



Muharram First Day Dua

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الْأَبَدِيُّ الْقَدِيمُ وَهَذِهِ سَنَةٌ
جَدِيدَةٌ أَسْأَلُكَ فِيهَا الْعِصْمَةَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ
وَأَوْلِيَائِهِ وَالْعَوْنَ عَلَى هَذِهِ النَّفْسِ الْأَمَّارَةِ
بِالسُّوئِ وَالْإِشْتِغَالَ بِمَا يَقْرَبُنِي إِلَيْكَ يَا كَرِيمُ



“O Allah! You are the everlasting and eternal One, and this is the new year. I am supplicating to you for Protection and safety from the devil and his companions, and seek help and victory against those who command to do evil against the soul. I ask for help in remaining busy in deeds which will bring me closer to You, O Merciful Lord.”

The Merits of this supplication is that one who recites this after sighting the moon of Muharram, Shaitan says. "Alas! We are hopeless against this person." Allah Ta'ala [points](#) to Angels over the person who recites this, who safeguard and protect him throughout the year.

AL-**M**IZAN

YOUTH CORNER

The Islamic New Year: What is Muharram?

Muharram is one of the most important months for Muslims and marks the start of the Islamic New Year. This year the event falls on 31 August and lasts until approximately 28 September.

Based on the lunar Hijri calendar, Muharram is the first month of the Islamic New Year and is considered a holy month, second only to [Ramadan](#) in its significance.

Muharram begins after the sighting of the new moon on the final day of the Islamic calendar.

Why is Muharram celebrated?

The 10th day of Muharram, called Ashura, is an important day for Muslims. It marks the day Nuh (Noah) A.S. left the Ark, and the day that Prophet Musa (Moses) A.S. was saved from the Pharaoh of Egypt by Allah SWT, while crossing the Red Sea with his people.

Sunni and Shia Muslims mark Muharram differently. For many Sunni Muslims, this month is the beginning of the Islamic New Year and symbolises peace and reflection.

For those Muslims who follow the Shia branch of Islam, this month represents a solemn, reflective day in Islamic history.

For Shias, Muharram commemorates the death of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) grandson, Hussein Ibn Ali. After questioning the legitimacy of the caliph Yazid, Hussein was murdered during the Battle of Karbala, which took place on the day of Ashura in the year AD 680.

Due to the brutality of the battle and the murder of the Prophet's grandson during a month when fighting is forbidden, many Shia mourn and remember the bravery of the Prophet's family.

How is it celebrated?

Many Muslims opt to fast on the day of Ashura, as well as on other days in the month of Muharram, to show thankfulness.

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Shia Muslims also engage in mourning rituals. Some gather at [mosques](#) to to mourn Hussein's death and to remember the importance of what the Prophet's family did for justice, while others perform public mourning rituals.

Whether Muslims are celebrating the beginning of the Islamic New Year or lamenting the loss of life, Muharram is an important and holy month for everyone. Many Muslims fast, give extra prayers, and spend longer hours in the mosque.

Muharram, with all of its variances, will always be a month of deep reflection for Muslims across the world.



"The Prophet sent a messenger to the village of the Ansar in the morning of the day of 'Ashura' (10th of Muharram) to announce: 'Whoever has eaten something should not eat but complete the fast, and whoever is observing the fast should complete it.' "She further said, "Since then we used to fast on that day regularly and also make our boys fast. We used to make toys of wool for the boys and if anyone of them cried for, he was given those toys till it was the time of the breaking of the fast."

From: Sahih Bukhari. Chapter 31, [Fasting](#)
Narrated/Authority of Rubay bint Muawwidh ibn Afra

ASHURAA

By Rafiq Ibn Jubair

There are certain days in the year which are more virtuous than others. One such day is the 10th of Muharram which is known as the day of 'Ashura. Following are 10 virtues of this day found in the Qur'an and Sunnah:

Allah mentions in the Qur'an that there are 4 sacred months:

"Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve [lunar] months in the [register](#) of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred.. " (Surah At-Tawbah, Verse 36)

And in a Hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said,

"The year is twelve months of which four are sacred, the three consecutive months of Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram, and Rajab Mudar which comes between Jumadah and Sha'ban." (Sahih Al Bukhari)

The 4 sacred months are: Dhul Qa'dah, Dhul Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab.

2. Prophet Musa and his people were saved on this day.



On this day, Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) and the Children of Israel were saved from Pharaoh and his pursuing army.

"Then We inspired to Moses, "Strike with your staff the sea," and it parted, and each portion was like a great towering mountain. And We advanced thereto the pursuers. And We saved Moses and those with him, all together. Then We drowned the others. Indeed in that is a [sign](#), but most of them were not to be believers. And indeed, your Lord - He is the Exalted in Might, the Merciful." (Surah Ash Shu'arah, Verses 63-68)

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3. Prophet Nuh's Ark came to rest on Mount Judi on this day



In a narration reported by Imam Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him), it was on this day that the Ark of Nuh (peace be upon him) came to rest on Mount Judi. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir)

4. The Prophet would fast on this day even before Prophethood

In a hadith in the Muwatta of Imam Malik (may Allah have mercy on him), it has been mentioned that in the era of ignorance (jahiliyyah), the polytheists of Makkah would fast on this day. It may have been due to a tradition of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him).

Imam Al Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) has said,

“Perhaps Quraysh used to fast on that day on the basis of some past law, such as that of Ibrahim A.S.”

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) would also fast on this day before prophethood.

5. Fasting on this day used to be obligatory

The significance of the 10th of Muharram was such, that it was obligatory to fast on this day. The prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and the companions would fast on this day before the obligation was abrogated by the fasts of Ramadan.

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Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates in a hadith:

“Allah’s messenger ordered (the Muslims) to fast on the day of ‘Ashura, and when fasting in the month of Ramadan was prescribed, it became optional for one to fast on that day (Ashura) or not. (Sahih Al Bukhari)

6. The Prophet recommended the believers to fast on this day

Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) said,

“The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to Madinah and saw the Jews fasting on the day of ‘Ashura’. He said, ‘What is this?’ They said, ‘This is a righteous day, it is the day when Allah saved the Children of Israel from their enemies, so Musa fasted on this day.’ He said, ‘We have more right to Musa than you,’ so he fasted on that day and commanded [the Muslims] to fast on that day.” Sahih Al Bukhari

7. It is the best fast after Ramadan

Fasting on the 10th of Muharram (‘Ashura) is the best fast after Ramadan.

“The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ‘The best of fasting after Ramadhan is fasting Allah’s month of Muharram.” (Sahih Muslim)

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported,

“I asked the Prophet: ‘Which Prayer is the best after the obligatory Prayers?’ He said: ‘Prayer during the mid of the night.’ I asked: ‘Which fasting is the best after that of Ramadan?’ He said, ‘The month of Allah that you call Muharram’” (Sahih Muslim)

8. The Prophet prioritized it

Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) said,

“ I never saw the messenger of Allah PBUH, so keen to fast any day and give it priority over any other day than this day, the day of Ashura, and this month, meaning Ramadan.” (Sahih Al Bukhari.)

9. A means of expiating sins

Fasting on this day is a means of having our (minor) sins being forgiven. Tawbah (repenting) is required for major sins.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said,

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“Fasting the day of ‘Arafah I hope Allah will expiate thereby for the year before it and the year after it, and fasting the day of ‘Ashura I hope Allah will expiate thereby for the year that came before it.” (Sahih Muslim)

We should try to fast on the 10th of Muharram and on the ninth too but we must remember that it is not obligatory though there are great virtues in doing so

Imam Ash-Shafi’i (may Allah have mercy on him) has said,

“It is mustahabb to fast on both the ninth and tenth days, because the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) fasted on the tenth, and intended to fast on the ninth.”

10. Spending on one’s family on this day brings blessings

There are great blessings to be attained throughout the year for the one who is extra generous to his family:

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said,

“One who generously spends on his family on ‘Ashura (10th of Muharram), Allah will be generous on him for the entire year.” (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu’ab al-Iman)

In this regard, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (Allah have mercy on him) quotes Sufyan ibn Uyayna (Allah have mercy on him) as saying,

“I have practiced this [spending on the family] for fifty or sixty years, and have found nothing but good in it.” (Lata’if al-Ma’arif)

THE MUSLIM ROOTS OF AMERICAN SLAVES

By [Aisha Stacey](#) (© 2014IslamReligion.com)

Most of the African slaves sent to North America came from West Africa. They were men, women and children captured and sold to slave traders, forced on to ships, and kept in appalling conditions for the long journey to the Americas. [1] It is thought by modern historians that at the height of the slave trade, the 18th century, up to 7 million Africans had undertaken this voyage. [2] It is also estimated that up to 30% of the enslaved in North America were Muslim. [3]

To understand the history of Muslim slaves in North America it is necessary to know something about slavery as it previously existed in Africa and the history of Islam in Africa, particularly in West Africa. Islam first reached West Africa by way of traders from North Africa and the Middle East. They settled in the area from as early as the tenth century BCE and thus began a slow and peaceful process brought about by trade. The journey from North Africa across the Sahara was done in stages. Goods passed through a chain of Muslim traders and were purchased finally by non-Muslims at the southern end of the route. Until the first half of the 13th century the kingdom of Ghana was a key trading partner with the Muslim North. Over the next five hundred years, assorted West African rulers and local merchants who wanted to do business with the Muslim traders adapted themselves to Islam and its customs.[4] Islam itself had a reputation of absorbing local customs thus the transition was smooth. However the majority of West African people did not convert to Islam until well into the 18th century[5], which just happened to be at the height of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Across Africa, prisoners of war were taken as slaves, and others were enslaved in payment for [debt](#) or as punishment for crime. This enslavement was usually on a small scale. Africans usually enslaved 'other' people, not their own particular ethnic, or cultural, group. [6] This small scale slave trade was enough to supply the demand for slaves within Africa, but not enough to supply the demand from outside particularly from Europeans thus warfare and raids to get slaves and the kidnapping of individuals increased. Europeans wanted the slaves to work on the land they owned on the Caribbean islands and in the Americas. They were a more plentiful source of labor than indentured servants. It is possible that Muslims were amongst the 20 Africans brought to the settlement at Jamestown Virginia in 1619.

For the thousands of Muslims that were captured and eventually settled in North America maintaining their religion was difficult and often impossible. Many were forcibly converted to Christianity. Any effort to practice Islam or keep their traditional names or clothing was quashed and had to be done in secret. [7] However evidence of Muslim origins can be found throughout documented history. Handwritten verses from the Quran have been found and reveal the high levels of education attained by the authors in Africa prior to enslavement. [8] It is known that slave masters often placed Muslim slaves as supervisors over their fellow bondsmen. In addition to this Muslim names can be found in reports of runaway slaves and among the rosters of soldiers in the American war of Independence.

In 1984 the noted scholar of antebellum black writing and history Dr. Allan D. Austin published a book called African Muslims in Antebellum America: A Sourcebook. It explores, via portraits, documents, maps, and texts, the lives of 50 Muslim Africans caught in the slave trade between 1730 and 1860. This book was updated and republished in 1997 and entitled African Muslims in Antebellum America: Transatlantic Stories and Spiritual Struggles. What follows are several brief biographies or snapshots of some of the Muslims captured and enslaved in the then fledgling nation of the USA.

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Job Ben Solomon was born Ayyub ibn Sulayman ibn Ibrahim around 1702 in what is now Senegal. He was from a family of religious scholars, and by age 15 was a co-Imam with his father. While on a trading expedition, Job was captured in enemy territory and sold to the British. He was then sold on to work in the tobacco fields of Maryland. He did not convert to Christianity but prayed openly and adhered to Islamic dietary guidelines. Job ran away from his plantation only to be captured and put in jail and later returned to his master. Filled with sadness he wrote a letter to his father and this letter found its way into the hands of a British philanthropist named James Oglethorpe. This man helped free Job who then started his journey [home](#) via England. On the ship journey to England Job was taught to write English and whilst in England he wrote the Quran three times from memory, and is reported to have helped with the famous George Sale translation. He called people to Islam by refuting their claims of Jesus' divinity and was also elected to the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, which may have put him in the company of Sir Isaac Newton and Alexander Pope.

The story of Yarrow Mamout has been bequeathed to us via conversations he had with the artist painting his portrait. His life in Africa is unknown but due to his good and well-mannered behaviour he was freed after laying the bricks for his master's home. As a free man he bought his own home in Georgetown and was known for praying in the streets and for his sobriety.

In December of 1807, a man known as S'Quash was brought to South Carolina. He was known to be an excellent horseman and literate in Arabic. Historians point to his marriage to a Muslim slave from Sudan to indicate that he was also a Muslim.

Growing collections of documents written in Arabic are being discovered across the United States of America. The light of research reveals that these documents long ago buried in basements and attics, and shut away in archives and libraries, provide evidence of the presence of Muslims among the Africans shipped to the Americas as slaves.^[9] The collections, unearthed in the late 20th century CE, contain biographical statements, verses from the Quran, personal letters and eloquent letters to Muslim leaders in their [home](#) territories. Sadly many of the letters pleading for help and manumission from their owners never reached their recipients but collected dust, in boxes, chests and filing [cabinets](#) for many decades. As interest in the origin of slaves in the Americas increases these letters provide clues to the slaves' homeland and background.

These collections tell us that among those who endured the horrific crossing of the Atlantic Ocean known as the Middle Passage were Muslims, many of them well educated. They included Quran scholars, religious and tribal leaders, commercial and building experts and some with vast military experience. It is no [surprise](#) then to discover that Muslims were often chosen to be leaders because of their valuable skills.

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They rose to the top of the slave hierarchy more easily, were manumitted more often, and returned to Africa more frequently.[10]

In at least one case a slave kept his master's plantation records in Arabic.[11] The Arabic language itself holds clues suggesting the pivotal role played by Muslims in American slave history. From 1828 we find an interesting anecdote about a Christian teacher asking a Muslim slave to write the Lord's prayer in his native language, the Christian man then witnessed the document, inscribing underneath the few lines of Arabic 'foregoing copy of the Lord's Prayer'. Decades later when the document was examined by someone who read Arabic it was found that the slave had, instead of writing the Lord's Prayer, written the opening chapter of the Quran, Al-Fatihah.[12]

Many Muslim slaves went to great efforts to retain an Islamic way of life. As was suggested by African American scholar Eric Lincoln, their memory of Islam and their previous lifestyle was never completely lost.[13] Many resisted converting to Christianity or did so in a pseudo fashion clinging to the pillars of their faith, praying, fasting and giving charity while appearing to accept the new faith. Many slave owners and their ancestors recall practices and habits of the slaves that suggest they were Muslims. A plantation owner in Georgia noticed one of his slaves "bowing down" each morning at dawn.

On the island of Sapelo, off the coast of Georgia, certain Islamic practices remain even to this day. In the church, men and women sit on different sides of the aisle, separated as they usually are in a mosque. All shoes are removed and the women cover their hair for services. The churches are built facing Makkah and the bodies are buried also facing Makkah. The people living on Sapelo Island are descendants of Bilali Muhammad a Muslim who was enslaved on Sapelo in 1803. Bilal could read and write Arabic and was buried with a copy of the Quran. His wife, Phoebe, wore a veil, and her daughters had Islamic names, such as Medina and Fatima[14]. In 1829, Bilali authored a small book on Islamic beliefs and the rules for ablution, morning prayer, and the calls to prayer. It is known as the Bilali Document, currently housed at the [University of Georgia](#). [15]

The descendants of Bilal Muhammad all have the surname Baily which is certainly a corruption of the name Bilal. Thus names also hold clues to slave identities and backgrounds. Slaves were routinely given new names, however many of the names were biblical contractions of their own Muslim names and on some occasions we find names that appear to be unchanged. Ayyub ibn Sulayman, whose story was told in Part 1 went by the name of Job Ben Solomon. Names also played a part in the well-known and documented Amistad case.

In August of 1839, the Amistad was seized off Long Island, New York. The captured slaves aboard the ship had risen up and killed the captain. They spared the lives of some of the crew on the condition they steered them towards the coast of Africa. The slaves were deceived and found themselves on trial in Connecticut. During the course of the [trial](#) it was revealed that the slaves were Africans, Muslim Africans from present day Sierra Leone. They had been given Spanish names and designated as black ladinos[16] in order to circumvent laws and treaties against the international slave trade by Great Britain, Spain and the United States.

Ex-British government administrator Richard Robert Madden testified in the trial. He said, "...I have examined them and observed their language, appearance and manners; and I have no doubt of their having been, very recently, brought from Africa. To one of them I spoke, and repeated a Mohammed-an[17] form of prayer, in the Arabic language; the man immediately recognized the language, and

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repeated the words 'Allah Akbar', or 'God is great'. The man who was beside this Negro, I also addressed in Arabic, saying 'salaam alaikum', or peace be on you; he immediately, in the customary oriental salutations, replied, 'alaikum salaam', or peace be on you..."[18]

From the amount of evidence that is being unearthed it is clear that not only were Muslims amongst those men and women enslaved in the Americas, but that they were influential in the making of the American nation.

FOOTNOTES:

[1]Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Context of West African History. J. D. Fage. The Journal of African History Vol. 10, No. 3 (1969), pp. 393-404 Published by: Cambridge University Press

[2]<http://www.history.com/topics/slavery>

[3]Tweed, Thomas A. "Islam in America: From African Slaves to Malcolm X". National Humanities Centre. & Curtis, Muslims in America.

[4]The Spread of Islam in West Africa. Margari Hill, Stanford University. January 2009

[5]Ibid

[6]<http://discoveringbristol.org.uk/slavery/people-involved/enslaved-people/enslaved-africans/africa-slavery/>

[7]<http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/feature/islam-in-america/>

[8]Were My African American Ancestors Muslims? 2013 Nathan W. Murphy

[9]African Muslims in Antebellum America: Transatlantic Stories and Spiritual Struggles. Allan D. Austin. 1997. New York and London: Routledge.

[10]Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas Sylviane A. Diouf New York: New York University Press, 1998

[11]Ibid

[12]African Muslims in Antebellum America: Transatlantic Stories and Spiritual Struggles. Allan D. Austin. 1997. New York and London: Routledge.

[13]Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas Sylviane A. Diouf New York: New York University Press, 1998.

[14](http://www.pbs.org/thisfarbyfaith/witnesses/cornelia_bailey.html)

[15]Sapelo Island's Arabic Document: The Bilali Diary in context. B. G. Martin. The Georgia Historical Quarterly Vol. 78, No. 3 (Fall 1994), pp. 589-601

[16]A word indicating that the slaves had been in Cuba long enough to know the language and customs.

[17]IslamReligion.com: The word Mohammedan was formerly common in usage, but the terms Muslims and Islamic are more common today.

[18](<https://bulk.resource.org/courts.gov/c/US/40/40.US.518.html>)



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