

# Islamic Center Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 9  
September 15, 2003  
Rajab 18, 1424

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

## CALENDAR

### MONTHLY GATHERING

Saturday, September 27, 2003  
5:30 pm

### HOST FAMILIES

Ayub & Shehzana Quraishi  
Khawar & Farah Qureshi

### OCTOBER 2003 HOST FAMILIES

Tahir & Nabeela Sharif  
Abdul Hafeez & Tahira Fauq

### ICNEF MANAGING COMMITTEE MEETING

Sunday, September 28, 2003  
After Zuhr Prayer

Articles News Announcements

### FOR NEWSLETTER

Please submit by  
Friday, September 19, 2003

### ICNEF WEBSITE

<http://www.ICNEF.org>

## ETIQUETTE OF CONVERSATION

Based on Friday Khutba of Imam Zaid Malik

**W**hat is the difference between words of advice (*naseeha*) and words of gossip (*gheeba*)? What is the difference between these two qualities?

Words of Advice: Imam Abdul Kahir Jurjani, one of the greatest scholars of Islam, especially of the Arabic language, said: "*Naseeha* means that you call people towards goodness and you try to stop them from *'idh* with sincerity." He goes on to say that the root of the word means pure honey. God Almighty has said in the Qur'an: "Oh you who believe, repent to God Almighty, repentance that is pure, based on sincerity, a true repentance." The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: "That the whole religion is based on sincerity (*naseeha*). And the people asked him: "O Prophet of God Almighty, to whom should we be sincere?" He replied: "You should be sincere to God Almighty, to His Book, with His Messenger, with the leaders of the Muslims and the common folk." (Bukhari)

Words of Gossip: Another great Muslim scholar, At Tahanawi, has defined *gheeba*. It's a very comprehensive definition. He says: "*Gheeba* means that you mention your brother in a way that if it reaches him, it displeases him. It could be anything in his body, or in his dress, or in his character, or in his action/deeds, or in his words, or in his religion, or in any worldly thing, or in his children, or in his house, or even in his vehicle. Also, *gheeba* is not limited to your words, it also includes your signs or any indirect expressions." He then quotes a hadith where Aisha (RA) indirectly made a sign about a woman being short. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: "that you have committed the sin of *gheeba*. You have back bitted or you were gossiping." (Bukhari & Muslim)

Difference between Gossip and Fabrication: *Gheeba* is when what you are saying about your brother/sister in his/her absence is true. *Al Buhtan* is when what you are saying about your brother/sister in his/her absence is a fabrication, a lie. *Gheeba* is a major sin. Thus, be careful when you get the urge to speak about others, whether what you say is true or not.

When *Gheeba* turns into *Naseeha*: Some situations allow us to talk about a person in their absence. Imam Nawawi (RA) has summarized 4 situations: 1) if a person has been wronged, he/she can go to someone in authority to stop the wrongdoer(s); 2) if a person sees a wrong being done, but does not have the authority to stop the wrongdoer; 3) if a person needs to share the bad qualities of another in order to seek advice from a scholar; and 4) if a person is warning the Muslims of an evil he/she sees in a person or a group of people. In all cases the intention should be to prevent a harm and not merely to talk bad about someone or a group of people. "God Almighty does not like that the evils of the people should be mentioned publicly except by who has been wronged. He is allowed to do that." (Qur'an 4:148)

## ANGER AND ITS CURE IN ISLAM

Homa Mojadidi

﴿ The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allāh ordered the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily! he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. ” [Qur’an - Fussilat 41:34]

“Those who spend (in Allāh's Cause - deeds of charity, alms, etc.) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon men; verily, Allāh loves *Al-Muhsinūn* (the good-doers).” [Qur’an - Al-Imran 3:134]

Psychologists tell us that anger is a natural human emotion. While it may be natural to feel angry at certain people and situations, as Muslims, we are advised by the Qur’an and Sunnah that it is in our own best interest to be able to control our anger and practice self-restraint. We have all seen how people who are unable to control their anger and let their anger control them, act in childish, irrational, and despicable ways, humiliating themselves and the people they are directing their anger towards. Uncontrolled anger also destroys a person’s inner peace, relationships with others, and can cause serious bodily injury and even death in cases of child and spousal abuse. Unrestrained anger can also lead a person to commit heinous crimes such as rape, murder, and other acts of aggression. On a much larger scale, the fires of anger and hatred in the form of wars, ethnic cleansing, and other unjustified acts of oppression, whether by one group of people or whole nations against each other, brings death and destruction to millions of people.

Given all the negative and drastic consequences of unleashed anger, it is not surprising that as Muslims, we are strictly enjoined to control our anger and practice self-restraint. The ahadith (sayings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)) mentioned below clearly demonstrate the extent to which we are supposed to refrain from succumbing to anger and the rewards for doing so:

A man said to the Prophet , "Advise me!" The Prophet said, "Do not become angry and furious." The man asked (the same) again and again, and the Prophet said in each case, "Do not become angry and furious." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

"No one has swallowed anything excellent in the sight of Allah ...than the anger he restrains, seeking to please Allah most high." (Al-Tirmidhi)

“Verily the most beloved of you to me and nearest to me in the next world are those of good disposition; and verily the greatest enemies to me and the furthest from me are the ill-tempered.”

“Verily, anger corrupts faith like as the juice of bitter plants corrupt honey.”

“Whoso suppresses his rage, while he has the power to show himself, God will call on him on the day of resurrection before all creation, and reward him exceedingly.”

"A strong man is not one who defeats his adversary by wrestling, but one who controls his anger." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

“My Lord has bidden me do nine things: the fear of God in secret and in public; a just word amidst anger and pleasure, and a middle way in poverty and affluence; and that I perform my relative duties to him who cuts off all ties with me, and give to him who denies me, and forgive him who wrongs me, and that my silence be for reflection, and my speaking be for remembrance (of God), and my eye (sight) be to take example, and that I bid justice.”

Abu Bakr relates that he heard the Holy Prophet (PBUH) say: "Let no judge decide a case between two parties while he is in a rage.

In his book, *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din* (The Revival of the Religious Sciences), Imam Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali's writes on anger and how to manage and restrain it:

Medicine removes the root cause of disease. When Jesus (AS) was asked to define the most difficult thing, he replied: "Allah's wrath." John the Baptist (Yahya) then asked: "What moves one closer to His wrath?" and Jesus replied: "Anger." Yahya than asked: "What grows and increases anger?" and Jesus said: "Pride, prestige, hope for honor, and haughtiness."

Self-conceit, self-praise, jest and ridicule, argument, treachery, and greed for wealth and fame exacerbate anger. Those who combine these characteristics within themselves manifest unbearable conduct, cannot escape their anger, and can remove them only if they apply their opposites: self-praise by modesty; pride by introspection, greed by remaining satisfied with necessary things, and miserliness by charity.

*Continued on Page 4*

## ABU DHARR

www.islamfortoday.com

In the Waddan valley, which connects Mecca with the outside world, lived the tribe of Ghifar. The Ghifar existed on the meager offerings of the trade caravans of the Quraysh, which plied between Syria and Mecca. It is likely that they also lived by raiding these caravans when they were not given enough to satisfy their needs. Jundub ibn Junadah, nicknamed Abu Dharr, was a member of this tribe.

He was known for his courage, his calmness and his far sightedness and also for the repugnance he felt against the idols, which his people worshipped. He rejected the silly religious beliefs and the religious corruption in which the Arabs were engaged.

While he was in the Waddan desert, news reached Abu Dharr that a new Prophet had appeared in Mecca. He really hoped that his appearance would help to change the hearts and minds of people and lead them away from the darkness of superstition. Without wasting much time, he called his brother, Anis, and said to him:

"Go to Mecca and get whatever news you can of this man who claims that he is a Prophet and that revelation comes to him from the heavens. Listen to some of his sayings and come back and recite them to me."

Anis went to Mecca and met the Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him. He listened to what he had to say and returned to the Waddan desert. Abu Dharr met him and anxiously asked for news of the Prophet.

"I have seen a man," reported Anis, 'who calls people to noble qualities and there is no mere poetry in what he says."

"What do people say about him?" asked Abu Dharr.

"They say he is a magician, a soothsayer and a poet."

"My curiosity is not satisfied. I am not finished with this matter. Will you look after my family while I go out and examine this prophet's mission myself?"

"Yes. But beware of the Meccans."

On his arrival at Mecca, Abu Dharr immediately felt very apprehensive and he decided to exercise great caution. The Quraysh were noticeably angry over the denunciation of their gods. Abu Dharr heard of the terrible violence they were meting out to the followers of the Prophet but this was what he expected. He therefore refrained from asking anyone about Muhammad not knowing whether that person might be a follower or an enemy.

At nightfall, he lay down in the Sacred Mosque. Ali ibn Abi Talib passed by him and, realizing that he was a stranger, asked him to come to his house. Abu Dharr spent the night with him and in the morning took his water pouch and his bag containing

provisions and returned to the Mosque. He had asked no questions and no questions were asked of him.

Abu Dharr spent the following day without getting to know the Prophet. At evening he went to the Mosque to sleep and Ali again passed by him and said:

"Isn't it time that a man knows his house?"

Abu Dharr accompanied him and stayed at his house a second night. Again no one asked the other about anything.

On the third night, however, Ali asked him, "Aren't you going to tell me why you came to Mecca?"

"Only if you will give me an undertaking that you will guide me to what I seek." Ali agreed and Abu Dharr said: "I came to Mecca from a distant place seeking a meeting with the new Prophet and to listen to some of what he has to say."

Ali's face lit up with happiness as he said, "By God, he is really the Messenger of God," and he went on telling Abu Dharr more about the Prophet and his teaching. Finally, he said:

"When we get up in the morning, follow me wherever I go. If I see anything which I am afraid of for your sake, I would stop as if to pass water. If I continue, follow me until you enter where I enter."

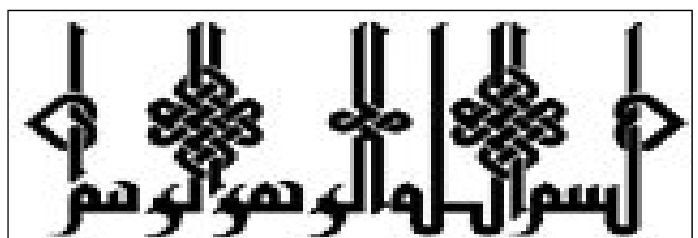
Abu Dharr did not sleep a wink the rest of that night because of his intense longing to see the Prophet and listen to the words of revelation. In the morning, he followed closely in Ali's footsteps until they were in the presence of the Prophet.

As-salaamu Alayka Yaa Rasulullah, (Peace be on you, O Messenger of God)," greeted Abu Dharr.

Wa Alayka salaamullahi wa rahmatuhu wa barakaatuhu (And on you be the peace of God, His mercy and His blessings)," replied the Prophet.

Abu Dharr was thus the first person to greet the Prophet with the greeting of Islam. After that, the greeting spread and came into general use.

The Prophet, peace be on him, welcomed Abu Dharr and invited him to Islam. He recited some of the Qur'an for him. Before long, Abu Dharr pronounced the Shahadah thus entering the new religion (without even leaving his place). He was among the first persons to accept Islam.



## CORRECTING OTHERS

Tales from Rumi

Four people entered a mosque and each busied himself in prayer, humbly bowing and prostrating before Allah. Each one said the "Allahu Akbar" after first having made his intention, and began to pray with humility. Meanwhile the Mu'adhin came in and gave the call to prayer.

The first man blurted out to the Mu'adhin, "Are you calling to the prayer? Is it the right time?" The second spoke on the spur of the moment, "You have wasted your prayer by speaking during prayers." The third retorted, "Why did you speak? Tell yourself how to behave!" The fourth mumbled calmly, "Praise be to Allah! I wasn't a party to their arguments."

Thus all the four broke their prayer and wasted it. The fault-finders went more astray than the one who made the original mistake.

### A POEM ABOUT ISLAMIC MANNERS

Maria Ilyas

Manners are a part of Islam,  
Wherever we are,  
We have to use them,  
No one is a good  
Muslim without them.  
Please and Thank You,  
But better if Islamic.  
Jazakallah, Al-humdulillah,  
Subhanallah and Mash Allah,  
Are our manners,  
So use them, Inshallah

*Continued from page 2*

Anger can be quelled by mixing six kinds of knowledge and action:

1. Remember what the Qur'an and Hadith say about controlling one's anger. The hope for obtaining rewards will restrain one from taking revenge.
2. Fear Allah's punishment and consider it greater than any human punishment.
3. Realize that there will be consequences to expressing your anger. You may get revenge on your enemy here, but he or she might get revenge on you later on, either here or in the next world.
4. Remember that an angry person looks like a ferocious beast, while one who appeases his or her anger looks like a sober and learned person.
5. Ignore Satan, who tells you that you will be weak if you do not become angry. Ask yourself: "Why should I be angry? What Allah has willed has happened."

The Prophet (PBUH) advised angry people to say: "I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan" (*A'udhu billahi min as-Shaytan ar-rajim*).

When 'A'isha (RA) became angry, the Prophet (PBUH) told her to say: "O Allah, You are the Lord of my Prophet Muhammad. Forgive my sins, remove the anger from my heart, and save me from misguidance."

The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Anger is a burning coal. Don't you see your eyebrows wide and eyes reddish? So when one of you feels angry, sit down if standing and lie down if sitting." In other words, make yourself calm like the soil if you are still angry. The cause of wrath is heat, and its opposite is to lie on the ground and make the body calm and cool.

The Prophet (saw) also said: "When one of you gets angry, make ablution with water, as anger arises out of fire." In another narration, he said: "Anger comes from the devil, and the devil is made of fire." In other words, if you are still angry after lying on the ground, make wudu' or ghusl with cold water, for water extinguishes fire.

Caliph 'Ali ibn Abi Talib said: "The Prophet did not get angry for any action of the world. When any true matter disturbed him nobody knew it, and nobody got up to take revenge for his anger. He got angry only for truth."

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<http://www.icnef.org>

**The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Every betrayer will have a flag on the Day of Resurrection and that flag will be fixed, so that the betrayer might be recognized by it." (Bukhari)**

*The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise. And a man who keeps on telling the truth becomes a truthful person. Falsehood leads to wickedness and wickedness leads to Hellfire, and a man may keep on telling lies till he is written before God, a liar." (Bukhari)*

***The Prophet (PBUH) said: "A backbiter will not enter Paradise." (Bukhari)***

**The Prophet (PBUH): "While a man was going on his way, he saw a thorny branch and removed it from the way and God became pleased by his actions and forgave him for that." (Bukhari)**

**The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Sometime one may utter a word without thinking whether it is right or wrong and because of that he may slip down in the Fire as far away as the East is from the West." (Bukhari)**

*The Prophet (PBUH) spoke to an evil person in a very polite manner. When that person left, I said, "Oh God's Messenger! You spoke to him in a very polite manner?" The Prophet (PBUH) said: "The worst people are those whom the people desert or leave in order to save themselves from their dirty language or from their transgression." (Bukhari)*

The Prophet (PBUH) said: "God has forbidden for you:      And God has hated for you:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To be undutiful to your mothers,</li><li>2. To bury your daughters alive, and</li><li>3. Not to pay the rights of others.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To argue unnecessarily,</li><li>2. To ask too many questions (without need), and</li><li>3. To waste the wealth (by extravagance)."</li></ol> |
|--|--|

(Bukhari)

The Prophet (PBUH) observed: "To sweep the mosque; to keep it tidy and clean; to cast out all dust and filth from the mosque; to burn incense in the mosque, specially to make the place fragrant with the aroma of the incense on Fridays— all these are acts which lead to Paradise." (Ibn Majah)

**"When the preacher comes forward to deliver the sermon then it is improper to say any prayer or engage in conversation." (Muslim)**

***The Prophet (PBUH) said: "If anyone says to his brother, 'O Disbeliever!' thus surely one of them is such (that is who says so)." (Bukhari)***

*The Prophet (PBUH) said: "If somebody curses a believer or calls him a disbeliever (Kafir), then his sin will be as if he killed him." (Bukhari)*

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**AGREE TO DISAGREE**

Sameen Piracha

It is natural to disagree or to be different. We come from different backgrounds, have different upbringings, speak different languages, and have variegated levels of education. We have different perceptions and opinions. But does that entitle us to believe "my way is the only way and the right way." God Almighty says in the Qur'an: "If God had so willed, He would have made you a single community, but (His plan is) to test you in what He has given you; so strive as in a race in all virtues." [Qur'an 5: 48] From this verse we see that being different is by God Almighty's design. Thus, differences among people are inevitable. We either make our differences work for us or against us.

There are many Muslim communities which pride their diverse makeup. Jacksonville is one of them. However, if we were to examine ourselves closely, we would find evidence of dissension. Some common symptoms are selfishness, pride, arrogance, ignorance, or blind loyalty. God Almighty has given us the example of nations before us who destroyed themselves through dissension: "And do not dispute with one another, lest you lose heart and your moral strength desert you..."[Qur'an 8: 46]

Can we prevent dissension and enmity by learning how to disagree? Imagine being trapped in a deep pit with a group of people. Would you rather die arguing with each other on who has the best idea on how to get out or stand upon each other's shoulders and reach the top with mutual cooperation? To differ and disagree is only natural, but the way we differ is a matter of attitude and discipline. Even the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) differed among themselves on a number of issues, but they continued to have respect, love, and reverence for each other.

Can we achieve the same? Can we disagree, yet be united? I believe we can. It will not be easy, but we need to train our hearts to reject pride and jealousy. To function as a united community, we need to subordinate our desires to that of God Almighty. Let us not be from those who have broken their unity of faith by becoming sects, each group being proud in what they believe. God Almighty has said in the Qur'an: "Turn ye back in repentance to Him, and fear Him: establish regular prayers, and be not ye among those who join gods with God, -Those who split up their Religion, and become (mere) Sects, each party rejoicing in that which is with itself?" [Qur'an 30: 31-32]

**WHAT IF?**

Submitted by Shakur Bolden

What if Allah couldn't take the time to bless us today because we could not take the time to thank Him yesterday?

What if Allah decided to stop leading us tomorrow because we didn't follow Him today?

What if we never saw another flower bloom because we grumbled when Allah sent the Rain?

What if Allah didn't walk with us today because we failed to recognize it as His day?

What if Allah took away the Qur'an tomorrow because we would not read it today?

What if Allah took away His message because we failed to listen to the messenger?

What if the door of the Mosque was closed because we didn't open the door of our heart?

What if Allah stopped loving and caring for us because we failed to love and care for others?

What if Allah would not hear us today because we would not listen to Him?

What if Allah answered our prayers the way we answer His calls?

What if Allah met our needs the way we give Him our lives?

What If.....



Television Program, Every Sunday  
Media One, Channel 24 or 29  
4:00 & 7:00 p.m. Check Local Listings



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## INTERVIEW WITH THE MASJID

Islamic Center of Northeast Florida

**Newsletter Team: How long have you been in Jacksonville?**

**Masjid:** Hmmm. The earlier Muslim families started looking for a site for me in the late 70s/early 80s. First, land was bought on Ricker Rd (all the way in Orange Park), but that soon proved to be too far to be a central place for the community to gather for worship. Then they purchased the parcel of land on St. Johns Bluff and began construction in 1983. I believe I was a fully constructed masjid around 1990.

**Newsletter Team: What makes you happy?**

**Masjid:** When I see Muslims coming to worship God Almighty with a sincere heart, to meet their fellow Muslims, and to acquire knowledge.

**Newsletter Team: How do you feel when you see people eat and drink, then forget to clean up after themselves?**

**Masjid:** It really saddens me when people come here to pray and to meet their fellow Muslims and forget that I am the House of God Almighty and that I deserve to be respected and taken care of.

**Newsletter Team: What are some of the things that hurt you?**

**Masjid:** It really hurts me when people disrespect and humiliate each other, call each other names, lie, backbite, and even try to slander each other within my sacred walls.

**Newsletter Team: What are the basic difficulties/challenges you face as a masjid? How would you like to see them resolved?**

**Masjid:** One challenge is inadequate space for the growing community. I love to see that every pray-able inch of me gets used, but I do realize that sometimes comfort gets compromised. Another challenge is daily maintenance. I realize that it takes more than just physical efforts to keep the doors open. Resolving these issues and others is the responsibility of the community.

**Newsletter Team: What is your vision for the Muslim Community?**

**Masjid:** I would like to become the central part in every Muslim's life, as was the case during the Prophet's (PBUH) time. I am only a structure, my community decides my role.

**Newsletter Team: Any requests you would like to make of the community?**

**Masjid:** I would really love to see Muslims race each other to be the first to come through the doors for prayers. I would like for people to remember that they are coming to the House of God Almighty, and that they should behave and dress accordingly. Anyone can come visit me for more than just weddings and funerals.



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To

## In This Issue

Gheeba v. Naseeha, Correcting Others, Abu Dharr, Poem ...

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## THE MIRROR

One day Abu Jahl came to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and said, "You have the most ugly face in Bani Hashim." Abu Jahl was the chief from Quraysh who showed the most hatred of Islam.

The Prophet (PBUH) said, "You speak the truth."

Soon afterwards Sayyiduna Umar (RA) came in and remarked, 'O! Prophet of God, your face shines like the brilliant sun.' The Prophet (PBUH) gave the same reply: "You speak the truth."

A Companion of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sitting nearby, asked, "How can it be possible, Prophet of God, that both these opposite remarks are true?" The Prophet (PBUH) replied, "I am like a clean shining, reflective mirror, everyone sees his own face in me."