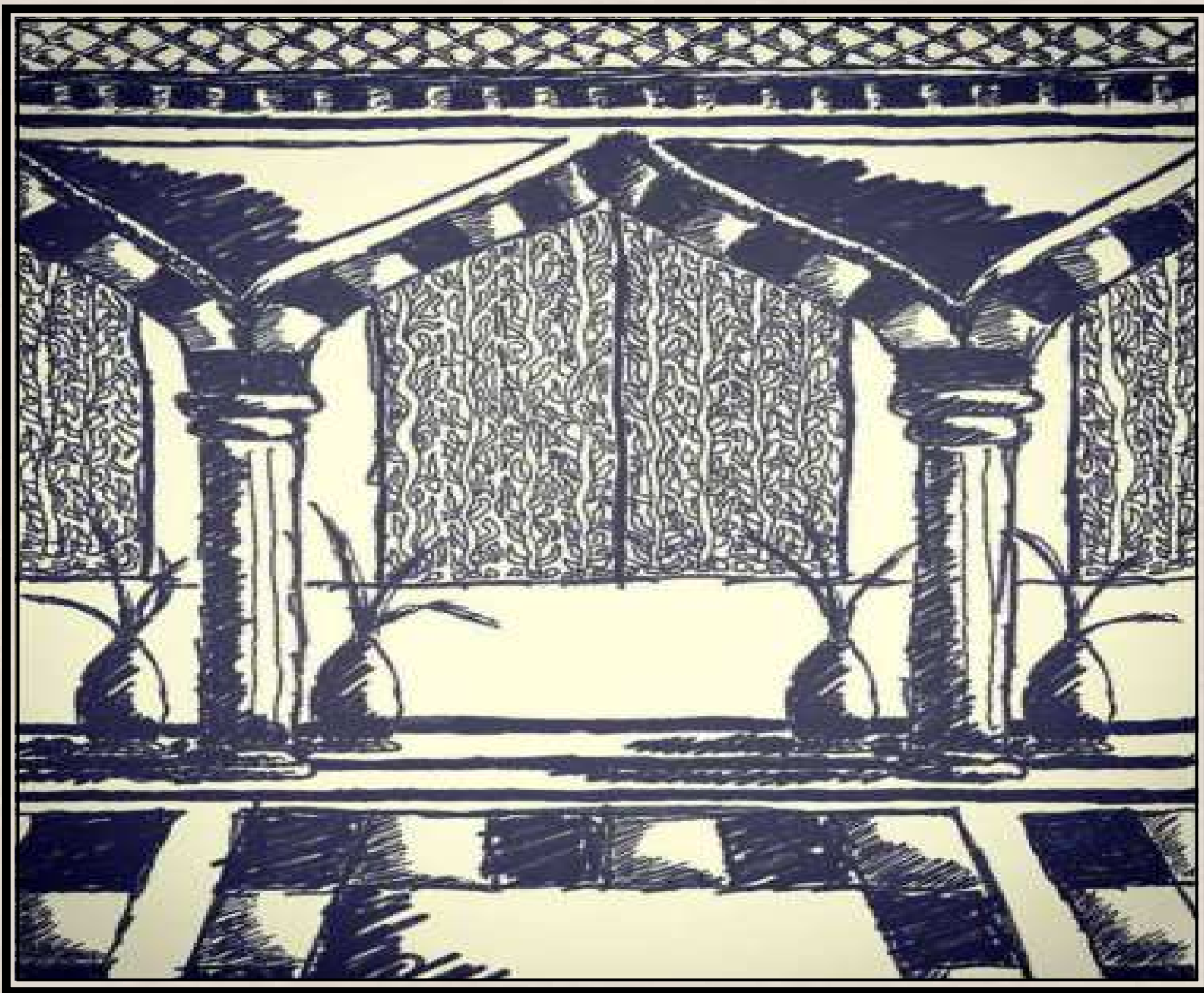
The people, the rulers, the scholars, all understood their duty of worship to Allah. With this intention and the best, most prosperous system, the Islamic world reached its peak of medical discoveries, and with the right intention and best system, it can once again reach above and beyond what anyone expects.

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art by
Behafarin

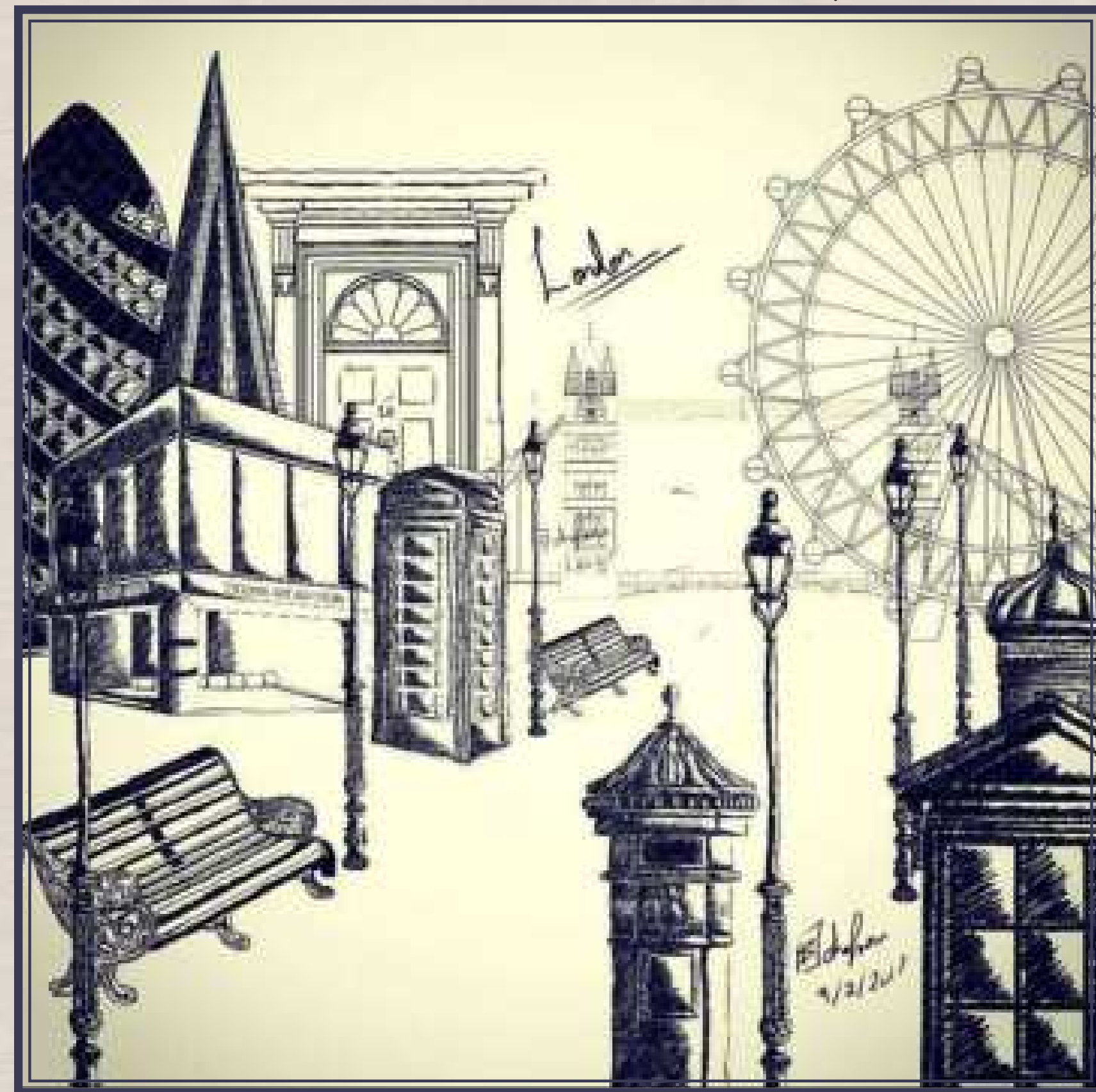


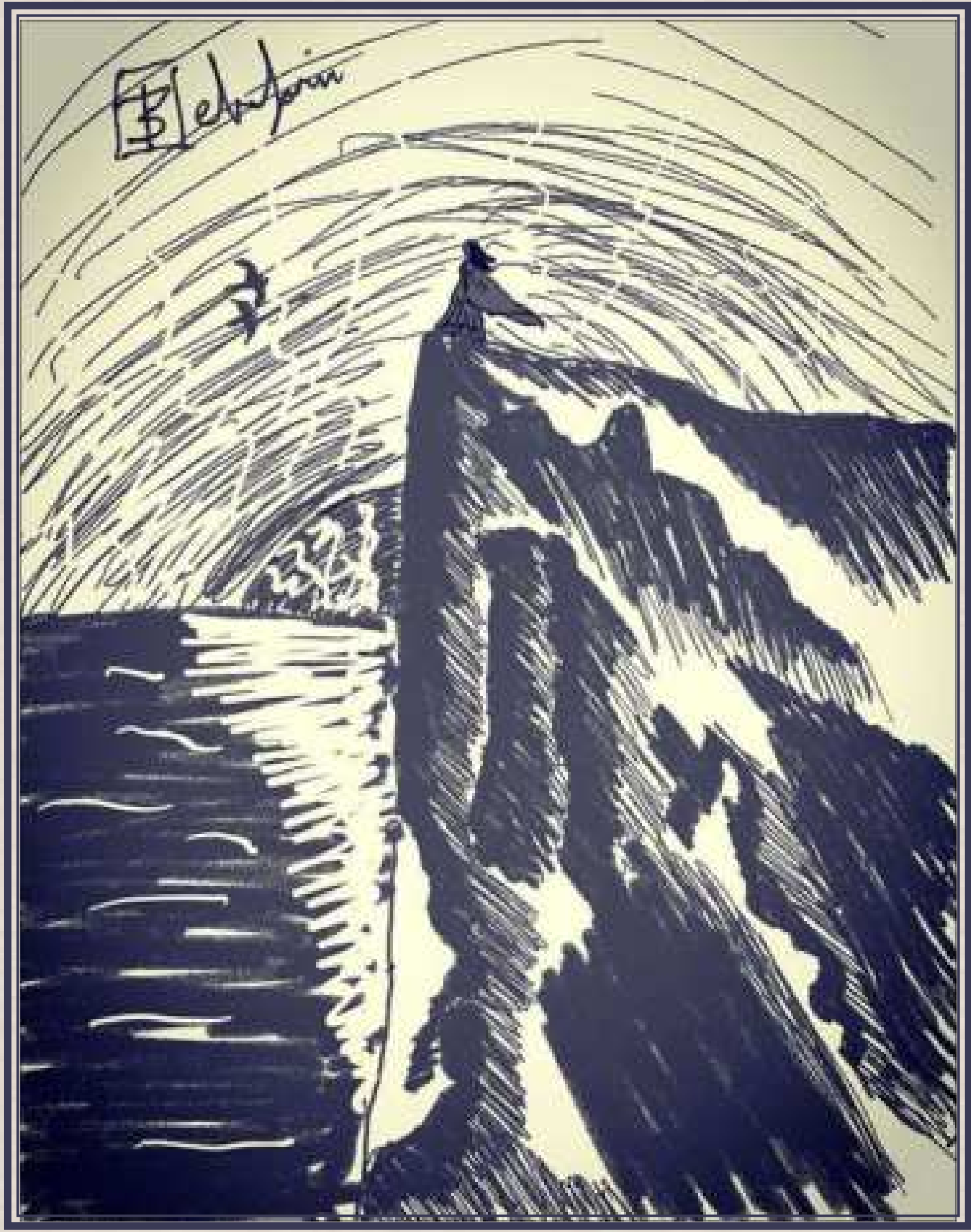
Behafarin is my chosen pen name which I decided to publish all my art work and doodles under. It seemed only fitting that a beautiful Persian name meaning 'well-created' and 'well-designed' was used for such a purpose.

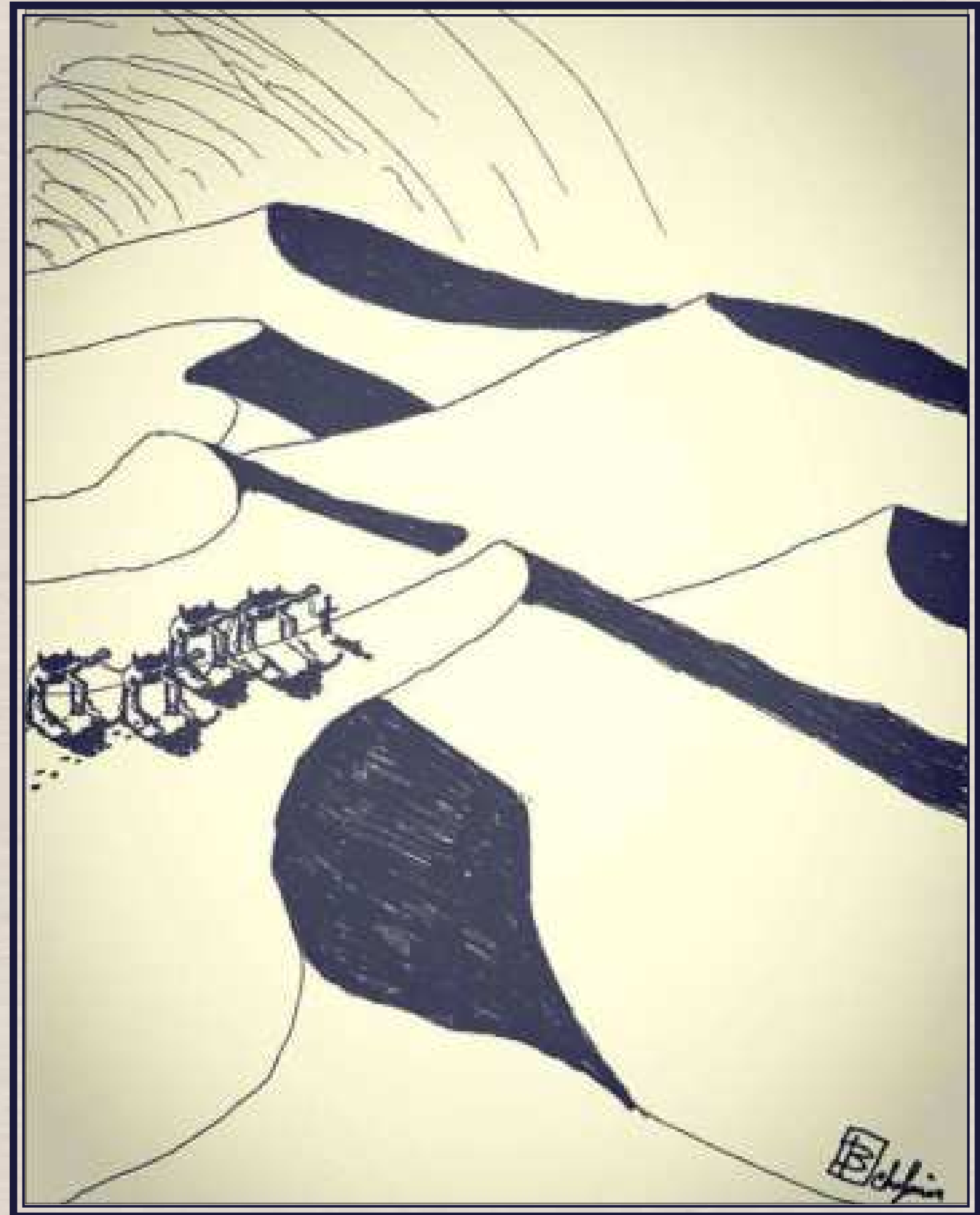
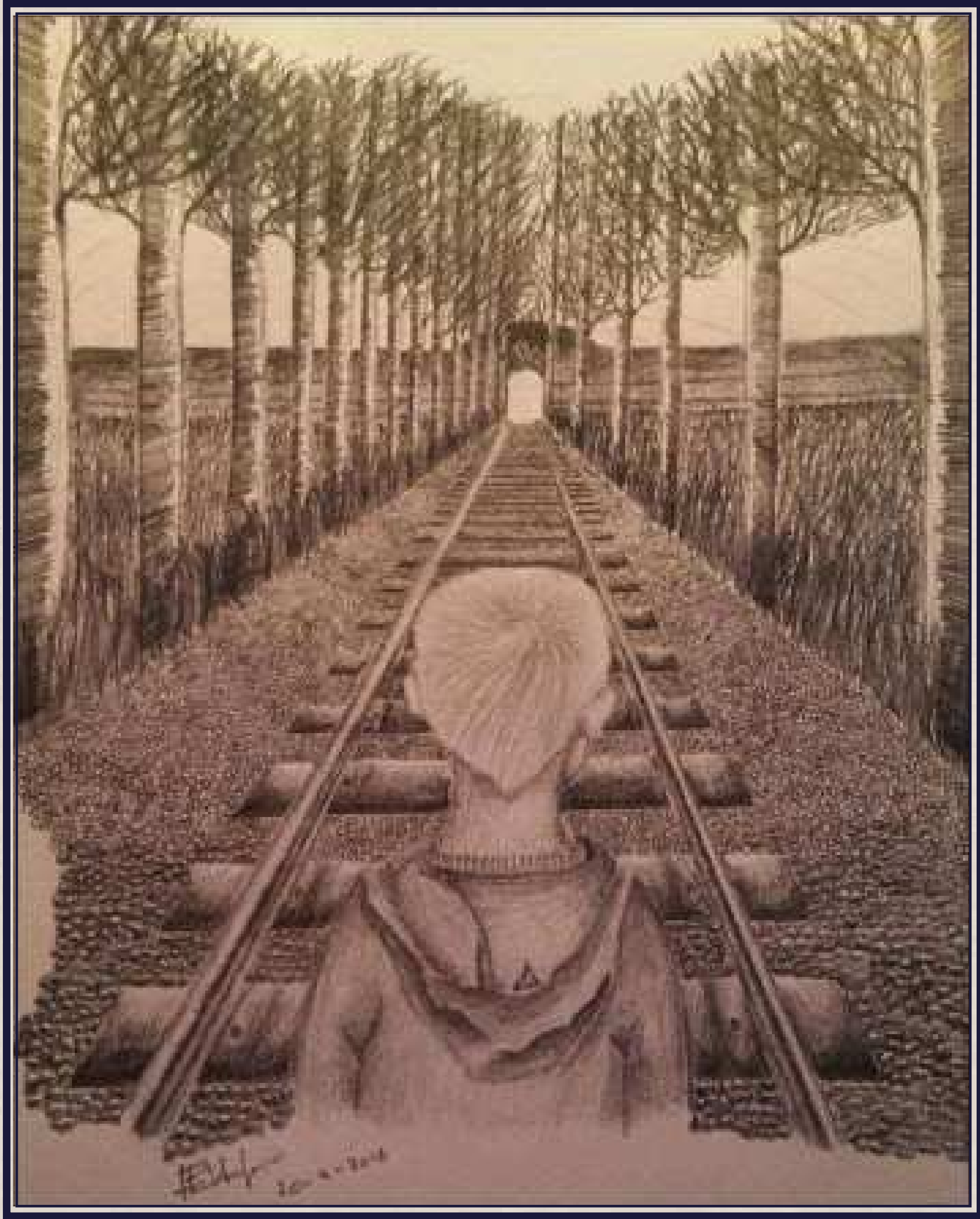
Drawing has always been an enjoyable experience of mine, it is a means of escape from the world into a place where you can turn your imaginations into doodles to be shared with the global community.

The main purpose of *Behafarin* is to help me to open my mind to the endless possibilities & think creatively and imaginatively, and most of all, to know, that the only barrier is the barriers I create! I post all my drawings and doodles onto my instagram account.

 follow me







food bites

by shahin



My name is Shahin and I'm the mother of two active boys, MA. Join me in my journey of all things related to food, travel, lifestyle and family fun! My facebook page is zkfoodandfamily. You can also find my webpage, YouTube, and instagram as zkmyway. Simply click on the logos on the right to like, follow, or watch.



POTATO TOASTIES

This is such a quick and easy snack (or light lunch). You can use mashed fresh potatoes or use instant mash potato flakes (like I did). The spices can also be adjusted to your liking.

I think next time I will also add some finely minced onions. The recipe is adapted from Ruhina Hashmi's potato slices. Click [here](#) for the original recipe.

I would say that the serving size would be two bread slices (or 4 pieces). I made these for lunch one day to change things up a bit. We usually have the same rotation of sandwiches (i.e. PB &J, grilled cheese, plain veggie sandwich, or veggie panini). My husband scarfed down the first serving and asked for seconds! My older son, to my surprise, also loved these and asked for seconds. Although I would've also enjoyed more, these are carb heavy (bread and mashed potatoes), so I stopped after my first serving.

Here's how you make them!

ingredients

1 packet instant mashed potatoes (made according to package directions)

8 slices of bread (whatever bread you have will do)

spices (I used salt, pepper, turmeric, red chili powder, and garlic powder)

green chilies, finely minced (optional)

1/4 cup finely minced cilantro (harra dhanya, coriander leaves, kothmir)

1/2 cup shredded cheese (mozzarella or cheddar work well)

paste

3 TBS besan (gram flour)

1 egg

enough water to make a thin paste (it should be just a little thinner than pancake batter)

Oil for shallow frying

instructions

Since these toasties are so customizable, I mixed the ingredients up in small batches depending on what ingredients each person would like. For example, my husband loves chili peppers and likes less cheese, so that's what he got. I skipped the chilie peppers and chili powder and added extra cheese for my son. If everyone in your family has the same preferences, you can mix it all up together in one go.

Heat oil in a large skillet. (Oil should be fairly hot, but not overly hot). Mix potato mixture ingredients together. Set aside. In another shallow bowl or dish, mix the paste ingredients together. Cut each bread slice in half. Spread with a thin layer* of potato mixture. Dip the potato side of the bread in the paste (or spoon the paste over the potato mixture) and put potato side down in oil. Working quickly, continue this process with the other bread slices. Work in batches so each slice has enough room to get properly toasted.

Once the potato side is golden brown, flip over and toast the other side. (The is no need to add more oil at this point). Sprinkle with cilantro and serve with chutney or ketchup, if desired. My family likes them plain.

*You can spread as much or as little potato mixture as you like. My family likes only a thin layer because otherwise it seems a bit too mushy. If you like more than a thin layer, go for it!



HALAL CART STYLE CHICKEN OVER RICE



I have never been to NYC, but I've heard wonderful things about the Halal Guys food cart. Apparently, people will wait in line for hours (even in the rain) to get a plate of their famous chicken over rice! I found a video on YouTube (watch it here), which was a pretty good start. If you know me, I can never leave well enough alone and almost always adjust a recipe to suit our Indian tastes. Everything has to be spicier and more flavorful than the recipe calls for! So I added some Indian spices to an otherwise Middle Eastern dish.

The only changes I made to the rice was to add cashews and double the recipe for a family of four (with leftovers, of course). The addition of the tikka masala gives the chicken a wonderful color. I like to give the chicken pieces a little bit of a char by frying them on high towards the end of the cooking time. Remember to fry the chicken in batches and not to overcrowd the pan! While the chicken is frying, you can start to prepare the rice. For our family of four, one cup of rice just wasn't enough. Two cups, however, gave us enough for leftovers the next day! Once the rice

is started and chicken is fried up, you can start making the sauces (as seen in the video link above). A good friend of mine from NJ actually sent me a few packets of the red and white sauces from the Halal Guys, so we used those. You can also use spicy ranch and sriracha as alternates to the typical red and white sauces.

My younger son, Zee Man, decided he was going to help Mommy out! He took great pleasure in posing for pics with the finished rice, as well as with setting the table. He carefully placed the plates, water glasses, silverware, place mats for both boys, and even place cards on the table. He finished off by making a cheese and fruit sampler platter. The final service (as seen below) may not have been super neat, but we were hungry and had no time for careful presentation, nor pretty pictures!

ingredients

Chicken marinade

- 2 lbs chicken thighs, cubed
- 2 TBS curd/yogurt (or Greek yogurt)
- 1 TBS shawarma masala
- 1/2 tsp coriander powder
- 1/2 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp tikka boti masala
- 1 heaping TBS bbq sauce
- 1/2 tsp (or to taste) red chili powder
- 1 tsp ginger garlic paste
- 1-2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 tsp olive oil
- salt to taste

Mix all of the above ingredients together and leave to marinate in the fridge overnight. After marination is complete, heat canola in fry pan and fry chicken up in

batches until browned and cooked through, about 3-4 minutes per side. Do not overcook. Set aside.

Rice

- 1 cup basmati rice
- 2 cups chicken stock
- curry powder – a good sprinkling to cover the surface of the rice
- canola oil
- cashews (optional)
- salt to taste (if your chicken stock is not salted)

instructions

Rinse rice and set aside to drain. Heat oil in a sauce pot. Add cashews and rice and toast for about a minute. Add curry powder by sprinkling over to cover the surface of the rice. Add salt, if using. Stir to coat rice with spices. Add chicken stock, reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 20 minutes. Fluff up rice and serve with chicken and halal guys sauces.



TRIPLE CHOCOLATE CHUNK MUFFINS



How can something with the words 'triple chocolate chunk' in the title be good for you?

It seems a little too good to be true, doesn't it? Well, do not despair, because these muffins are extremely delicious and satisfying, yet filled with the wholesome goodness of oats and the protein power of Greek yogurt. Yes, there is the addition of sugar substitute and chocolate chips to this, but anything in moderation is good.

Once again, this is one of those recipes found on Pinterest. A cute little 16 year old girl hosts a blog here. The link is no longer available via Pinterest because some users reported it as spam. I'm not sure what the deal with that is, because it seems like a legit site. Who knows? I'm just happy to come across this wonderful recipe, which my 7 year old devoured in 15 seconds flat!

You can see that my muffins didn't rise too much. It is important to fill up the cups all the way, if you want tall, rounded muffins. The recipe suggests to use foil cupcake/muffin liners. My foil liners were lined with paper, so I just used paper liners. All of my muffins stuck to the paper, and I wasn't able to remove them easily. (No worries, as neither my son or I have any trouble gobbling up the tiny left-over bits directly from the liners!) To avoid this, next time I think I will just spray my liners with a little cooki cooking spray, or use silicone baking cups.

So every recipe for muffins/cupcakes that I have ever seen always recommends to fill the cups 3/4ths of the way up. I did this, and had so much batter left over. I was able to fill a little six inch silicone mold (which I sprayed, by the way and had no issues getting the mini cake out) and had a nice little cake along with my 12 muffins. I would recommend filling the muffin cups all the way for nice, tall, rounded muffin tops.

Finally, if you are not on any sugar restricted taste of the splenda, which I am not accustomed to yet.

Here's the recipe, with some of my changes and tips!

Triple Chocolate Chunk Muffin Knock-Offs of Whole Food's 6 Dollar per 4 Chocolate Chunk VitaTop Muffins (via healthyisalwaybetter.tumblr.com) diet, I would recommend using 1/2 sugar and 1/2 splenda (or even all sugar – which means these will not be healthier anymore). Although still delicious, there is a slight after taste of the splenda, which I am not accustomed to yet.

ingredients:

- 1 3/4 c oats
- 3 egg whites
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt (or regular plain low fat yogurt)
- 1/2 tsp cream of tartar (or 1-1/2 Tbsp. vinegar) (I used the vinegar)
- 1-1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1-1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 cup hot water
- 1 cup sugar substitute (like Splenda granular) OR 1/4 cup + 2 tbs stevia OR Regular sugar*

instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line 2 (12-cup) mini muffin pans (or one large 12 cup muffin pan) with foil cupcake liners (spray liners with oil spray or use silicone cups also sprayed with oil spray), or spray muffin tin with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside.

In a blender, (or food processor), mix all of the ingredients together, except for the chocolate chips. Blend until oats are ground and mixture is smooth.

Place mixture in a bowl and gently stir in 1/2 of the chocolate chips (set the rest aside). Scoop mixture into prepared muffin pans, filling all the way to the top of liner.

Place muffins tins in the oven for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, remove muffins from the oven (but don't shut oven off), and distribute the other half of the chocolate chips on top of each muffin.

Place the muffins back into the oven and bake for an additional 2-5 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean. *Note, you could skip this step by putting all of the chips in the batter, and baking the muffins for 12-15 min straight, but this method gives the muffins the traditional 'VitaTop Muffin' look with the chocolate chips on top!

Cool muffins before removing from pan. ENJOY!!!



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