



PARADISE

A Monthly Publication of Huntsville Islamic Center

September/October 2002

EDITORIAL

LET THE FUTURE BE

"(Inevitably) cometh (to pass) the Command of Allah: seek ye not then to hasten it..." An-Nahl [1]

It is against the teachings of Islam to constantly worry about the future, which Allah chose to be unseen. In fact, worrying about the poverty, illness, and troubles of the future is a teaching of Shaitan. *"The Evil One threatens you with poverty and bids you to conduct unseemly. Allah promise th you His forgiveness and bounties..." Al-Baqara [268]* Indeed, worrying about the future is futile, because the length of our stay in this life is not in our hands.

Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, reported: *"A desert Arab said to Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him): When would be the Last Hour? Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: What preparation have you made for that? ..."* **Sahih Muslim [4775]** Allah's messenger PBUH focused the goal of Muslims on the present and how it is used rather than the future and when it will be. So dear Muslim, rid yourself of your worries about the future and its troubles. Let your goal be utilizing every second in building a solid foundation of faith and good deeds to carry you in your hereafter.

Discussing Religion with the People of the Scripture

Engaging the Jews and Christians in meaningful dialogue is something that we need to do. Those who wish to participate in this activity, however, should observe some general guidelines:

1. Any attempt at dialogue must be able to practically address what Islam is, explain its principles and issues properly, and demonstrate clearly Islam's position on Judaism and Christianity from the Qur'ân and Sunnah. It should be able to show the difference between what Islam teaches about how Muslims should deal with the Jews and Christians and what is actually going on in Muslim society.
2. It should take into consideration the things that these religions have in common, like the concept of divine revelation, prophethood, and the need to follow the guidance of the Prophets. Then, the necessary consequences of these beliefs we hold in common should be demonstrated. This is what Allah does in the Qur'ân when He says: "Say: O people of the scripture! Come to com-

mon terms between us and you: that we worship none but Allah, that we associate no partners with Him, that we erect not from among ourselves Lords besides Allah." [Sûrah al Imrân: 64]

3. The other religion should not be dismissed or declared invalid from the get go as if it were a foregone conclusion. It does not matter how false the other's ideas might be. When engaging in a dialogue or discussion, it must be brought forth as the result of carefully reasoned arguments and not be treated like a first principle.

4. Convincing the other party should be achieved in conformity with the basic principles of Islam, using a universally understood, rational approach to support those principles. In a discussion, it is necessary to use an approach that by the force of reason is capable of compelling other party to accept one's argument.

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General Assembly Meeting

Saturday October 19, 2002

At 5:00 p.m.

The meeting will be preceded by a potluck dinner

Youth Corner

WHY SHOULD I SPEND TIME IN PRAYER?

Submitted by By: Jenna Elshamy

Some people don't realize the importance of prayer. The objective of human life is to know (and worship) our Creator, as Allah says in the Qur'an: "I have not created jinns and humans but for my worship."

Prayer is not only the way that a human can establish a relationship with his Creator, but also a main door that leads to his complete submission to Allah. Prayer also prevents you from wrongdoing. Allah says: "Surely prayer restrains one from indecency and manifest evil." This shows that prayer is a guarantee from Allah that if a worshipper observes prayer with all its conditions, he will be safe from evils. The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked his companions, "If one of you had a stream running by his door, and he takes a bath in it five times a day, would any dirt be left on him?" They replied, "No dirt would be left on him!" The Prophet said: "This is the case with prayer (the five daily prayers). Allah makes the prayer wipe out his sins".

When you realize the true value of prayer, you see that the time spent in prayer is much more valuable than the time spent using the internet, talking on the phone, shopping, watching television, or playing video games.

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5. It is important that the issues discussed in dialogue are not issues accepted by Muslims on the basis of faith alone. They must be issues that can be approached in discussion by those who do not share that faith.

6. Among the important topics to address in the early stages of discussion is the position of Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them both) in Islam as well as Islam's recognition of the origin that Judaism and Christianity have in divine revelation.

7. Every attempt should be made to free the dialogue from guarded partisanship.

8. The Christians especially should be addressed regarding the thorny and difficult teachings of their faith.

9. Attention should be given to the failure of their faith on a practical, societal level, especially the difficulties they experienced with respect to reconciling religion and science.

10. The scientific knowledge found in the revelations of Islam - the Qur'an and Sunnah - should be brought up, like the scientific miracles of the Qur'an.

11. The best manner of speaking should be sought out for any given set of circumstances.

What I have outlined here is suitable only for engaging in dialogue with Jews and Christians.

There are general rules for engaging in dialogue that are applicable to everyone. The arguments given by the Qur'an are the best of arguments, with respect to their certainty as well as their inherent strength.

With respect to Christian sources, there are a number of works available about them written by Muslim scholars, like *al-Jawâb al-Sahîh* by Ibn Taymiyah.

In any event, the best discussion of the Christians and their beliefs is to be found in the Qur'an. This is something accessible to all Muslims.

Please submit your Paradise contributions by the 15th of the month to:
paradise@huntsvilleislamiccenter.org

Doaa of the Month

"Our Lord! forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteous. Our Lord! Grant us what Thou didst promise unto us through Thy Messengers, and save us from shame on the Day of Judgment; for Thou never breakest Thy promise" (3:193-194)

Choosing Good Leaders Among Us

"O mankind, surely we have created you, families and tribes, so you may know one another. Surely, the most honorable of you with Allah is the Most Righteous Among You. Surely, Allah Is All- Knowing, Aware." (HQ)

Throughout history, you will not find a person who came to lead so many people, or who had so much influence on a nation, than that of Prophet Muhammad, ibn Abdullah (s). What was it that made his leadership so effective? How was he able to attract such a broad range of people with such diverse backgrounds and move them forward in such a magnificent manner? Every lesson of a good leader can be found in the life of Prophet Muhammad (s). As a leader, he was always humble and compassionate. He would never put himself before the others he was leading. He involved himself in daily work side by side with his companions. He did not overburden those under him. Allah (swt) summarized Muhammad's (s) life by saying "You are the best of manners." Even when Aisha (ra) was asked about the behaviors of the Prophet she replied, "If you look at every manner Allah mentioned in the *Quran* that one should possess on the behavior of humans, they will be found in Muhammad (s)." Every word Allah (swt) said about him, he implemented. He reached the highest level reached by any human being in his manners, belief in Allah (swt), his advice to people, steadfastness, commitment, honesty, and forgiveness.

Qualified leaders are hard to find, but the search becomes even more difficult when we seek to choose leaders with the wrong qualifications, the wrong temperament, or for the wrong reasons. In a few short weeks, the General Assembly of HIC will elect board members to govern our Masjid for the next two years. Let us look at some positive traits that should exist in the leaders we select to govern and serve our Islamic community:

1. **Knowledge and Hikmah** (wisdom, insight). Leaders should be chosen based on their level of knowledge, its application in their personal life, their ability to assist others in solving human problems, and their insight in practical matters. Leaders should not be chosen based on friendship, loyalty, or favoritism.
2. **Taqwa or God-Consciousness**. Good leaders must possess a strong sense of consciousness and fear of Allah (swt). If a person truly fears Allah, they will also fear doing that which would displease Allah in any manner.
3. **'Adl (justice) and Rahmah** (compassion). Good leaders must be able to illustrate just dealings with the people, while at the same time exhibit warmth, kindness, and compassion.
4. **Courage and Bravery**. Good leaders must have courage. Leaders are faced with a multitude of challenges requiring them to make tough, often unpleasant or unfavorable decisions. They must be brave enough to stand by their convictions with firm resolve.
5. **Shura** (mutual consultation). A good leader must be one that understands and applies the principals of shura in the muslim community. They cannot be allowed to merely run with their own ideas, or agenda.
6. **Decisiveness and Being resolute**. Good leaders must not only be effective decision-makers, but must also be able to make those decisions in a firm and timely manner.
7. **Eloquence**. Good leaders must be able to talk properly to the people, be clearly understood, and be effective in their communication. Their speech should be one that motivates, encourages, & holds the attention of the people.
8. **Spirit of Self-Sacrifice, Commitment, and Willingness**. Good leaders should possess a willingness to do the job and have time to do it properly; be committed to fulfill its requirements; and exhibit a spirit of self-sacrifice..
9. **Sabr** (patience). Good leaders must illustrate a high level of patience when dealing with people, particularly in the heat of anger, ridicule, controversy, and dispute. They must also be able to keep a cool during times of stress.

As we embark on the election of our governing board for the next two years, let each and every one of us make a sincere effort to mark our calendars for Oct 19th & attend the General Assembly at HIC. When we come together for the sake of Allah, all of us will be the winners, so support your Masjid on Oct 19th and cast your Vote!

HIC Activities

Friday Night Study Circles: 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Two study circles for brothers and sisters.

Sunday Study Circle: 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Study circle for brothers and sisters.

Prayer Times at the Masjid

Fajr:	5:45 a.m.
Duhur:	1:00 p.m.
Asr:	4:15 p.m.
Maghrib:	Sunset
Isha:	8:00 p.m.
Jumu'a (Friday):	12:30 p.m.

| We say farewell to Dr. Mustafa Abushagur and |
| his family and wish them |
all the best in life. You will be greatly missed.

HIC's Expansion Project needs your generous donations



With Allah's help and
your continuous support the project will be done.
May Allah bless you all
and bless your families...

Youth Corner

Starting this month on Paradise is our *Youth Corner*. Please encourage our children to submit their writings for their benefit and the community's.



Congratulations



- ? Congratulations to brother *Sayed Iqbal* on completing his PhD degree; may Allah help you in applying your knowledge to serve Islam.
- ? Many happy returns to brother *Fuad Musleh* and his wife on their marriage. May Allah bless them and their marriage, and always join them on good.
- ? Best wishes go out to brother *Ashraf Musleh* on his engagement. May Allah bless him with the completion of his marriage.
- ? We are proud of the new addition to our Muslim community, brother *Mohammad Almuhtasib's* baby girl (Dalia).

IAH Needs your Support

Please help us continue our Islamic Education to our young Muslim generation.

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