

Essay 1

[Submit Assignment](#)

Due Sep 14 by 11:59pm **Points** 10 **Submitting** a file upload

Prophecy Essay (500-550 words)

Voices in your head...

(The purpose of this exercise is to help you appreciate aspects of the Prophet's initial experience of, and encounter with what he interpreted later to be the Divine.)

We all have internal conversations within our mind all the time, often commonly depicted in popular culture as a conversation with an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other, and we are generally familiar with the idea of these inner voices within ourselves.

Now consider that you are going about your business in New York City one day, when you begin to notice one such voice in your head. This voice is more assertive than the internal conversations you have in that it raises fewer doubts and generally brings deeper clarity to your thoughts. You begin paying more attention to it and assume that it's just a product of your own brainstorming. Eventually, the voice acquires a commanding presence that – at times – calms and reassures you while – at others – is brutal with its clarity and honesty. Still it does not interfere with the routine of your daily life; it simply interjects itself at times of quiet and solitude like at night when you settle in to watch t.v. or read a book with a nice cup of coffee. Increasingly, however, it begins to take a more active role in your life. It counsels you when you face difficult choices (Should I propose to my partner? Should I leave my job?) and provides clear and helpful guidance. It also begins to elaborate on more general societal problems. It speaks to injustices in the economic system, police brutality, political corruption, bank bailouts, inadequacy of laws dealing with ownership and use of guns, racial tensions, gang wars, the use of drugs, general urban decline. These are not your thoughts at all... You've always been a fairly apolitical person not rocking the boat or taking part in protest marches or questioning the basic social order. As the years pass, you begin to believe more and more that the voice in your is not just a product of your imagination. It even begins to inspire you with its indignation and passion on issues that you know little about... like the restructuring of the public school system. You find its arguments very convincing and gain a complete faith in its reality and truthfulness. The voice clearly seems like an outside force and seems as though it has chosen to communicate with you out of millions of potential people (or that you have, of millions of people, become the one who listens and attends to this voice). You find real peace and reassurance in the voice.

Then one day, the voice suggests you go out and start spreading the ideas that it has placed in your head. You are aware that people will not believe you and you are reluctant to approach them... but the

voice is now a searing presence in your brain and you are convinced of its truthfulness.

What do you do?

Some guidelines:

1. Assume that you are either (a) a highly regarded mid-level employee in a hedge fund on Wall St. or (b) a respected corporate lawyer in a downtown law firm.
2. Ignoring the voice is an option but bear in mind that the voice rings in your head constantly... and you are certain of its truth. You also enjoy and even crave its presence.
3. You can choose any literary form of your choice (e.g., letter, speech, diary, etc...).
4. Include (a) the point of view of the voice in your head on the social issue you picked to write about, (b) a general plan of action on how you would proceed, (c) the response(s) you anticipate, especially those that disagree with what the voice in your head is preaching, (d) how you think the entire episode would play out, and (e) the emotional state/strain that such a demand would place upon you.
5. You may compare the voice's views on the issue that you picked with what other institutions concerned with issues of social justice, i.e. the Catholic Church, say about that same issue. Another alternative would be to summarize what the Catholic Church teachings on the issue under discussion, whether you agree or disagree with the Church's position, and why? You may also compare the Church's position with what other religious traditions say about the subject.

This exercise was designed by Dr. Najam Haidar.