



Wanted: an Imam for Today

The current debate about whether Imams should be home-grown or brought in from abroad misses the crucial point – namely that they need to be suitably qualified, imparting guidance, knowledge and wisdom in a beautiful manner. Throughout Islamic history the Imam has been a noble, dignified and respected person. That is of little wonder when you consider their calibre. Here is an advert for the position of Imam of the Grand Mosque in Istanbul at the time of Sultan Suleyman the Lawgiver (known in Europe as Suleyman the Magnificent) who ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1520 to 1566.

1st

To have mastered the languages of Arabic, Latin, Turkish and Persian

2nd

To have mastered the Qur'an, the Bible and the Torah

3rd

To be a scholar in Shari'ah and Fiqh

4th

To have mastered physics and mathematics up to teaching standard

5th

To be a master of chivalry, archery, duelling and the arts of Jihad

6th

To be of a handsome countenance

7th

To have a strong melodious voice