

Islamic Center Newsletter

Volume 10, Issue 2
February 15, 2003
Zul Hijjah 24, 1424

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

CALENDAR

MONTHLY GATHERING

Saturday, February 28, 2004
5:30 pm

HOST FAMILIES

Zafar Awan & Farkhanda Khan
Dr. Mohammad & Amtul Ilyas

MARCH 2004 HOST FAMILIES

Dr. Mobeen & Sumra Rathore
Najmah Shabazz

ICNEF MANAGING COMMITTEE MEETING

Sunday, February 29, 2003
After Zuhr Prayer

Articles News Announcements

FOR NEWSLETTER

Please submit by
Friday, March 5, 2004

ICNEF WEBSITE

<http://www.ICNEF.org>

MUHARRAM

Imam Zaid Malik

Muharram is the first month of the Islamic Calendar and it is one of the four sacred months, as Allah the All Mighty has said: "The number of months with Allah is twelve. They were in Allah's Book on the day He created the Heaven and Earth. Out of them four are sacred. Such is the established religion." [9:36] The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told us that these four months are Muharram (1st), Rajab (7th), Zul Qa'dah (11th) and Zul Hijjah (12th).

While telling us its virtues the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) told us:

The most excellent fast after Ramadhan is God's month of Al Muharram. [Muslim Book 6, Number 2611]

Ibn Abbas reported that when Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) came to Medina, he found the Jews observing the fast on the day of Ashura. They (the Jews) were asked about it and they said: 'It is the day on which Allah granted victory to Moses and Bani Isra'il over the Pharaoh and we observe fast out of gratitude to Him.' Upon this the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'We have a closer connection with Moses than you have, and he commanded to observe fast on this day.'

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "I hope that Allah will expiate the sins of previous year by fasting the day of Ashura (the 10th of Muharram)." It is Sunnah to fast the 9th of Muharram also as the Holy Prophet said: "If I lived to the next year I will fast the 9th along with the 10th of Muharram."

It is noticed that some people give more importance to the fast of Ashura than to the fasting of Ramadhan, or the five daily prayers, which is wrong. The fasts of Ramadhan and the five daily prayers are far more important than to the fast of Ashura, as they are the pillars of Islam. In spite of its importance the fast of Ashura is not obligatory. It is Sunnah. The fast of Ramadhan and the five prayers are obligatory. Without these obligatory worships we cannot be considered Muslims. And it does not mean that by fasting the day of Ashura all the major and minor sins are forgiven. Only the minor sins are forgiven provided the major sins are avoided.

Some people have asked me that if a person missed some of the obligatory fasts of Ramadhan, should he/she make up the missed fasts first or he/she can fast the Ashura and then make up for the missed ones? Yes, he/she may delay the making up of their obligatory fasts, because the missed fasts can be made up in any month.

May Allah give us the ability to follow His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Happy New Islamic Year.

THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR

<http://webexhibits.org/calendars/calendar-islamic.html>

The Islamic calendar (or Hijri calendar) is a purely lunar calendar. It contains 12 months that are based on the motion of the moon, and because 12 syndic months is only $12 \times 29.53 = 354.36$ days, the Islamic calendar is consistently shorter than a tropical year, and therefore it shifts with respect to the Christian calendar. The calendar is based on the Qur'an (Surah Taubah: 36-37) and its proper observance is a sacred duty for Muslims. The Islamic calendar is the official calendar in countries around the Gulf, especially Saudi Arabia. But other Muslim countries use the Gregorian calendar for civil purposes and only turn to the Islamic calendar for religious purposes.

What does an Islamic year look like?

The names of the 12 months that comprise the Islamic year are:

1	Muharram	7	Rajab
2	Safar	8	Sha'ban
3	Rabi'al Awwal	9	Ramadhan
4	Rabi'al Thaani	10	Shawwal
5	Jumada'al Awwal	11	Dhu'al Qidah
6	Jumada'al Thaani	12	Dhu'al Hijjah

Each month starts when the lunar crescent is first seen (by a human observer's eye) after a new moon. Although new moons may be calculated quite precisely, the actual visibility of the crescent is much more difficult to predict. It depends on factors such as weather, the optical properties of the atmosphere, and the location of the observer. It is therefore very difficult to give accurate information in advance about when a new month will start. Furthermore, some Muslims depend on a local sighting of the moon, whereas others depend on a sighting by authorities somewhere in the Muslim world. Both are valid Islamic practices, but they may lead to different starting days for the months.

So you can't print an Islamic calendar in advance?

Not a reliable one. However, calendars are printed for planning purposes, but such calendars are based on estimates of the visibility of the lunar crescent, and the actual month may start a day earlier or later than predicted in the printed calendar. Different methods for estimating the calendars are used.

Some sources mention a crude system in which all odd numbered months have 30 days and all even numbered months have 29 days with an extra day added to the last month in 'leap years' (a concept otherwise unknown in the calendar). Leap years could then be years in which the number year mod 30 is one of the following: 2, 5, 7, 10, 13, 16, 18, 21, 24, 26, or 29. (This is the algorithm used in the calendar program of the Gnu Emacs editor.)

Such a calendar would give an average month length of 29.53056 days, which is quite close to the syndic month of 29.53059 days, so on the average it would be quite accurate, but in any given month it is still just a rough estimate. Better algorithms for estimating the visibility of the new moon have been devised.

How does one count years?

Years are counted since the Hijra, that is, Mohammed's emigration to Medina in AD 622. On 16 July (Julian calendar) of that year, AH 1 started (AH = Anno Hegirae = year of the Hijra). In the year AD 2003 we have witnessed the start of Islamic year AH 1424. Note that although only $2003 - 622 = 1381$ years have passed in the Christian calendar, 1423 years have passed in the Islamic calendar, because its year is consistently shorter (by about 11 days) than the tropical year used by the Christian calendar.

Islamic Center of Northeast Florida, Inc. – Receipts and Payment Summary – 1/1/03 – 12/31/03

Khadim Hussain

FUND NAME	ACCOUNT NAME	BEG. BALANCE	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS	ENDING BALANCE	COMMENTS
Al-Furqan Academy		0.00	7,300.00	2,300.00	5,000.00	
AMYA		0.00	7,345.26	3,412.97	3,932.29	
Bookstore		0.00	13,018.16	11,688.24	1,329.92	
Bosnian Refugees		0.00	539.00	0.00	539.00	
Building		41,780.12	51,811.61	35,371.39	58,220.34	
Burials		1,275.00	1,200.00	0.00	2,475.00	
Calendar		529.68	2,151.00	2,000.00	680.68	
Cemetery		15,456.42	5,400.00	7,200.00	13,656.42	
Children		3,110.68	169.00	0.00	3,279.68	
D'awah Outreach		487.99	1,688.52	2,019.88	136.63	Newspaper ads to invite non-Muslims to Dawah Programs
Islam Awareness		2,593.27	11,145.00	3,511.37	10,226.90	Used on the library project and Imam's leadership seminar
Kashmiri Refugees		100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	
Land		37,326.08	0.00	44,500.00	(7,173.92)	Reserved to pay the lenders at the end of the year
Needy Family		768.70	17,923.57	6,369.25	12,323.02	Need to raise funds. It is negative due to non-repayment of loans from the needy.
New Muslim		137.01	920.00	230.00	827.01	
Parking		6,457.45	10,220.00	6,369.25	10,308.20	Paid to Police Officers for Jum-mah Prayers and both Eid Prayers
Sunday School		2,177.52	27,519.82	25,196.53	4,500.81	
Understanding Islam		0.00	18,416.00	16,040.10	2,375.90	
Visiting Scholar		132.66	0.00	0.00	132.66	
Women's Excellence		6,000.00	10,200.00	5,478.92	10,721.08	
Total in the Bank		122,633.84	353,778.97	309,819.07	166,593.74	

Al Furqan Academy – Receipts and Payments Summary – School Year 1/8/03 – 12/31/03

Khadim Hussain

	ACCOUNT	BEGINNING BALANCE	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS	ENDING BALANCE
RECEIPTS	Beginning Balance	43,909.11			
	Tuition		56,603.50		
	Registration		250.00		
	Books		1,362.00		
	After Care		275.00		
	Donations		1,021.00		
	Other Income		138.29		
	Adjustments		0.45		
	Teacher's Dev.		0.00		
	Lunch Program		4,219.95		
	ICNEF		27,879.33		
PAYMENTS					
	Salaries			57,928.82	
	Payroll Taxes			10,647.95	
	Accounting			510.00	
	School Supplies			859.25	
	Books			12,036.88	
	Misc. Supplies			3,226.11	
	Telephone			330.60	
	Class Manipulative			852.29	
	Marshal Art (PE)			200.00	
	Lunch Program			3,901.44	
	Dues/Subscriptions			0.00	
	Insurance			2,865.00	
	Teacher's Dev.			20.00	
	Newspaper Ads			705.86	
	Bank Charges			30.00	
	Repair & Main.			2,925.00	
	ICNEF Salaries			25,348.46	
	ICNEF Payroll			2,530.88	10,739.53
	Subtotal AFA	43,909.11	91,749.52	124,919.10	

HOST A MONTHLY GATHERING

It has been tradition in this community to get together every last Saturday of the month and share company as well as food. Would you like to be a host for a monthly gathering? The responsibilities of the host are setting up tables, cleaning up, and folding tables & chairs after dinner, as well as donating \$75 towards disposable paper goods. If you would like to become a host for a monthly gathering, please email Br. Khadim Hussain (khadimhussain@yahoo.com). The following is a table for the Host Families of 2004:

MONTH	FAMILIES
January 31, 2004	Dr. Asadullah & Razia Mojadidi Ashraf & Fauzia Shaikh Khair & Tahira Arsalla
February 28, 2004	Zafar Awan & Farkhanda Khan Dr. Mohammad & Amtul Ilyas
March 27, 2004	Dr. Mobeen & Sumra Rathore Najmah Shabazz
April 24, 2004	Tahir & Nabeela Shareef Parwin Arsalla
May 29, 2004	Muhammed Saeed & Naila Choudhry Rahim & Alicia Shah
June 26, 2004	Shad & Noorulain Quraishi Aslam & Karishma Khan
July 31, 2004	Mohammed & Sameena Shahid Dr. Muhammad Anwar Murshid Al Awady James Abdur Rahman
August 28, 2004	Shakur & Naila Bolden Aatif & Hope Barbari Abdel Ali Bedri Dr. Siddiqa & Kaleem Khan
September 25, 2004	Ayub & Khairun Quraishi Khawar & Farah Qureshi
October 30, 2004	Tahir & Nabeela Shareef Abdul Hafeez & Tahira Fauq
November 27, 2004	Khadim & Nighat Hussain Dr. Jawed & Mahrukh Hussain Zahid & Zakia Choudhry Kalsoom Zori Farah & Munawar Kamal
December 25, 2004	NO MONTHLY GATHERING

For current hosts: if you will not be able to host a monthly gathering, please give at least one month's notice to Br. Khadim.

Thank you to all the families who have hosted in the past and those who do so currently. Your hard work is appreciated.

PEACE

Maha Khan

All I need is a pencil and a book
To get started and take a look
Take a look to what I could make
And see all the topics I could create
I get so many ideas all at once in my head
But I let go of all and go to bed

When I wake up, my ideas are gone
And nights turned off but days turned on
All I want is to give the world joy
And brighten the hearts of every girl and boy

I wish war wasn't going on
And children crying and dying with their parents gone
If two countries don't get along they don't have to fight
They should try to agree and do what is right
They should at least try to agree
Or maybe sign a treaty
But they don't have to be so mean to each other
Because every human is a sister or brother

People should give to the poor
And make the world a better place to live now and more
Humans should learn to love
And remember the great God is watching us above.

AHADITH

Some of them cut pieces from their own sides and eat their own flesh. They are the slanderers and those about whom the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "We saw people cutting flesh from their sides and eating it." It was said, "As you used to consume the flesh of your brother!" I asked, "Who are they?" and I was told, "Those of your community who slandered. Some of them have brass nails with which they scratch their faces and chests. They are those who were backbiters and maligned peoples honor." (Bukhari)

A person asked the Messenger of Allah, "What rights does the wife of one among us have over him?" His answer was, "It is that you shall give her food, you shall not slap her on the face, nor revile her, nor leave her alone except within the house." (Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah).

On the authority of Abu Huraira, who said that the Messenger of Allah said: "Allah said: 'Sons of Adam inveigh against [the vicissitudes of] Time, and I am Time, in My hand is the night and the day.'" (Bukhari, Muslim)

KNOWING THE QUR'AN

Marwan Shaikh

This article will be the first in a multiple part series over the next few months. The articles would briefly summarize the book, How to Approach and Understand the Qur'an, by Jamaal al-Din M. Zarabozo. Although the articles are considerably short compared to their respective chapters in the book, the general meaning will be given with the hope to increase one's desire to learn more.

To begin we must remind ourselves what the Qur'an is. The more we know about the Qur'an the more we will yearn to read it, understand it, and memorize it. We will strive to keep it even closer to our hearts and minds. Once we are joined with the Qur'an we will truly know our Lord and how to worship him. In its first chapter, Allah (swt) says, in response to our prayer, "This is the Book, concerning which there is no doubt, a guidance for those who fear Allah" (Surah Baqarah). The evidence of this truth is so widespread that in reality there is no room for doubting this book. A believer must be "completely certain and satisfied that everything stated in this book is true." The guidance of the Qur'an is open to everyone, but only those who approach it properly, obey it, and implement its guidance truly benefit—both in their mundane and religious spheres. Allah (swt) also describes his book in many other verses. Some are 2:185, 42:52, 21:10, and 59:21.

To discuss our obligations to the Qur'an we begin with loyalty to Allah (swt). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "The strongest tie of faith is having loyalty for the sake of Allah, disassociating from others for the sake of Allah, love for the sake of Allah, and hatred for the sake of Allah" (Recorded by al-Tayaalisi, al-Haakim, al-Tabaraani, and others, Zarabozo p. 27). Loyalty to Allah (swt) implies love and respect for his book. We exhibit these qualities by not only believing in the Qur'an, but also through our actions of "reading, studying, memorizing, defending, and acting in accordance" with it. Another obligation to the Book of Allah is to accept it as the final arbiter on any issue. Whatever the Book permits as lawful and whatever it forbids must be avoided—whether the issue relates to mundane or religious matters. Knowing the Qur'an's purpose and our obligation to it should lead us to read it more often, study its verses, and sincerely apply it in the same manner as Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions did.

ASK THE IMAM

Do you have a question relating to fiqh that you would like answered? Then, why not ask Imam Zaid Malik! Send in your questions to icnefnews@yahoo.com. Please keep your questions limited to fiqh. Questions regarding mortgages, nail polish, and the like will not be answered.

BR. JOHN CHAPMAN

John Chapman

My name is John Chapman and I am 30 years old. I would like to tell you how Islam changed and saved my life. I was raised as a Christian. I was made to go to church when I was young, but I stopped when I got older. I always believed in God, but the Bible always confused me. You could say I was discouraged. I got married to my high school sweetheart that I was with since I was 15; we got married when I was 19. I got a job in the Merchant Marines. I was able to buy my first house at 23 for \$85,000.00, but I was still unhappy. My wife and I decided to have a baby. I was 23, but things were not going well, then my wife and I got a divorce. When I was 25, I lost everything. She got the house, car, boat, and \$785.00 a month child support. I was angry at the world. I started living for myself. I got into the club scene and drugs. This all lasted until I was about 29. I was partying all the time. I thought I had everything life could offer. My partner and I bought a gentlemen's club. I was on top of the world. That's when the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and FDLE showed up. I was charged under the RICO (Racketeering, Influence, Coercion Organization) Act. I was looking at life in prison. I met a Muslim from Sudan and became interested in Islam, so I bought The Complete Idiot's Guide to Islam. After the book I said my "shahadah." I now have a peace I cannot explain. I signed a cap for 20 years and received 7.5 years all thanks to Allah. Not only did I get 7.5 years, I lost everything. I would gladly give it all away for the peace I have now. The veil has been lifted from my eyes.

CONGRATULATIONS

The 17th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. was held at the Prime Osborne Convention Center. Our state senator Bill Nelson, along with the mayor of Jacksonville, John Peyton, and other local politicians were in attendance. Twenty youths representing various organizations and faith groups were honored as "Tomorrow's Leaders." From the Islamic Center, Saher Quraeshi, was honored and presented an award by Mayor Peyton.

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The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Actions are only by intention, and every man shall only have what he intended. Thus, he whose *hijra* was for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, his *hijra* was for Allah and His Messenger, and he whose *hijra* was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his *hijra* was for that for which he made *hijra*." (Bukhari)

This hadith clearly indicates that ones actions are accepted by Allah (swt) only if they are done with the right intention, i.e. truly for the sake of Allah (swt). This brings us to a very important aspect of the religion of Islam - the concept of Sincerity. The Arabic word used for this is *Ikhlass*. What is meant by sincerity in Islam is to ensure that all of our deeds of worship and other matters are solely for Allah (swt) and to gain His pleasure. Hence, sincerity is a condition for the acceptance of our deeds that are performed in accordance to the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an in Surah Bayinah 5: "And they have been commanded to worship only Allah, being sincere towards Him in their deen and true."

Thus, we are commanded to perform our religious acts based on sincerity. This is what Allah (swt) has commanded us. This is the foundation of our faith. In one of the statements of the Prophet (PBUH), he said: "whoever says 'la illaha illullah' will enter paradise." He made a general statement, but he further clarified his statement by saying whoever says 'la illaha illullah' sincerely from his heart will enter paradise. Hence, once the true faith has entered your heart, it will never leave. You may do wrong and may go astray sometimes, but once you have tasted the reality of faith, it will cause you to be sincere in all your deeds; and this sincerity will ultimately make you attain paradise, God willing.

A heart that lacks sincerity is, from an Islamic point of view, the worst of hearts. It is the heart of a hypocrite. This sincerity is not an easy thing to achieve. As someone said: It is much harder for the people to purify their intentions than to execute any of their actions. In order to be truly sincere, one has to give up the worldly desires, and devote himself to the love of Allah (swt). He has to contemplate on the next world, that is to come and this would leave no place in his heart for the love of this world. Such a person should be devout in his actions, even in eating, drinking and answering the calls of nature. Without this it is very difficult for a person to be really sincere to Allah (swt).

Many a times, it so happens that we think that our actions are for Allah (swt), but in reality, they are lacking sincerity. Here is a story of a man who used to stand in the first row for every prayer. As the Prophet (PBUH) mentioned in one of the hadith that if people knew the reward of standing in the first row and calling the *Adhan*, they would fight one another to perform these acts. But once it so happened, that this man was late for prayers and had to stand in the second row. He felt embarrassed that people would see him in the second row and it was then that he realized that the satisfaction he used to get from standing in the first row was from people seeing him in the first row and his sincerity in doing this act was impure. This is just a small example of how our sincerity towards our Lord is unsafe from being impure.

It is very important that we realize the gravity of this situation in this world. Because if we don't, then on the day of Resurrection, these very deeds of ours, that we thought to be good will appear as bad deeds. As Allah says in the Qur'an: "And something will come to them from Allah which they had never anticipated, for the evil of their deeds will become apparent to them." (39: 47-48)

And also, "Shall We tell you who will lose most in respect of their deeds? Those whose efforts were astray in the life of this world, while they thought that they were doing good works." (18: 103-104)

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To

In This Issue

Muharram, Islamic Calendar, Peace, Sincerity, Financial Update...

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IMAM

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***“By the time. Lo, man is in a state of loss,
Save those who believe and do good
works, and exhort one another to truth
and exhort one another to endurance.”***

**Wishing you A Blessed Islamic New
Year. Full of joy, happiness, and peace
for you and your family.**

1 Muharram 1425 H ◇ February 22, 2004