

# Almuslim

A monthly newsletter of Muslim community of Carbondale.  
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*Narrated Jabir (RAA), I heard Allah's Messenger (pbuh) saying, "Every night there is a special space of time during which whatever a Muslim asks Allah of any good relating to this life or the hereafter, it will be granted to him; and this moment comes every night". (Muslim)*

## **Welcome New Students**

Dear Muslim fellow students, on behalf of Islamic Center of Carbondale, we would like to welcome you in this community and at the university. Hopefully with the blessings of Almighty and the cooperation from the community you will feel that you have not left your home. Inshaallah we will try our best to provide all possible facilities which we can. Please do not hesitate to ask any question or need you have. All brothers and sisters will be happy to assist you in every matter. We also encourage you to participate in ICC activities announced in this newsletter. Please keep in touch with the Muslim Student Association (MSA) of SIU, and we also encourage you to be a part of MSA.

## **Developing Humility in Prayer, (Part 1)**

### **Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal**

You should know - may Allah have mercy upon you - that when the slave [of Allah] leaves his house to go to the mosque, that he is going to face Allah, the Irresistible, the One, the Omnipotent, the Exalted in Might, the Oft-forgiving, in the knowledge that nothing is hidden from Allah, wherever it might be, and that nothing is hidden from Allah and that even something as small as a mustard seed is not concealed from Him, nor even something smaller, nor larger - in the seven earth or the seven heavens, in the seven seas or the lofty mountains, fixed and firm. And verily, the mosque to which he comes is one of the Houses of Allah. He desires only Allah and he sets out to one of Allah's Houses, which: "Allah has permitted to be raised to honor, for the celebration in them of His Name: In them He is glorified in the mornings and the evenings [over and over] by men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the practice of regular charity: Their [only] fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed." [Qur'an 24:36-37].

So when any one from amongst you sets out from his house (for the mosque) he should say quietly to himself word of remembrance [of Allah] - words unconnected with the affairs and business of this world. He should set out calmly, somberly, for this is what the Prophet, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, ordered us to do; he should set out with (his heart full of) longing and desire [for Allah's pleasure] and fear and apprehension [of Allah's anger] and with humility and meekness towards Allah. For the more humble, the more meek, the more submissive he is to Allah, the more virtuous and righteous does he become in Salah and the greater becomes his reward, and the more noble and nearer to Allah becomes the worshipper. But should he be filled with pride, Allah will destroy him and will reject his deeds, for the deeds of the proud are never accepted. It has been narrated in a hadith concerning Prophet Ibrahim, (pbuh), Allah's Khalil, that he spent the night in worship and remembrance of Allah, and in the morning, he was pleased with the night's worship and he said: "How good is the Rabb (Lord), and how good is the slave, Ibrahim (pbuh." On the following day, finding none to share his food with him -

and he loved to share his food - he took his food outside to the road and sat, waiting for any passerby to eat with him. Then two angels descended from the heavens and approached him. So he invited them to eat with him and they accepted. Then prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) suggested that they approach a nearby garden, which contained a fresh water spring. They agreed to this and approached the garden, only to find that the spring had run underground, so there was no water. This was a severe blow to Prophet Ibrahim, (pbuh) and he was embarrassed by what he had said (because there was no spring in evidence) and so the angels said to him: "Ask your Rabb to return the spring." He did so, but the spring did not appear, and this was a great blow to him and so he said to the angels: "You ask Allah." So one of them asked Him, and behold! The water returned, then the other supplicated Allah and the water flowed near to them. Then they informed him that his being impressed by his own standing in prayer the previous night had caused his supplication to be rejected. So beware - may Allah have mercy on you - of pride, for no deed will be accepted if it is accompanied by pride. Be humble in your Salah. Should any of you stand in Salah before his Rabb, he should know Allah, in his heart by the great blessings which He bestows upon him and the abundant favor which He grants him, for Allah has honored him with great

goodness, but he has saddled himself with sins. Therefore it is incumbent upon him to be excessive in his humility and meekness towards Allah.

*Narrated Abu Hurairah (RAA), Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, "Allah makes the way to paradise easy for him who treads the path in search of knowledge".*

### **Islam has a progressive tradition too**

#### **Sheikh Hamza Yousuf**

When a Welsh resistance leader was captured and brought before the emperor in Rome, he said: "Because you desire to conquer the world, it does not necessarily follow that the world desires to be conquered by you." Today one could offer an echo of this sentiment to western liberals: "Because you wish your values to prevail throughout the world, it does not always follow that the world wishes to adopt them." The imperial voice is based on ignorance of the rich traditions of other civilizations, and on an undue optimism about what the west is doing to the world politically, economically and environmentally.

The entrenched beliefs many westerners profess about Islam often reveal more about the west than they do about Islam or Muslims. The Ottomans were history's longest lasting major dynasty; their durability must

have had some relation to their ability to rule a multi-faith empire at a time when Europe was busily hanging, drawing and quartering different varieties of Christian believer.

Today Islam is said to be less, not more, tolerant than the west, and we need to ask which, precisely, are the "western" values with which Islam is so incompatible? Some believe Islam's attitude towards women is the source of the Muslim "problem". Westerners need to look to their own attitudes here and recognize that only very recently have patriarchal structures begun to erode in the west.

The Islamic tradition does show some areas of apparent incompatibility with the goals of women in the west, and Muslims have a long way to go in their attitudes towards women. But blaming the religion is again to express ignorance both of the religion and of the historical struggle for equality of women in Muslim societies.

A careful reading of modern female theologians of Islam would cause western women to be impressed by legal injunctions more than 1,000 years old that, for instance, grant women legal rights to domestic help at the expense of their husbands. Three of the four Sunni schools consider domestic chores outside the scope of a woman's legal responsibilities toward her husband. Contrast that with

US polls showing that working women still do 80% of domestic chores. Westerners, in their advocacy of global conformism, often speak of "progress" and the rejection of the not-too-distant feudal past, and are less likely to reveal their unease about corporate hegemony and the real human implications of globalization. Neither are the missionaries of western values willing to consider why Europe, the heart of the west, should have generated two world wars which killed more civilians than all the wars of the previous 20 centuries. As Muslims point out, we are asked to call them "world wars" despite their reality as western wars, which targeted civilians with weapons of mass destruction at a time when Islam was largely at peace.

We Muslims are unpersuaded by many triumphalist claims made for the west, but are happy with its core values. As a westerner, the child of civil rights and anti-war activists, I embraced Islam not in abandonment of my core values, drawn almost entirely from the progressive tradition, but as an affirmation of them. I have since studied Islamic law for 10 years with traditionally trained scholars, and while some particulars in medieval legal texts have troubled me, never have the universals come into conflict with anything my progressive Californian mother taught me. Instead, I have marveled at how most of what western

society claims as its own highest ideals are deeply rooted in Islamic tradition.

The chauvinism apparent among some westerners is typically triggered by Islamic extremism. Few take the trouble to notice that mainstream Islam dislikes the extremists as much as the west does. What I fear is that an excuse has been provided to supply some westerners with a replacement for their older habit of anti-Semitism. The shift is not such a difficult one. Arabs, after all, are Semites, and the Arabian prophet's teaching is closer in its theology and law to Judaism than it is to Christianity. We Muslims in the west, like Jews before us, grapple with the same issues: integration or isolation, tradition or reform, intermarriage or intra marriage.

Muslims who yearn for an ideal Islamic state are in some ways reflecting the old aspirations of the Diaspora Jews for a homeland where they would be free to be different. Muslims, like Jews, often dress differently; we cannot eat some of the food of the host countries. Like the Jews of the past, we are now seen as parasites on the social body, burdened with a uniform and unformable law, contributing little, scheming in ghettos, and obscurely indifferent to personal hygiene.

Cartoons of Arabs seem little different to the caricatures of Jews in German newspapers

of the Nazi period. In the 1930s, such images ensured that few found the courage to speak out about the possible consequences of such a denomination, just as few today are really thinking about the anti-Muslim rhetoric of the extreme-right parties across Europe. Muslims in general and Arabs especially, have become the new "other".

When I met President Bush last year, I gave him two books. One was *The Essential Koran*, translated by Thomas Cleary. The second was another translation by Cleary, *Thunder in the Sky: Secrets of the Acquisition and Use of Power*. Written by an ancient Chinese sage, it reflects the universal values of another great people.

I did this because, as an American, rooted in the best of western tradition, and a Muslim convert who finds much of profundity in Chinese philosophy, I believe the "Huntington thesis" that these three great civilizations must inevitably clash is a lie. Each civilization speaks with many voices; the best of them find much in common. Not only can our civilizations co-exist in our respective parts of the world; they can co-exist in the individual heart, as they do in mine. We can enrich each other if we choose to embrace our essential humanity; we can destroy the world if we choose to stress our differences.

## *Women's Corner*

### **How to make Delicious Kabsa**

#### **(Chicken & Rice Skillet)**

1/4 cup butter or margarine,  
Chicken 2-1/2 to 3-lb,  
1 large onion, chopped,  
5 garlic, minced,  
1/4 cup tomato sauce/ puree,  
2 medium tomatoes,  
2 medium carrots, grated,  
1 orange (peeled),  
3 whole cloves,  
2 cardamom pods or 1/2 tsp.  
ground cardamom seeds,  
1 cinnamon stick,  
Salt and freshly ground  
pepper to taste,  
3 cups chicken broth,  
1 cup long-grain rice,  
1/4 cup raisins,  
1/4 cup toasted sliced or  
slivered almonds,

Melt butter or margarine in a large skillet. Add chicken pieces. Sauté until onion is tender. Stir in tomato sauce or puree. Simmer over low heat 1 minute to blend flavors. Add tomatoes, carrots, orange peel, cloves, cardamom, cinnamon stick, salt and pepper. Cook 1

minute. Add broth. Return chicken pieces to skillet. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cover. Simmer over low heat 30 minutes. Stir rice into liquid between pieces of chicken. Or remove chicken, stir in rice, then return chicken pieces to skillet. Cover. Simmer 30 minutes longer or until rice is tender. Garnish with raisins and almonds. Make 6 to 8 servings.

#### *Kids and Teens corner*

We encourage kids, teens and young writers to write for Almuslim. Best articles will be awarded with cash prizes and awards. We also encourage community members for their participation in Almuslim. It can be through suggestions, comments and writing articles. Articles can be submitted electronically at [islamic\\_center511@yahoo.com](mailto:islamic_center511@yahoo.com) or by surface mail to **Islamic Center, 511 S Poplar street, Carbondale, IL-62901**. Articles must be in text format using Microsoft word or Word perfect files. Hard copies can also be submitted.

#### *Community News*

##### *Current activities*

Taleem, Sundays, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM, at Masjid An-Nour.

Video/live lectures, Islamic quiz contests for adults and children, indoor sports, Fridays between Maghrib and Isha, at ICC or Masjid An-Nour.

Soccer and Volleyball, Fridays, Sundays and Tuesdays, after Asr. Venue: Evergreen Park and Parrish Fields.

#### *Upcoming event/Seminar/Conference*

39<sup>th</sup> ISNA Annual Convention: ***Islam: A Call for peace and Justice***, August 30 - September 02, Washington D.C. For registration and information visit online [www.isna.net](http://www.isna.net).

Regional Islamic Conference: (proposed dates October, November 2002). We are planning to hold a conference/meeting of the Muslims living in Tri State area (Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky). The conference will focus on the development and future strategies.

Community news can be submitted on above email address or by calling at **457-2770, 457-6522**, no later than 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

#### *Classified*

88 Lincoln Town Car (Cartier), Grey, well maintained, low mileage, fully loaded and power, \$1950 or best offer, interested call 549-7506 or leave message.

93 Mazda Protégé, Grey, 4-door, 5 speed, 102 K, nice and clean, a/c needs to be recharged, \$ 2000 or best offer, call 549-7449, leave message.

*Allah the Exalted says in Quran, " Do not help one another in sin and transgression". (Almaida, 5:2)*

