



Almuslim

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Umar bi Al-Khattab (RA) said: Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, " Deeds are considered by intentions, and a person will be rewarded according to his intentions. So whoever emigrated for Allah and his messenger, his emigration would be for Allah and his messenger: and whoever emigrated for worldly benefits or for a woman to marry, his emigration would be for what he emigrated for (Al-Bukhari & Muslim).

Freedom of Expression and Islam

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

Islam grants human beings total intellectual freedom. Rather it would be truer to say that it was Islam which for the first time in human history brought about a revolution in freedom of thought. In all the ages of history prior to Islam, the system of despotism prevailed, and man was consequently denied freedom of thought. This was a matter of the utmost gravity for it is a fact that the secret of all human progress lies hidden in such freedom. The first benefit of intellectual freedom is to enable man to achieve that high virtue which in Quran is called "fearing the unseen." That is, without any apparent compulsion or pressure from God, man, of his own free will, acknowledges God and leads his life in this world, going in fear of Him. In the absence of an atmosphere of total freedom, no one can undergo this spiritual experience—an indescribable spiritual pleasure—which is called in Quran, going in fear of the Lord. Without such freedom it is not possible to give credit to anyone for this highest of human virtues.

Man is a thinking creature. Of necessity he forms opinions. If curbs are placed on the independent expression of his views, the content of his thought may remain unchanged, but his ideas will never find expression in his speech and writings. Curbs of this nature, imposed by a

is only freedom of thought and expression which can save man from hypocrisy. Moreover, intellectual freedom is directly related to creativity. A society with freedom of thought will produce creative human beings: a society which places curbs on freedom of expression will necessarily witness intellectual stagnation; it will stop producing creative minds, and its development will come to a final standstill.

In matters of criticism or expression of differences, the right approach is for people to end unnecessary sensitivity to it instead of attempting to put an end to criticism and differences. This is the demand of Islam as well as of nature. According to the Hadith it is a virtue on the part of believers: to accept the truth without any reservation when it is presented to them. That is to say, a believer is one who has the ability in the perfect sense of the word to accept the truth. Whenever truth is brought before him, whenever his faults are pointed out to him, no complex comes in the way of his accepting of the truth.

This quality is present to the maximum degree in one who is ready and waiting to accept the truth when it is brought before him. Eager for his own improvement, he accepts the truth with pleasure. This keenness for self-reform through acceptance of the truth is perfectly expressed in the words of 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab: "May God bless on one who sends me gifts of my own shortcomings." It is a fact that acknowledgment of truth is worship, nay, it is the greatest form of worship. It is an act for which man has to make the greatest sacrifice. What makes it such a great sacrifice is that it involves the setting aside of one's prestige. It amounts to the sacrifice of one's ego. But that is the occasion when man assures his entry into heaven.

When does one find the opportunity for this great form of worship and this great good

fortune? This opportunity comes one's way only when there is full freedom of expression. When one can criticize another with impunity. When such an atmosphere prevails in a society which permits the speaker to air his views freely and the listener may freely appreciate what is being said. Just as a mosque is the right place for the performance of prayer in congregation, similarly freedom of expression is the right atmosphere in which to foster the great virtues of expressing the truth and acceptance of the truth.

Sister's Corner

Rice Rolls (Lontong) Indonesian Rice Rolls

Ingredients: (Serves 3)

2 cups Rice

4 cups water

Banana leaves

Instructions: I a pot combine the rice and water and bring it to a boil over moderate heat. Cover the pot and cook it for another 10 minutes over low heat, or until the water is somewhat absorbed. Remove the pot from the heat and left the rice stand for ten minutes.

Using one banana leaf at a time with the size of your liking, which usually about seven inches long and two inches in diameter, put approximately 1½ cup of rice in the center of the leaf and roll into a cylinder. There should be a little bit of space left in the cylinder for the rice to be thickened. Close both ends securely with toothpicks. In the meantime prepare a large stockpot filled with water. Put the rice rolls into the stockpot, cover the stockpot and cook it for approximately 2 hours on low heat. The rolls are very hot when removed from the water and the rolls should be firmed. Let them cool for sometime before unwrapping. Then unwrap and cut the rolls into ½ - 1 inch thick slices. Serve warm and are usually served with other dishes such as satays, mixed vegetables salads, etc.

Kid's Corner

Prophet Isa (Jesus) (Alaih Assalaam)

The mother of Prophet Isa (Alaih Assalaam) was called Maryam(sa). Some people also call her Mary(sa). She was a very pious woman and once, an angel of Allah came to her and said: Soon you will have a son. But how can I have a son? Maryam(sa) asked. I have no husband. The angel replied: Allah is almighty. when He wishes something, then it will happen. You will have a son, and his name shall be Isa, and he will be a great prophet of Allah (swt). When Isa (Alaih Assalaam) was born, Maryam(sa) was on her own. She was very sad and hungry, for she had nothing to eat. But Allah came to her aid. He made a stream flow and a tree with nourishing fruits grew in the place where Maryam lived. Now, she would not have to suffer thirst and hunger. Later Maryam (sa) returned to her family. They were very curious about the child and asked: How did you get him? But Maryam(sa) did not answer. Instead, she just pointed to the child. Don't be silly, Maryam! the people admonished her. How can we ask a child, who is still in the cradle? But just then, to their amazement, they heard the child say: I am the servant of Allah. He has given me the scripture and made me His prophet. We, mankind, should worship only Allah and help the poor and give them some of our money.

Years passed and Isa grew to be a man. Often, he spoke to the people and told them what Allah had revealed to him. He told them too of the earlier prophets of Allah. He told them: I am also a prophet of Allah and I am also a man like all the other prophets of Allah. You should believe in Allah and worship no-one apart from Allah. You should be good to one another and help each other. Some people have given Isa(Alaih Assalaam) the name Jesus. They say that Allah is the father of Jesus. We know that this is not true. Isa (Alaih Assalaam) himself has said that he is only a prophet of Allah, even though he had no father. Allah has no sons. Only human beings have sons and daughters.

Isa (Alaih Assalaam) brought a book to mankind. This book is called Injil, and Allah

gave this book to Isa (Alaih Assalaam). In it there are many stories and it is also stated there that mankind should worship only Allah. Prophet Isa (Alaih Assalaam) had many blessings from Allah. He was able to perform many miracles with Allah's help. He could cure the sick so that they would be grateful to Allah and obey and pray to Allah alone. Isa (Alaih Assalaam) could also bring the dead back to life so that the people would be happy and pray to Allah and thank Him. Prophet Isa (Alaih Assalaam) told the people of another prophet who was going to come later, whose name would be Prophet Ahmad. It was Allah who had sent Prophet Isa (Alaih Assalaam) to the people to tell them that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would come.

There were many people who listened to Prophet Isa (Alaih Assalaam) and worshipped Allah, but here were some who refused to listen and wanted to kill him. Evil people have always tried to persecute and kill Allah's prophets. We know that from the stories of Ibrahim (Alaih Assalaam) and Yusuf (Alaih Assalaam) and many other prophets. But when the evil people were just about to kill Isa (Alaih Assalaam), Allah came to his rescue, just as He had rescued other prophets when they were in danger.

Some people say that Prophet Isa (Alaih Assalaam) was nailed onto a cross by his enemies and that he died in this way. But we know this is not true. Allah protected Prophet Isa (Alaih Assalaam) so that the people could not carry out their evil intentions. Allah said to Isa: I will let you die in peace and then you will come to Me and be with Me. Those who had been following you and prayed to Me and did good will be brought to Me. They will receive the best rewards, because they have been very obedient. Thus, Allah helps His prophets when they are in danger, and He also helps those who follow the prophets and worship only Allah and do good.

Abu Hurairah (RAH) reported : I heard Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saying: whosoever visits an ailing brother of his to seek the pleasure of Allah an angel calls out: may you be happy, may your walking be blessed and may you be rewarded a dignified position in jannah.

MYNA Corner

MYNA takes part in March of Dimes Fundraiser, by Mohammad Baig (Age: 16)

On Sunday, May 1st 2005 MYNA of Southern Illinois participated in the March of Dimes walk. The March of Dimes is a community fund-raiser that intends to protect the lives and health of babies. The event took place at the Marion V.A Hospital. MYNA members met at the masjid and carpoled to the walking site as a group.

The leading cause of death among infants in the United States is birth defects and money raised through the March of Dimes helps pay for the cost of neonatal intensive care. Every participant tries to raise money for this cause and Hassan Butt was the MYNA member who raised the most money. Hassan raised \$65 from family, teachers, and friends. Out of the 160 walkers at the March of Dimes, 36 of them were part of the Muslim community. The MYNA team as a whole raised \$400.00 through their pledges. They also rose and additional \$95.00 by selling lollipops after Sunday school. MYNA will continue to sell the lollipops until the middle of June for the March of Dimes Fundraiser.

It's important for the Muslim community to participate in activities such as the March of Dimes fundraiser. The Muslim community needs to work alongside other communities to help improve the world. In an age when Muslims are often antagonized, it's important for people to see our true intention. The involvement in the community in activities like these will help people understand our cause. It's also important for the Muslim youth to understand that Muslims are not alone in this world, there are many cultures and many religions but we all suffer for various reasons. The Muslim youth needs to understand we need

to help the entire world and the entire world needs to understand that the intention of Muslims is good and their assistance is dedicated. It would be a worthy aim for us all to not only be more involved in events like these, but to also initiate new traditions, like the March of Dimes, that would help the entire world and would be open to the world as well.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MYNA'S TOP MARCH OF DIMES FUNDRAISER,

HASSAN BUTT!

The Perfect Day

(Poem by: Hagar El-Sakkary Age: 13)

What would you think life would be?
If it was only filled with peace and harmony?
If love came back, chasing hate away
Could you think of a more perfect day?
No war will be broken out.
No more of those screams or shouts.
No more blood spilling through the night, the perfect day, right?
Don't tell me you don't desire the same
Peace requires better things than fame
Love, hope and harmony
Peace would be nothing without these three
When all violence has gone away
Wouldn't that be the perfect day?

MYNDA UPDATES:

MAKING FINALE TREATS FOR THE NURSING HOME RESIDENTS!

Date: Saturday, May 14th

Time: 6:30-7:30pm

Location: Poplar Street Masjid

Activity: Since this will be our last visit to the Carbondale Nursing Home for the year we want to make it special! We'll be finalizing a fun program, making treat bags, designing a MYNA poster board with pictures, and writing individualized notes for the residents.

LAST NURSING HOME VISIT AND PICNIC!

Date: Sunday, May 15th

Time: 9:45am

Location (to meet): Poplar Street Masjid

Activity: This will be our LAST visit to the Nursing Home this year! We'll be going to the nursing home and playing BINGO along with some other possible projects with the residents. After, the nursing home (at 11:15am) we'll be heading over to Evergreen Park for a picnic as a reward to MYNA members for the time they volunteered to the Nursing Home. We will also, have a culminating discussion on our participation at the Nursing Home Insha'Allah.

What you need to bring for the Picnic: All MYNA members should bring a bagged lunch with them for the picnic. You can make extra snacks for the picnic to share with all MYNA members if you want. Also, if you'd like you can bring some outdoor activities with you (balls, games, etc...). We'll return to the masjid at **1:15pm** Insha'Allah.

Community News

We would like to extend our heartiest congratulations to Brs. Abu Mubarak and Emad Abu Shanab for successful completion of their doctor of philosophy degree.

Community news can be submitted electronically at ICC511@yahoo.com or by calling at **457-2770, 457-6522**, no later than 15th of each month. We also encourage brothers, sisters and young readers to write for Almuslim. The best young writers will be awarded prizes and certificates.

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Recycle helps in cleaning the environment. If you are looking for recycling your office, accounts, personal notes etc., we can help, contact:

