FAITH WITH WINGS

A Photopoetic Tour of Canberra's Mosques

HAMISH DEAN

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by Hamish Dean

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About the Author

I have lived a long life, I think. So I will only tell you about the last few years. After a bachelor's degree in science, I had more time to listen to audiobooks and learn all the things that I liked to learn. I have more recently put some of those things that I have learned in my poetry books, which can be found on my website: www.HamishDean.com

For the last few years, I also have taken up photography. I decided to take it more seriously and enrol in Tafe for formal education. After that, I started a Master of Photography at PSC, and hence I had to do a project on any topic of my choosing. So, I picked Islamic spirituality. This project explores my understanding and striving for wisdom and holiness. I have also taken up photography and this project for my mental health recovery. You can find all about my multi-part project on my website:

www.hamishd-artproject.com

I hope you learn from me and excuse any mistakes.

Peace and Love

Hamish Dean

Introduction

This photobook is dedicated to God for helping me overcome my health problems. Taken at the three main mosques in Canberra, Australia, in 2023, this artist's book photobook meshes my love of photography and poetry. Due to the circumstances and conservatism of the community, it was agreed that an anonymising filter be used for anonymising the people in the photos for privacy reasons. I, however, have decided not to include photos with people's faces in them and instead concentrate on the mundane objects in the mosque. In the first poem written by me, I lay the groundwork and introduction to the book. In the subsequent poem, the free verse and haiku-inspired poetry delve into deep truths, problems and worship within the mosques and community. I start the ending of this book with a closer look at the first picture. I then show a photoshopped portrait of myself and the bird. I have included a more spiritual poem at the end as a conclusion. I end the book with two photos that are to be thought about and understood by the reader. All photos for this book are taken in 2023 for a Master of Art in Photography degree which this photobook is an outcome thereof.

A Crow

A Crow in Iran
Black chadors around
Simple life and sounds
Prayer times aloud

Life full of pollution
Less trees, lots of population
Semi-desert hot and cold
A population that is starving for more

Islamic revolution had happened
And war was over
Yet poverty biting like the bitter cold
Something destructive to the bone

Let us fly to offshores
Were the wind blows rain
And parrots sing of freedom and soar
And take our child where he will gain knowledge and a better life

That is what my parents said when they decided
They prayed and applied for a visa, that departed
The child from the relatives, society, language and religion
They started yet finished their life when they departed

Landed in Australia, the land of the wealthy
Of foreign language, nay I am, no you are, no I am,
Of days of saying yes and no
Of years and decades of learning the language in poverty for sure

Then humiliation and suffering from war on terror
Of years of inquisition for being a Muslim
Talk about the hero, me, being the villain
Or was it just the fact, that I was better and they were jealous?

Yet his parents stood for the inquest mentality
As they themselves were of the crowd they thought
They harmed him and gave him no assurance
They eventually changed their mind and became supportive

He tried his best in school eventually it came to him
He had found his love in Islam and its study
And they questioned him
He was in trouble as the idol of education was not being worshiped

They all made him cry and crumble
The one man army stopped and he tumbled
He fell into illness, in mumble and jumble
Yet he finished his degree with some hope

As he found some believers at the university that he called home
He attended the prayer room often
In worship he found his peace and his situation became at ease
His friendships were of quality, no longer he was the oddity

He did well yet was not the highest
Both in high school and higher education
He thought, I will get into a research degree and I will prove myself
Little did he know what lay ahead

He met a strong atheist that thought he was God
One that would supervise him for his first and crucial research degree in life
Little did he know of this fact, yet it became clear after that
He left with bitter remorse and anger

But he was forced to leave science after another professor in disguise
No wonder why they have reputation for bad behaivour in academia, he realised,
Afterwards, he got hospitalised as another episode started
He lost around eight years of life in suffering and recovery after that mental illness

Yet he had the time to pursue his love
The love of education in the religion of God
And the general knowledge of the world
And he wrote some poetry books that people adored

He also took up photography and was self-taught
He went to technical school and was successful
Then he did a master's in photography, which is this project
And he did it well making a documentary series as well as a video game and now a book

You are welcome to have a look!
You may view the documentary series knowing the story
It is to show the mosque with photography
To right the wrongs he has seen in society

And there is a surprise at the end of this story
The crow I saw on the first day back to the mosque saw a miracle it seems
I have captured it with my camera it seems
You have a look perhaps it is real.

At the age of thirty three the crow approaches the mosque again
A Crow? A Raven?, An Australian Raven?
The bird has seen home


NO PARKING
ON SIDE OF
ROAD OR ON
THE GRASS

With the call to prayer
A bird enters with anxiety
The place of worship




ERE IS NONE WORTHY OF WORSHIP EXCEPT ALLAH AND
MUHAMMAD (PBUH) IS THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH

Mosque newly built with plush red carpet on the ground
There is an event to behold
For the VIPs of God


اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِيْ اَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ
GUNGAHLIN MOSQUE
مسجد جنجلان
140 The Valley Avenue, Gungahlin, ACT 2912
Opened on
Sunday 8 October 2017/18 Muharram 1439H
CANBERRA MUSLIM COMMUNITY INC


اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِيْ اَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ
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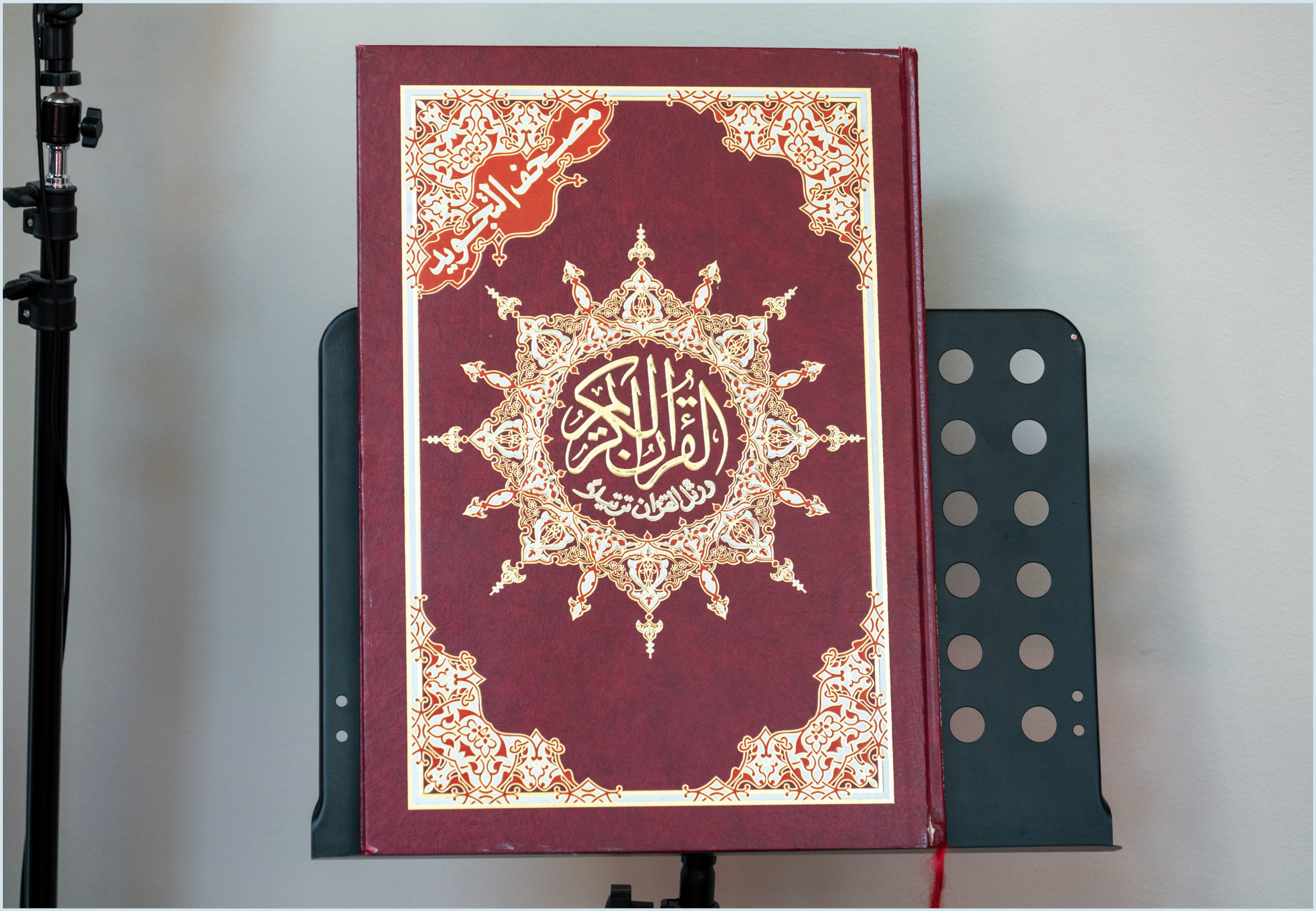
CANBERRA MUSLIM COMMUNITY INC

Tissue paper and cleaned carpet
Regular cleaning has been done
Mosque needs it too


aloe vera & vitamin e
Kleenex

Book of the Muslims at the front
Book containing words of God
The Book of God with Muslims


مصحف التجويد
القرآن الكريم
ورش اقرأ عن نافع

The writing is on the wall
God is greatest is the call to prayer
And nature is always at the mosque


بسم الله



Perfume for all for free

Mosque perfumed like a person

Mosque and human smell alike



Translations of Quran for reading

For those who cannot read the original Arabic

Yet the prayer is in Arabic?




THE QURAN
ENGLISH MEANINGS AND NOTES BY
SAHEEH INTERNATIONAL

Signs of prayer on the carpet
Showing the prostrations of the devotee
Marks that will be replaced by new ones



Marks of hands and feet

On the ground recording

Like the book of deeds



All seems to be designed
Signs of life yet to appear and departed
Signs of the believers




Imam’s
Office

Adding a Quran to the book stand

Chair ready as the person is too heavy to sit on the ground

Sign of prosperity hampering humility?



Young and old, all welcome
All have fun in their own way
Worshiping in devotion to God





The arrival of the masses
All lined up for worship of God
Left worldly occupations


GUNGAHLIN MOSQUE
مسجد جنجلن

All bowing in humbleness and servitude
All making their mark in their book of deeds
Lovers and hopefully beloved by God



There is no room in the mosque
There is the courtyard for worship of God
The world is a place for worship



A mosque in the middle of the City

Expensive houses and embassies

Mosque is as old as the community


CANBERRA MOSQUE

Gates are not locked

The minaret with no loud speakers

The mosque is an embassy of God

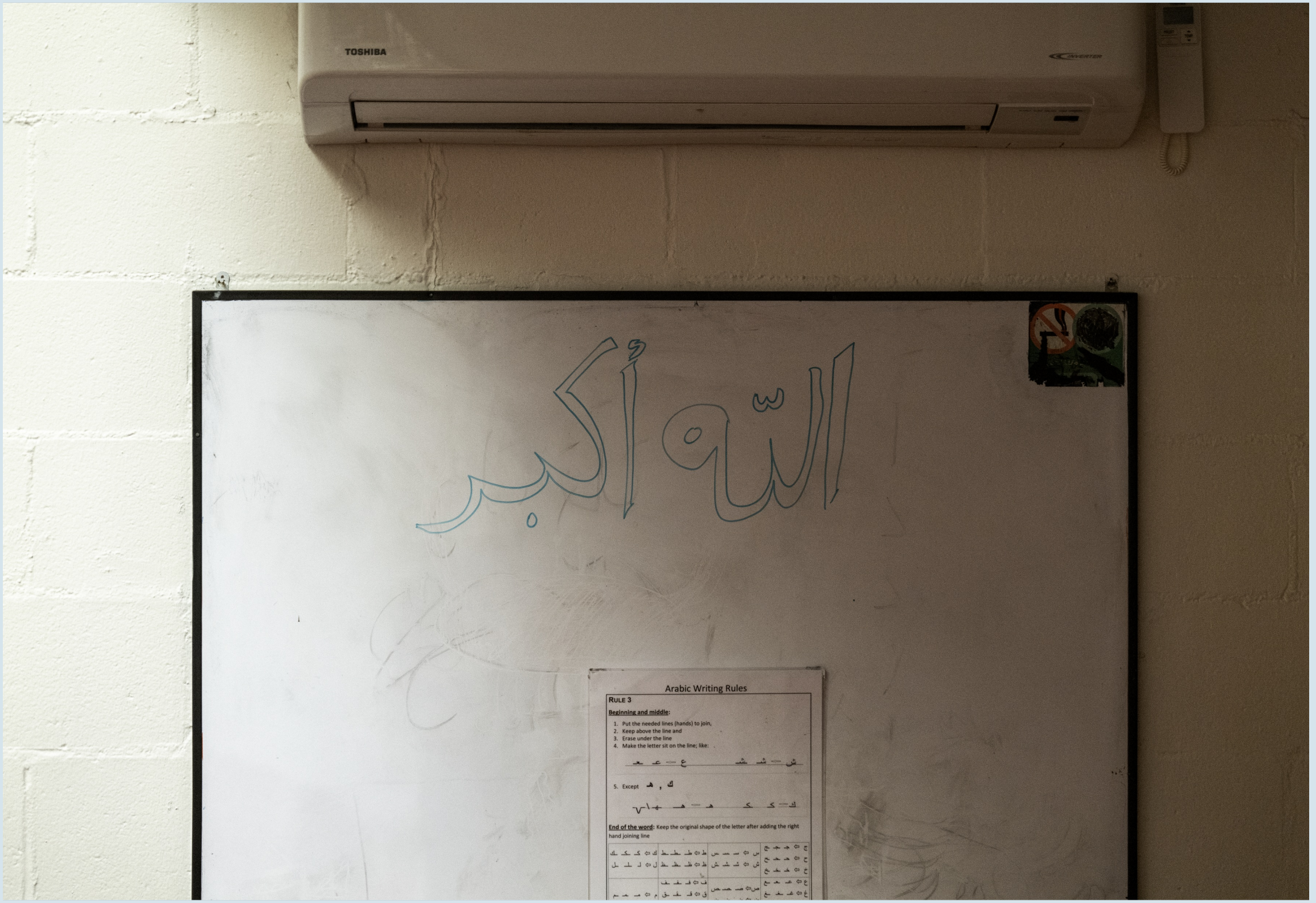

Bank Details for Donation



Washing the face and the body before prayer
Rituals to soothe the mind and wash the sins
The world is a dirty place



Teaching the greatness of God
Under the teachers of religion
That themselves are students thereof

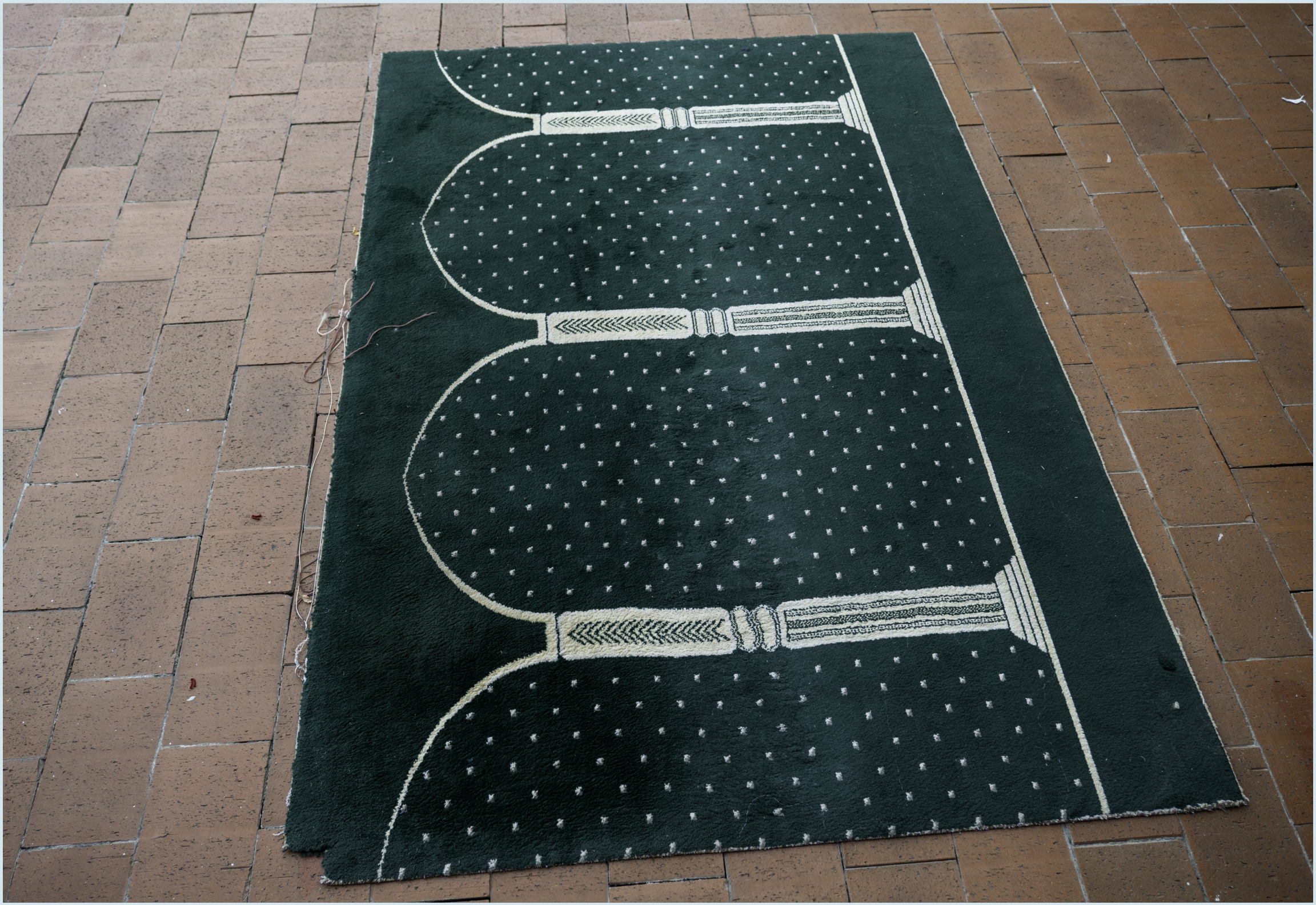

TOSHIBA
الله أكبر
Arabic Writing Rules
RULE 3
Beginning and middle:
1. Put the needed lines (hands) to join,
2. Keep above the line and
3. Erase under the line
4. Make the letter sit on the line; like:
5. Except ه , ك
End of the word: Keep the original shape of the letter after adding the right hand joining line

Both old and young learning about religion
Both learning to love God
God loves those that love Him


IMRAN


K
Three
Apple

Prayer rug for the travelers that come
Mostly workers for their five daily prayers
Workers of God

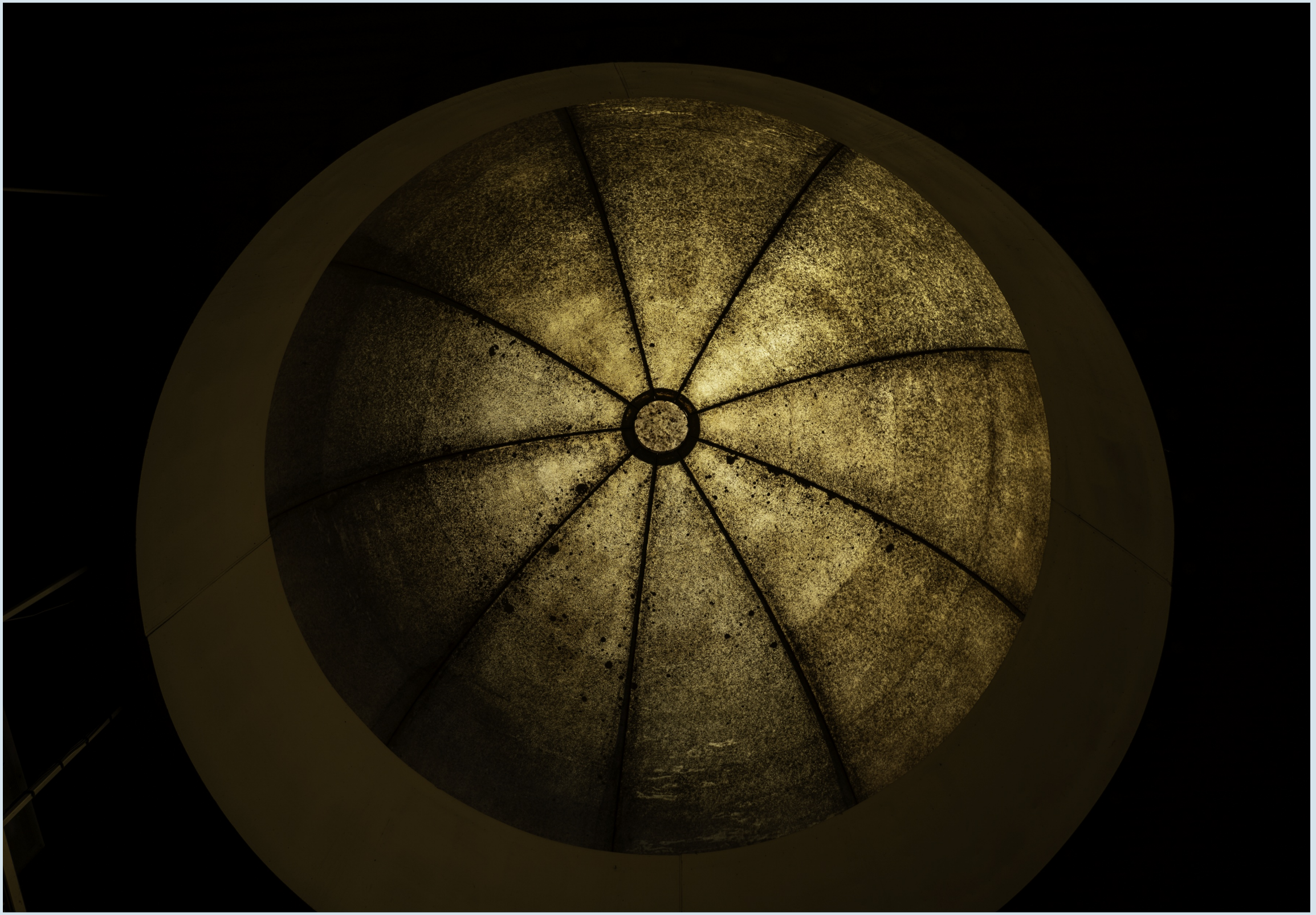


The mosque is beautiful
The door with thousands of openings and closings
The minbar still looks new




DO NOT TALK
DURING THE
KRIYYA
PLEASE

The ceiling not that of great mosques of Iran
But due to age has become beautiful
Perhaps it has heard thousands of worshipers



The minbar is a wooden one
The preacher a long time Imam
Great things take time to carve out



The words are all the same in Arabic

There is variation in the translations into English

Quran is so beautiful that it is worth crying over


THE NOBLE QUR'AN



Seats for mostly old men conversations
Women have their own room in every mosque
“Mosques should not be for men only”


BASEMENT PL

Laying or sitting on the ground
Or for a conversation with a fellow brother
The kitchen is nearer to the tea


B(E)
POWDE
FIRE
EXTINGUISHER

The southern mosque is a big one
Like the country Australia
Has gates to keep people out


WARNING
BLACKHAWK
SECURITY
6108 3644
WARNING
BLACKHAWK
SECURITY
6108 3644

The mosque is opulent
More progressive like Canberra
Yet devotees mostly migrants





Capacity for maybe a thousand

Parking lot for a hundred max

Practical, because it does not get overcrowded



Come to the mosque for worship
Or go to a palace for chandeliers
Better not mix worship with wealth



Light and shadow, heat and cold
Friendship lasts when you worship God together
God is a better friend





Worship better done with a back to the wall
Worship is abnormally tiring
God is a heavy thing


THE NOBLE
QURAN

Worshipers suffering on the ground
God will be happy with our worship
The lord of the world is present



Sign of opening times of the library

World is full of information

Volunteers are desired for operation


Australian National
Islamic Library
(Public Library)
Open Hours: (During Daylight Saving)
Monday Wednesday 10am - 2pm
Sunday 11am - 2pm
Every Day 8pm - 10pm

Old books for the believers

Old people for librarians

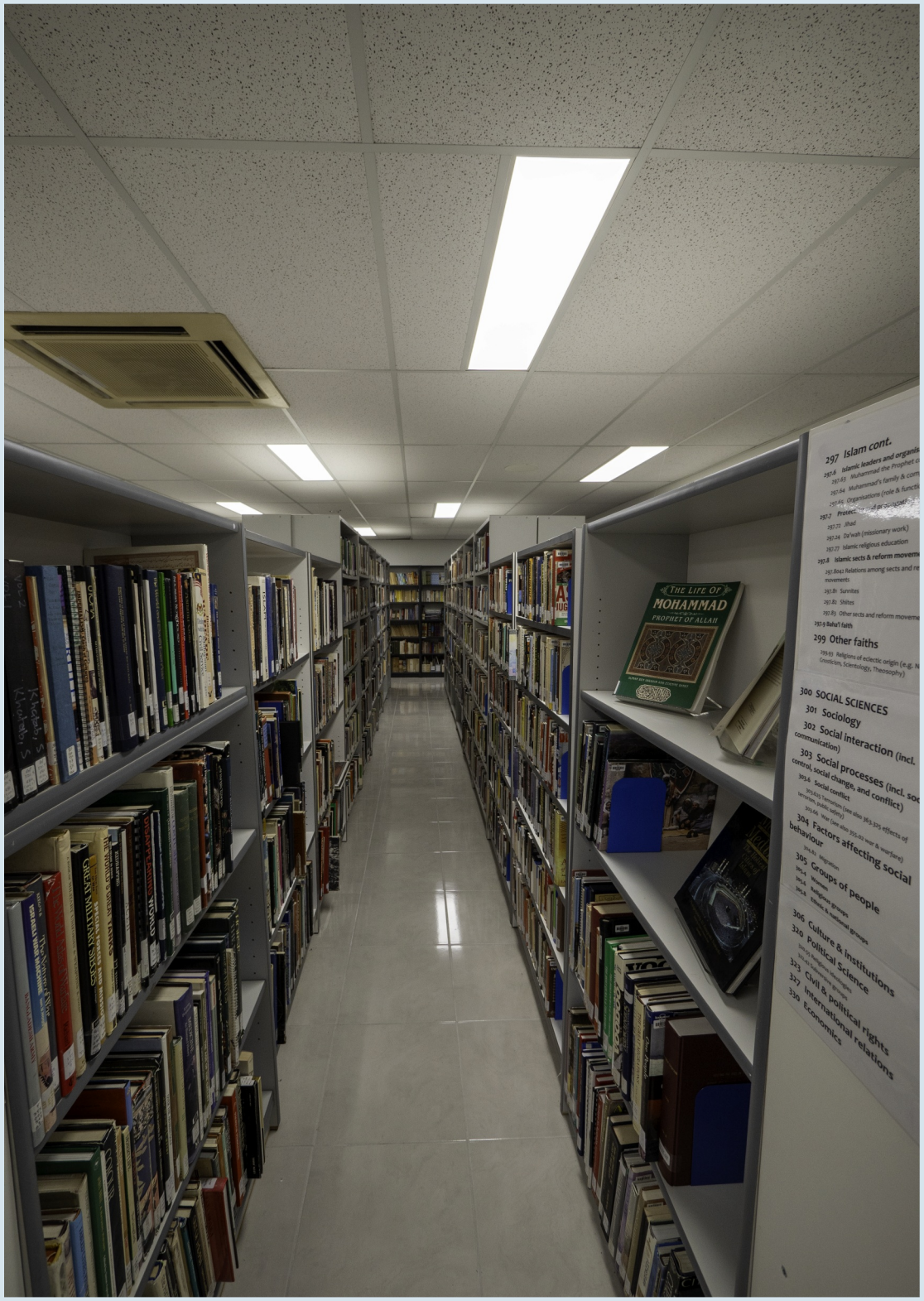
Aging makes people young



Fascinating books

Empty library full of them

Enslavement to computers and work


297 Islam cont.
297.6 Islamic leaders and organis
297.63 Muhammad the Prophet
297.64 Muhammad's family & com
297.65 Organisations (role & functi
297.7 Practi
297.72 Jihad
297.74 Da'wah (missionary work)
297.77 Islamic religious education
297.8 Islamic sects & reform moveme
297.8042 Relations among sects and re
movements
297.81 Sunnites
297.82 Shiites
297.83 Other sects and reform moveme
297.9 Baha'i faith
299 Other faiths
299.93 Religions of eclectic origin (e.g. N
Gnosticism, Scientology, Theosophy)
300 SOCIAL SCIENCES
301 Sociology
302 Social interaction (incl.
communication)
303 Social processes (incl. soc
control, social change, and conflict)
303.6 Social conflict
303.6(01) Terrorism (see also 363.325 effects of
terrorism, public safety)
303.66 War (see also 355.02 war & warfare)
304 Factors affecting social
behaviour
304.8 Migration
305 Groups of people
305.4 Women
305.6 Religious groups
305.8 Ethnic & national groups
306 Culture & institutions
320 Political Science
323 Civil & political rights
327 International relations
330 Economics
THE LIFE OF
MOHAMMAD
PROPHET OF ALLAH


IDIOT'S
Hindu

The most beautiful part of the Quran

Amazingly captured and displayed

One day it will be in English


بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الله لا إله إلا هو الحي القيوم لا تأخذه
سنة ولا نوم له ما في السموات وما في الأرض
من ذا الذي يشفع عنده إلا بإذنه يعلم ما بين أيديهم
وما خلفهم ولا يحيطون بشيء من علمه إلا بما شاء وسع
كرسيه السموات والأرض ولا يؤوده حفظهما
وهو العلي العظيم

Mosques a second home for believers

With time homes become comfortable

Hearts become at ease



Large hall and kitchen,
Poor people wish they could marry
Marriage for the wealthy in culture



Children come to play
Play is worship for children
Or is it?



Sign a current and old symbol

Mobile phones are a distraction

God is better to pay attention to

DO NOT TALK
DURING THE
KHUTBA
PLEASE



Fasting in Ramadan is a reminder
Of the willpower in all of us to do good
And how precious our lives and means are


Sprite

Everything tastes better after fasting

Even the water tastes like honey

But too much fasting makes faith decrease



God is a witness to the worship of Himself
God is watching all at all times
Faithful worship knowingly




NO PARKING
ON SIDE OF
ROAD OR ON
THE GRASS
NO PARKING
ON SIDE OF
ROAD OR ON
THE GRASS

I have seen the mosque



The crow has seen a miracle!



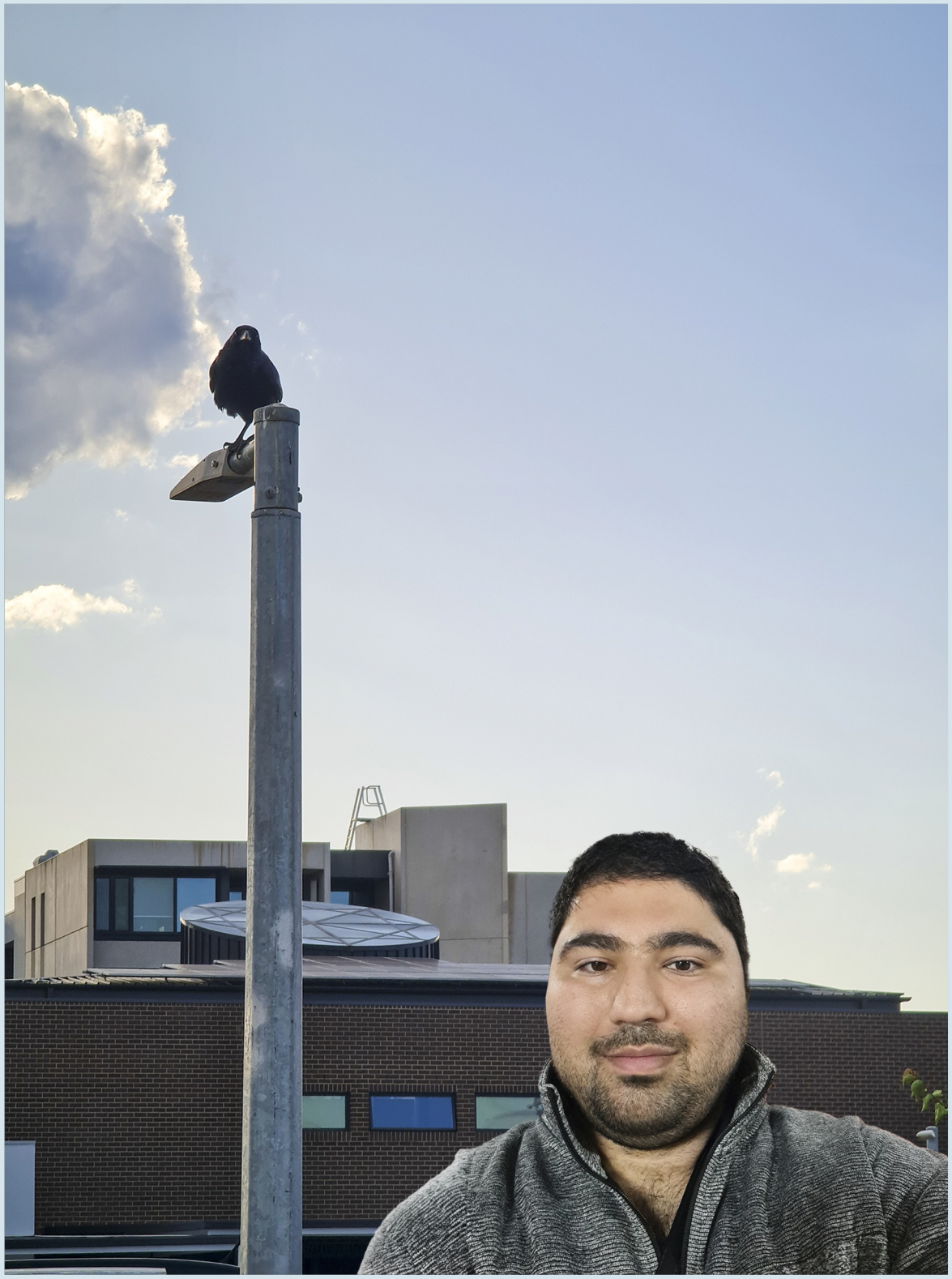
Seeing is believing!

A Lesson

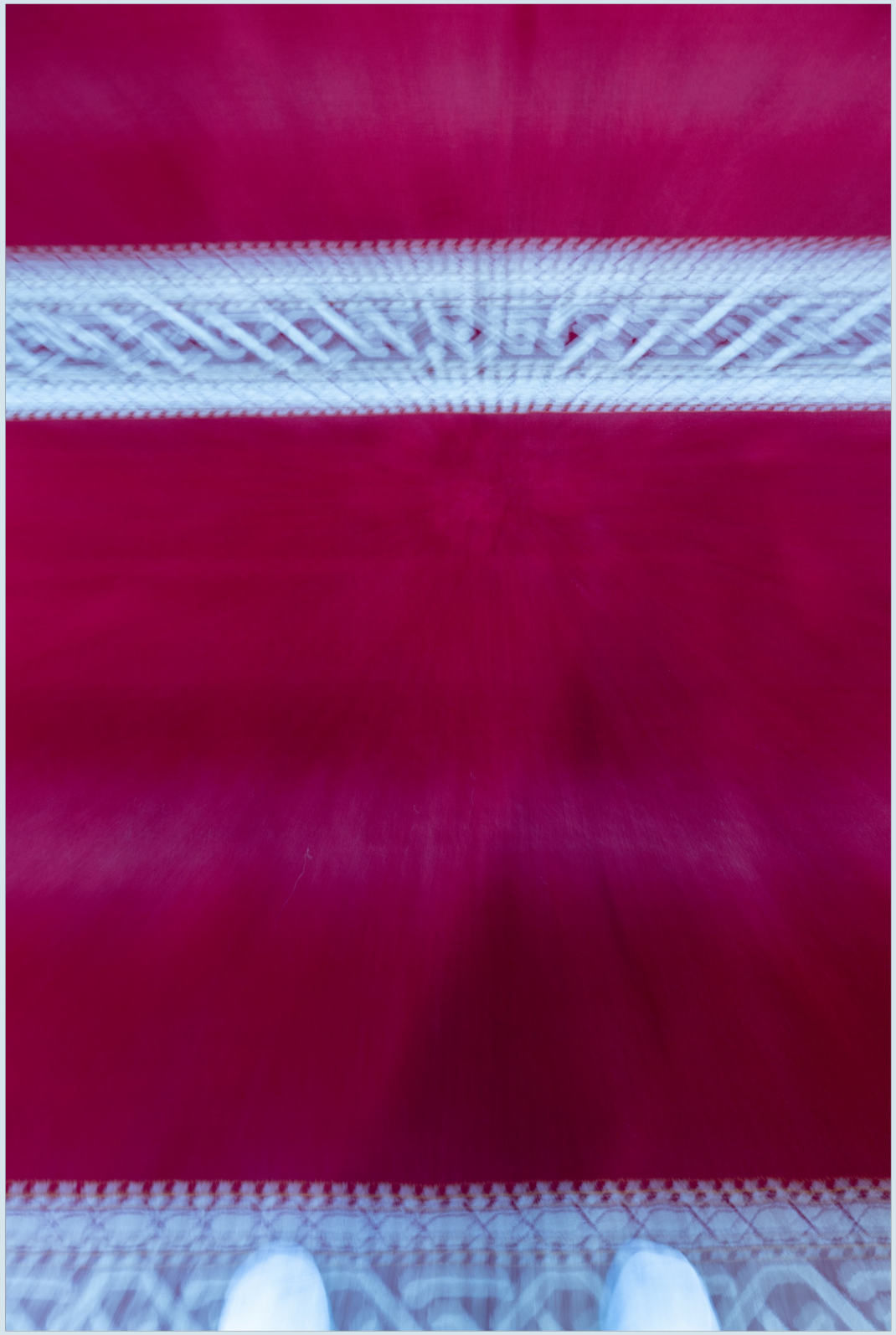
A being often hated for its dark attire
Yet in its pure heart, a lesson to acquire
Seeking wisdom and truth, where the horizon lies
In pursuit of a treasure, beyond worldly eyes

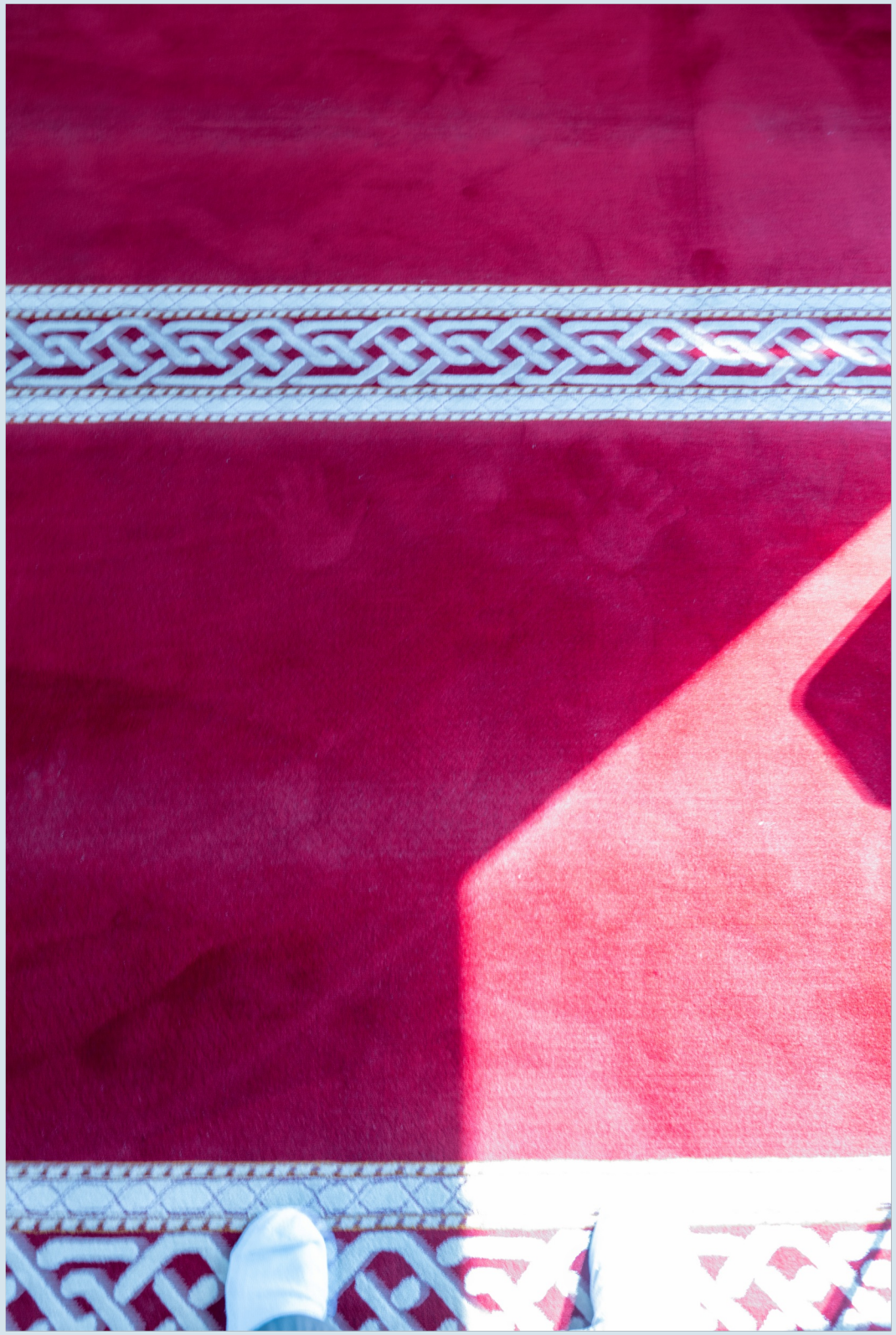
“Oh, wise God, teach us your creed
For in your worship, there's much we need
To seek true success, not in wealth or greed
But in the embrace of your love, freed”

That would be the true success indeed
So let us learn from the crow's life
To seek God's pleasure with all our might
And not let our life pass us by!









In "Faith With Wings," Hamish Dean blends photography and poetry to capture the essence of Canberra's three main mosques in 2023. Respecting the conservative nature of the community, the book forgoes the portrayal of people, instead focusing on the mundane objects within these sacred spaces. Through this lens, the artist encourages a deeper understanding beyond the visible. The book opens with an introductory poem by the artist, setting the tone for this journey. A series of free verse and haiku-inspired poems follow, each delving into the intricate layers of truth, challenges, and devotion inherent within the mosques and their community.

This artist’s book is more than a collection of photographs and poems; This book offers a unique perspective on the spiritual life in Canberra, inviting readers to discover the hidden truths. As the narrative progresses, it builds towards a profound climax where the crow, metaphorically the author, witnesses an abnormality, a miracle. One that might have been missed by the reader. This is a book of faith, meditation, and identity. This is a book of faith, meditation, and identity. It is a book that will make the reader think as well as observe.