

Islamic Center Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 12
December 15, 2003
Shawwal 21, 1424

ICNEF, St. John's Bluff Road S., Jacksonville, Florida 32246

CALENDAR

MONTHLY GATHERING

No Monthly Gathering
due to Holidays

JANUARY 2004 HOST FAMILIES

Dr. Asadullah & Razia Mojadidi
Ashraf & Fauzia Shaikh
Khair & Tahira Arsalla

ICNEF MANAGING COMMITTEE MEETING

Sunday, December 28, 2003
After Zuhr Prayer

Articles News Announcements

FOR NEWSLETTER

Please submit by
Friday, January 2, 2004

ICNEF WEBSITE

<http://www.ICNEF.org>

ABU UBAIDA

Usama Malik

The soldier of Islam and the guardian of the ummah, Abu Ubaida was the great sahabi of Rasulullah (PBUH). He was the fourth person to accept Islam. He was a living picture of deep faith and of a heart that was full of courage and strength.

On the day of the Battle of Badr, Abu Ubaida, was confronted by his father, Abdullah ibn Al-Jarrah, who was one of the disbelievers. He was determined to kill his son who had turned away from his religion. He would teach him a lesson for opposing his father. He faced his son and attempted to kill him, but his son moved away and averted his sword from him. He moved on to another group. The two men were separated. The father kept looking for his son until he caught him once again.

He lifted his sword high at his son. Abu Ubaida stopped with a light movement and made the sword fall to the ground and turned away as far as he could. But the father was determined and got him the third time. Abu Ubaida saw that his father was intent on opposing him and his hostility against Islam. Now Abu Ubaida considered himself as a soldier of Islam and therefore his father's opposition towards him was a barrier between himself and the establishment of the religion of Allah. Now, Abu Ubaida was persuaded to kill his father.

Two swords met in combat. The two men faced each other. Beautiful memories Of his childhood began to stir in his mind: when his father used to carry him, laughing and playing. He forced himself not to let these memories come in the way of spreading the message of Islam. He raised his sword high and dropped the sharp blade on the chest of his father whose heart was full of hatred against Islam. The sword pierced on his father's heart. It was one of the decisive moments of Islamic history. The sky shook and the angels recorded it on everlasting pages. The angel, Gabriel, revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) the following verses:

"You will not find a people who believe Allah and the Day of Judgment befriending those who have turned away from Allah and His Prophet. Even if they be their fathers or sons or relatives. Those are the people who have Faith written in their hearts and who have been strengthened with a spirit from Him, He will make them enter Gardens with River flowing underneath to live there in eternally. Allah is well pleased with them and they are pleased with him. These are of the Party of Allah. Indeed those of the Party of Allah are successful." (58:22)

When Abu Ubaida heard these verses his pained heart was soothed and his soul gladdened that Allah was pleased with him.

JESUS: BIBLICAL AND QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVES: A MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

Homa Mojadidi

A Muslim-Christian debate entitled "Jesus: Biblical and Qur'anic Perspectives," took place at UNF's University Center on Friday, October 17, at 7:15 pm. The event was sponsored by MSA, AMYA and made possible by the joint efforts of IC-NEF and UNF. Reverend Tom Borland represented the Christian perspective while Dr. Jamal Badawi spoke about the Qur'anic perspective.

While welcoming everyone to this Muslim-Christian dialogue, Dr. Parvez Ahmed said, "the full room tonight sends a message that we are committed to interfaith understanding." Dr. Parvez spoke of how during the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) time, the prophet personally served a Christian delegation, and made his private mosque a place of worship for another Christian delegation. Dr. Parvez said that today, this tradition of religious tolerance has been replaced by people who kill in the name of religion. "In this age of senseless violence and endless retribution, our little effort may not change the world, but we hope that it will touch many people," Dr. Parvez said. He said that both the Qur'an and the Bible exhort us towards tolerance and understanding of each other and it is in this spirit of tolerance and brotherhood that we are gathered here tonight.

Reverend Tom Borland represented the Biblical perspective on Jesus. He began his speech by saying that he came more to learn than to share and that he was not there as a Biblical scholar but as a pastor of a Christian congregation in Jacksonville, "who sweats every Sunday trying to figure out what to say [to his congregation] and adapt the Biblical text to modern day." "We don't have many sources of information about Jesus," continued Reverend Borland. He said that one of these sources is the Q (Qavilla) source, which is no longer in existence, but which was a group of sayings by Jesus and appears in Mark, Matthew, and Luke. He said that while the Gospels of Matthew and Luke are closely related, that of John is a little different, while the Gospel of Thomas presents a yet more different picture of Jesus. "It is historically and scientifically impossible to determine which is the true gospel," stated Reverend Borland.

Reverend Borland covered a chronological list of the events of Jesus' (PBUH) life and said that the causes of his death are murky. Reverend Borland mentioned that Jesus' resurrection is reported in different ways e.g., the Letters of Paul make no reference to the empty tomb or to what happened to Jesus' body but only refer to a vision of Jesus, but that other letters make a reference to the empty tomb and to what happened to his body. "What really draws me to Jesus irresistibly is the Doctrine of Mercy," said Reverend Borland. "He recognized truth and goodness wherever he found it," and "there was tremendous congruence between what he taught and who he was...he had a direct, honest, and fearless manner and what you might call prophetic courage, and what gave him tremendous power was the visionary dimension of his thought," stated Reverend Borland about Jesus (PBUH).

"I greet you with the greetings of all the prophets and of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), "Peace be onto you," thus Dr. Jamal Badawi began his presentation on the Qur'anic perspective on Jesus (PBUH). Dr. Badawi said that what he and Reverend Borland and all Muslims and Christians share is "believing in Jesus, respecting him, and loving him," and that Jesus (PBUH) is a common link between Christians and Muslims. He quoted the saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in which he says, "I am the closest to Jesus, son of Mary, in this life and in the next."

Dr. Badawi said that praises of Jesus in the Qur'an begin before his birth and God praises Jesus' mother, Mary, in verse 28 of chapter 19: "O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a man of evil, not thy mother a woman unchaste." Dr. Badawi said that the Qur'an also recognizes the virgin birth of Jesus in the following verses: "Behold! The angels said: 'O Mary! God gives you glad tidings of a Word from Him: His name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and the Hereafter and of (the company of) those Nearest to God; He shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity and he shall be (of the company) of the righteous.' She said: 'O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me?' He said: 'Even so: God creates what He wills when He has decreed a Plan, He but says to it, 'Be,' and it is! [3:45-47] Dr. Badawi said that the Qur'an speaks of the prelude to Jesus' birth by telling Zachariah's story of how God gave him John the Baptist at an old age. At another instance the Qur'an compares the birth of Jesus to Adam: "The similitude of Jesus before God is as that of Adam; He creates him from dust, then said to him: "Be": And he was [3:59]. Dr. Badawi went on to say that God created human beings in four ways: to be born of both male and female; to create a human being from neither male nor female (Adam); to create from a male and not a female (Eve); and to create from a female without a male (Jesus). Dr. Badawi said that thus we get all miraculous forms of creation even though every act of creation is miraculous in itself. Dr. Badawi continued his presentation by saying that Jesus is the word from God in Qur'anic terminology, which refers to God's command "to be." He said that some scholars also interpret "the word" here as a promise, e.g., God giving good news of a son to Mary. Dr. Badawi said that while Jesus is called the spirit from God, in the following verses, God also speaks of us as having breathed His spirit into and that every human being has the spirit of God as we have the common spiritual nature:

Continued-on page 4

2ND WALK AS ONE

Saman Quraishi

On a beautiful Saturday morning, more than 400 people from all different backgrounds, cultures and faiths congregated at Friendship Fountain downtown Jacksonville on Nov. 15 to take part in the National Conference for Community and Justice's second annual Walk as One event. NCCJ is an organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism as well as promoting understanding and respect amongst all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education. Claud Myers, the executive director for NCCJ, in his welcome speech challenged all participants to get to know someone other than the people they came with. He went on to say that "this walk is about demonstrating to Jacksonville and the world, that we are a community and we will walk as one!"

Many walkers met the challenge put forth by Myers, Dr. Mo-been Rathore said, "I came here to support the concepts that NCCJ stands for, I met people, exchanged ideas, and I believe this is the way to promote a more harmonious community in Jacksonville."

The Islamic Center of Northeast Florida had an informative booth set up with many volunteers such as Dr. Asad Mojadidi handing out literature and answering questions about Islam. Our very own Imam Zaid Malik, also the Religious Chair of the event, led the walkers in a beautiful prayer. In his prayer he asked God to "help us to understand that while we are many, we walk as one. We walk as one, united in bringing out the best that mankind has to offer. We walk as one in the fight against hatred, bigotry, racism and terrorism." When asked why he supported NCCJ and its programs, the Imam replied by saying, "NCCJ is serving the same purpose of Islam, by fighting against racism, bigotry and biases."

Many people from the Islamic Center were present at the Walk. The numbers were incredible and in my opinion we did a good job of showing our solidarity with NCCJ. In fact, many people decided to tackle the 3.5-mile walk even while they were fasting! NCCJ has been supportive of the Islamic community and is very active in promoting interfaith dialogue to overcome differences and provides an excellent outlet for Muslims to learn about other faiths and to teach others about ours.

IMAM'S DIARY

Imam Zaid Malik

Nov. 6th: I participated in the first meeting of the Super Bowl Host Committee, as a part of the Faith Sub-Committee. There are 11 of us on the board.

Nov. 7th: Nickelodeon visited the Islamic Center. They had a plan to shoot a documentary, "Muslim Youth Life in America." I participated in a Q/A like talk with youths representing the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faith. Sr. Henna Shah was a representative for the Muslim side. They all had very good questions to ask me. Br. Rahim Shah told me that Nickelodeon was also planning to visit a church and a synagogue.

Nov. 13th: I participated in an interfaith program hosted by the Mayor. We have been working for weeks to arrange this program. Around 200 clergy members from the monotheistic religions were there. I had to call the adhan and then I translated it into English. I was not able to lead the Taraweeh prayers tonight, however, Brother Hafiz Siddiq, filled in for me. Much thanks to him.

Nov. 15th: Our community participated in NCCJ's annual Walk as One. It was a lot of fun and the coming together of different cultures. As the Religious Chair of the event, I offered invocation before the start of the walk.

Nov. 17th: Br. Rahim Shah and I participated in a preparatory meeting hosted by City Council President Lad Daniel. An interfaith and intercultural youth camp is being organized during the summer of 2004.

Nov. 23rd: I participated in Thanksgiving programs arranged by the NCCJ and NAS JAX. At NCCJ, I spoke on "Thanksgiving, The Instrument of Praise: The Melody of the Heart". At NAS JAX, I spoke on "Thanksgiving, An Islamic Perspective". Br. Ashraf accompanied me to NCCJ's program. The three (3) monotheistic religions were represented in the programs.

Nov. 26th: We taped our weekly TV program, "Understanding Islam". This program is aired every Sunday at 4:00pm and then on 7:00pm on Channel 29 (Comcast).

Understanding
ISLAM

Television Program, Every Sunday
Comcast, Channel 24 or 29
4pm & 7pm Check Local Listings

Continued-from page 2

"Such is He, the Knower of all things, hidden and open, the Exalted (in power), the Merciful; He Who has made everything which He has created most good: He began the creation of man with (nothing more than) clay, and made his progeny from a quintessence of the nature of a fluid de-spised: But He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him something of His spirit. And He gave you (the faculties of) hearing and sight and feeling (and understanding): Little thanks do you give!" [32:6-9]

"Jesus is described in a very tender way in the Qur'an-as an honored person here and in the hereafter," said Dr. Badawi. He said that the Qur'an describes the angels giving Mary glad news of a pure child and that in Muslim belief, there is no concept of original sin, but that every child born is pure. Dr. Badawi said that the Qur'an mentions Jesus being strengthened by the holy spirit but that the Qur'anic image of the holy spirit is simply a reference to the Arch Angel Gabriel, who is a creature and servant of God like all creatures.

Dr. Badawi said that the Qur'an speaks of the miracles Jesus (PBUH) performed such as curing the blind and the lepers, all of which were performed by the leave and permission of God. He said that every prophet's miracles are unique as they relate to the spirit and need of his time and that during the time of Jesus, people were very materialistic and did not believe that the spirit was important. "Jesus taught nothing but the core basic knowledge that all prophets taught," continued Dr. Badawi. "The core message is one...the message of them all was Islam, because Islam means to achieve peace with God and with the creatures of God," stated Dr. Badawi.

Dr. Badawi said that every prophet is given a certain mandate and Jesus preached to the Israelites and was sent to the lost sheep of Bani Israel in preparation for the coming of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). He said that the Qur'an speaks about the nature of Jesus as a human being, as a creature of God. "Among the prophets there is a select group called messengers," continued Dr. Badawi, "and among those are the five "greatest of the great," messengers of all time, and these are Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammad (peace be upon them all).

"The Qur'an makes it clear that Jesus was rejected by his people" said Dr. Badawi, and the rejection did not stop with accusing him or trying to stop him but his enemies tried to crucify him. However, the following verse of the Qur'an rejects the Israelites' claim that they killed Jesus, son of Mary: "That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Apostle of God"; But they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not: Nay, God raised him up unto Himself; and God is Exalted in Power, Wise;" [4:157]

Dr. Badawi said that the most common interpretation of this verse among Muslims is that God saved Jesus and raised him unto Himself and that what is so shocking to most Christians is that Muslims believe in the second coming of Jesus. He said that while there is no direct reference to this in the Qur'an, there are verses that allude to Jesus being a sign for the Hour and the eminence of the Last Day, and that there are also more than 170 ahadith that speak of the second coming of Jesus (PBUH), and when Jesus comes to earth again, he will join the Muslims in fighting the false messiah, he will live on earth, get married, have children and then die.

In his conclusion, Dr. Badawi said that, "Not only is it clear that Jesus is a common link between Christians and Muslims but I humbly submit to you that Mohammad (PBUH) is also a potential if not a common link between Christians and Muslims." He said that Genesis 61:6 quotes Jesus as speaking of one who comes after him while chapters 16 & 17 also speak of the Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) coming.

AL-FURQAN ACADEMY 2ND ANNUAL IFTAR

Mona Hussein

On November 11, 2003, Al-Furqan Academy was the host for its second annual iftar, which was a wonderful success. The program began with Br. Marwan Abu-Sawwa, the school's MPTA (Muslim Parent Teacher Association) President, thanking everyone who participated in the preparation and organization of the food and festivities. After he stated the MPTA's goal of wanting to equip every classroom with a new computer, the program began.

The start of the program began as AFA students recited Surah Al Fatiha and Ayat Al Kursi. Then they all sang "Ramadan Kareem", a beautiful song about the blessed month. Next was the recitation of the 99 Names of Allah and then a beautiful recitation of Surah Ar Rahman. To hear this particular Surah recited by children will always be treasured by those present. The recitations closed with a dua made by all the students.

The last part of the program was especially entertaining. The student's martial arts instructor, Mr. Angel Casiano, from GFM Martial Arts School came and had the students demonstrate some techniques. After showing a series of fighting forms, kicks, and punches he invited members of the community to participate, and some eagerly did. Martial arts is indeed a fun and healthy way to keep our youth fit as well as disciplined.

Finally, everyone was treated to a fireworks display, courtesy of Al-Furqan Academy MPTA. Our only hope and desire is that first, Allah was pleased with our efforts and that second, the AFA parents were pleased with the performance of their children.

HARMONY

Islam teaches man to live in complete harmony with all that is around him/her.

Harmony with God:

Islam teaches man how to love and please God through submission to Him.

Harmony with Self:

Real happiness can only be obtained through the remembrance of God, His worship, and living in accordance with His laws. "Without doubt in the remembrance of God do hearts find satisfaction." (13:28)

Harmony with Others:

Islam teaches man how to live as a constructive member of his/her society.

Harmony with the Environment and rest of Creation:

Islam is a religion of mercy in all its aspects. It prohibits the needless waste of resources and unnecessary cruelty to animals. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Have mercy on that which is on the earth and then the One in the Heaven will have mercy on you."

In the Qur'an, God teaches human beings that they were created in order to worship him, and that the basis of all true worship is God-consciousness. As such, worship in Islam is not limited to religious rituals. The teachings of Islam act as a mercy and a healing for the human soul.

POINT TO PONDER

☞ The greatest defect of observant Muslims today is that they recite Holy Qur'an merely as a ritual without understanding what they are reading rather than regarding the sacred book as a practical manual of everyday conduct to be acted upon. If Muslims were taught to understand and above all, translate into action, what they recite, the world would experience a veritable revolution which would put all previous revolutions to shame." Maryam Jameelah Answers Questions, *The Criterion*)

7 JEWELS OF FAITH

Humility

Avoidance of vanity

Charity

Sexual purity

Fidelity to trusts

Fidelity to covenants

An earnest desire to get close to God Almighty

A BEAUTIFUL PRAYER

O God, deliver us from preoccupation with worldly vanities, and show us the nature of things "as they really are". Remove from our eyes the veil of ignorance, and show us things as they really are. Show us not non-existence as existent, nor cast the veil of non-existence over the beauty of existence. Make this phenomenal world the mirror to reflect the manifestation of Thy beauty, not a veil to separate and repel us from Thee. Cause these unreal phenomena of the Universe to be for us the sources of knowledge and insight, not the causes of ignorance and blindness. Our alienation and severance from Thy beauty all proceed from ourselves. Deliver us from ourselves, and accord to us intimate knowledge of Thee.

**The believers must (eventually) win through;
Those who humble themselves in their prayers;
Who avoid vain talk;
Who are active in deeds of charity;
Who abstain from sex except with those
Joined to them in the marriage bond;
Or (the captives) which their right hands possess,
For (in their case) they are free from blame,
But those whose desires exceed those limits
Are transgressors;
Those who faithfully observe
Their trusts and their covenants;
And who (strictly) guard their prayers;
These will be the heirs, who will inherit Paradise;
They will dwell therein forever, (23:1-11)**

LOVING THE NEW NEWSLETTER?

**Let the Newsletter Team know
by emailing your comments, concerns,
and suggestions to
icnefnews@yahoo.com**

**SUPPORT THE NEWSLETTER
Muslim Businesses = Monthly/Yearly Ads
Readers = Donate to the Newsletter Fund**

AMYA FAMILY NIGHT

Featuring **Azhar Usman**, world renowned comedian!
He's coming to Jacksonville on **December 20th**.
Tickets are selling fast, buy yours today.

Shands Auditorium, 6pm to 8pm
Cost of Tickets: \$20 for non-AMYA members
\$15 for AMYA members

Kids under the age of 5 are FREE
(however, they cannot occupy a seat)

Dinner will be served for \$5

For more information, contact any or all of the following:

Br. Faheem Rathore
Br. Mueez Qureishi
Sr. Sahar Qureishi
Sr. Meleha Khan
Sr. Aniqah Qureishi
Br. Syed Hussein
Sr. Henna Shah
Sr. Sumaira Rajpoot
Br. Rahim Shah

PARKING AT ICNEF

Alhudmulillah our community has grown considerably in recent years. The parking lot is not big enough to accommodate everyone who come for Jummah, for the two Eids, and during the month of Ramadhan (iftar and/or taraweeh). The Managing Committee needs the help of the community when it comes to parking. Please respect those who have bought parking decals for the year. Do not come and park in someone else's spot during Jummah and the two Eids. People who will not respect this will be towed at their own expense (\$150). ICNEF is contracting with a local towing company to tow those who park without a decal on ICNEF premises during Jummah and the two Eids. We will tow your car! Also, please do not park in the adjacent parking lot (Turf Tech). They have asked us not to abuse their customers' parking spaces. If the parking lot is full, please park across the street at New Covenant Ministries. They have been kind enough to let us park in their parking lot. Please do not abuse this privilege. Do not park on the grass, especially not on their sprinklers. We appreciate everyone's cooperation.

"Definitely actions are judged by their intentions."

(Bukhari)

WHO IS POOR?

Excerpt from A Muslim's Character,
Muhammad Al-Ghazali

One day the Prophet (PBUH) asked his dear companions whether they knew who was poor. They answered that poor was one who had no dirham or dinar (money). He said: "In my ummah, the poor is that man who would appear on the Day of Judgment before God Almighty; he had offered prayer; he had paid Zakat; he had observed fast; but he would have abused somebody, he would have falsely accused someone; he would have taken someone else's property without authorization; he would have murdered someone; would have hit somebody. All his virtues would be given to his victims. If his virtues are finished before his wicked deeds are finished, then the errors and sins of the victims would be given to him and he would be thrown into Hell." (Muslim)

A religious man who offers prayers or performs certain forms of worship, but after that performs certain evil deeds, behaves rudely with the people, treats poor and helpless people cruelly, how then can such a man be called righteous?

2004 ISLAMIC CALENDAR MOSQUES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

A calendar every Muslim will be proud to display at home, in the office, or to give as a gift for family and friends.

Now available for purchase at the
Islamic Center Bookstore for only \$10

Baymeadows Primary Care, Inc.

No Appointment Necessary/Walk Ins Welcome
Board Certified

Talat Imam, MD
In Family Medicine

Hussain S. Imam, MD
In Internal Medicine

Quality Healthcare for Entire Family

M-F:8am-8pm Sat:9am-1pm

904-636-5400/ 9551 Baymeadows Road (Behind Applebee's)



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2003

1. Aboudan, Lisa*
2. Arsalla, Hogai.*
3. Ashouri, O'sama
4. Bhatti, A. Lateef
5. Bolden, A. Shakur*
6. Chaudhri, Zafar M.
7. Elbanna, Khalil
8. Elbaz, Abdel M*
9. Fauq, A. Hafeez*
10. Hussain, Jawad
11. Hussain, Khadim*
12. Kawwaf, Omar
13. Khayat, Amjad*
14. Khan, Khalil A.
15. Malik, M. Zaid*
16. Mojadidi, Asadullah*
17. Mojadidi, Homa*
18. Mona, Mohammad N.
19. Piracha, Sameen A.*
20. Rathore, Mobeen H.*
21. Quraeshi, Shad*
22. Shabazz, Najmah*
23. Saleh, Issa M.*
24. Sayed, Shah Faisal*
25. Shah, Rahim*
26. Shaikh, M. Ashraf*
27. Shareef, Tahir*
28. Wareh, M. Faiz
29. Yasrebi, Hosein
30. Zahir, Muhammad

President:

Shakur Bolden

Vice Presidents:

Tahir Shareef
Shah Faisal Sayed

Secretary:

Rahim Shah

Assistant Secretary:

Lisa Aboudan
Sameen Piracha

Treasurer:

Khadim Hussain

Assistant Treasurer:

Hogai Arsalla
Shah Faisal Sayed

PHONE
904-646-3462

*also members of Managing Committee

THE VEIL OF HEEDLESSNESS

Harun Yahya

Man is intrinsically selfish; he is extremely sensitive about issues linked to his own interests. Ironically, he displays indifference towards death, which ought to be a matter of paramount concern. In the Qur'an, this state of mind peculiar to "those who do not hold firmly to Faith" is defined by God in one word: "heedlessness".

The meaning of heedlessness is a deficiency in full comprehension of facts owing to a blurring of awareness or even total unawareness and the resultant failure to arrive at sound judgments and give pertinent responses. An example of this is given in the following verse:

Mankind's Reckoning has drawn very close to them, yet they heedlessly turn away.
(Surat al-Anbiya': 1)

People feel certain that one who is afflicted by a fatal or incurable disease will die. Yet, no less than this patient, these people who harbor such feelings of certainty, too, will die. That this will happen some time in the future or very soon does not change this fact. Often, heedlessness obscures this truth. For instance, it is highly probable that someone afflicted with HIV will die in the near future. Yet, the fact remains that it is also highly probable -if the truth be told, it is certain- that a vigorous person next to him will one day die. Maybe death will come upon him long before it comes upon that "HIV-stricken patient." This will most likely be at some quite unexpected moment.

Death, especially at an early age, seldom comes to mind. Considering this as the end, man even escapes from the thought of it. However, just as physical avoidance provides no cure for death; neither does avoidance of thinking about it. Besides, it is impossible to ignore death. Every day, newspapers run headlines about the deaths of so many people. You frequently come across hearses or pass by cemeteries. Relatives and associates die. Their funerals or visits to offer condolences inevitably bring death to mind. As one witnesses the death of others, and especially the death of beloved ones, he inevitably thinks about his own end. This thought hurts him deep inside, making him restless.

No matter how strongly the individual resists, wherever he seeks refuge or how he tries to escape, he may actually encounter his own death at any moment. He has no other choice. Ahead of him, there is no other exit. The countdown never stops, not for a moment. Wherever he returns, death meets him there. The circle encloses constantly and finally catches up with him:

Say: 'Death, from which you are fleeing, will certainly catch up with you. Then you will be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible and He will inform you about what you did.' (Surat al-Jumu'ah: 8)

Wherever you are, death will catch up with you, even if you are in impregnable fortresses.
(Surat an-Nisa': 78)

That is why we need to stop deceiving ourselves or disregarding facts and strive to earn the good pleasure of God during this period predetermined by Him. Only God knows when this time will be over.

Our Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) also said that one of the best ways to prevent one's conscience from hardening, and attain a good character is by frequently remembering death: Abdullah ibn Umar narrated, "God's Messenger (peace be upon him) said, 'These hearts become rusty just as iron does when water affects it.' On being asked what could clear them he replied, 'A great amount of remembrance of death and recitation of the Qur'an.'" (Al-Tirmidhi, 673)

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Editor

Sameen Piracha

Associate Editors

Sunyia Hussain

Homa Mojadidi

Reporters/Contributors

Mona Hussein

Imam Muhammad Zaid Malik

Usama Malik

Homa Mojadidi

Saman Quraishi

All original works contained in this newsletter are copyrighted and owned by the authors unless otherwise stated. Articles may not be used or reproduced without the prior consent of the editor, authors, publishers or their representatives. Any reproduction must acknowledge this newsletter and the author and must not be edited or changed in anyway.

(c) 2003 ICNEFnews

To

In This Issue

Abu Ubaida, Badawi-Borland Lecture, AFA Iftar, Walk, Diary...

Published by
Islamic Center
of NE Florida, Inc.
2333 St Johns Bluff Rd. S.
Jacksonville, FL. 32246

IMAM

Hafiz Muhammad Zaid Malik

PUBLISHER

Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad

WEBPAGES

Khadim Hussain

The opinions expressed in the articles and other editorial material are those of the authors and are not to be construed as opinions and/or recommendations of the Islamic Center.

Send your articles, questions, comments and community news to:

ICNEFnews@yahoo.com

Fax: 904-783-0784

sameenpiracha@hotmail.com
khadimhussain@yahoo.com

SURAH IKHLAS

After the Surah Fatiha, Surah Ikhlas is the most important and most often repeated Surah of the Holy Qur'an. The importance of this Surah has been described in the following hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

"He (Abud Darda) reported God's messenger as saying, "Is any of you capable of reciting a third of the Qur'an in a night?" On being asked how they could recite a third of the Qur'an he replied, " 'Say, He is God, One' is equivalent to a third of the Qur'an." Muslim transmitted it, and Bukhari transmitted it from Abu Sa'id."

The translation of Surah Ikhlas (Holy Qur'an 112:1-4) is:

Say: He is Allah, the One and Only!
Allah, the Eternal, Absolute;
He begetteth not nor is He begotten.
And there is none like unto Him.