

PARADISE

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EDITORIAL

Br. Majdi Saleh

Asalamu Alaikum;

You receive this issue of PARADISE at the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, 1421. Is Ramadan different this time? Is the situation of the Muslim Ummah better, worse, or the same? Are the Muslims really learning the lessons form Ramadan(s)? These questions and many others are always been asked with no avail. No real answer is given and when trying to search for one, more questions arise.

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But at our local level here in Huntsville/Alabama we will try our best, *insha'a Allah*, to always search for the truth and abide to it. We will always be one Ummah, undivided. We will, *insha'a Allah*,

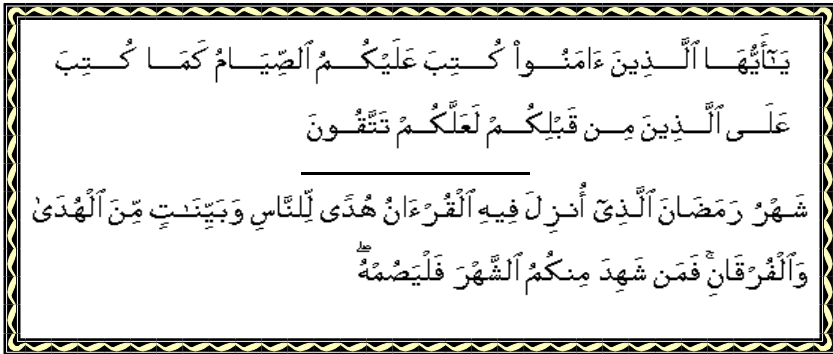
with our undoubted determination keep the traditions that has kept us and is keeping and will continue to keep us as a role model and an example for other communities. This is the kind of feedback we always hear from our visitors and newcomers. It is our strive as a community to establish Islam in our lives first and then in our surroundings. Islam is what gathers us and it is what will keep our "beautiful" unity and preserve our identity as long as we hold fast to it.

PARADISE continues to be an effort toward achieving that goal. It will provide a way for communicating our ideas and our community news and activities.

Prayer Time at the Masjid

Fajr:	5:45 am.
Duhur:	12:15 pm.
Asr:	2:45 pm.
Maghrib:	Sunset
Isha and Tarawih:	7:00 pm.
Jumu'a (Friday):	12:30 pm.

OUR BELOVED RAMADAN



Once again, the month of *Ramadan* is knocking at our doors and the traces of Allah's great Blessings and Mercy are getting closer and closer. The doors of the *Jannah* (Paradise) are being prepared to be widely opened and the doors of *Jahannam* (Hell) are being prepared to be tightly closed. The devils are running away and the angels of mercy are gathering in the houses of Allah to witness those who are worshipping Him (SWT) and asking for His forgiveness, and those who are reciting the Qur'an and learning its meanings, and those who are praying the *Qiam* (night prayer) and cleaning their hearts for a new start.

It is the month of the *Sawm* (fasting) and its reward is a very special one from Allah (SWT).

It is the month of the Qur'an and *Lailat-ul-Qadr* which is better than a thousand months.

It is the month of blessings and mercy. Its beginning is mercy, its middle is forgiveness, and its ending is salvation from *Jahannam*. The one who misses this great

opportunity of forgiveness is really the deprived one.

It is the month of charity. The Prophet (PBUH) used to give more during this month. Whether it is a few dollars you spend to feed and aid hungry and needy Muslims, or money that you give for finishing a masjid or an Islamic school or project that would benefit a Muslim community, or a meal you provide to a fasting Muslim; *Sadaqah* (charity) will be for you as a shield from the blaze of Hell.

It is the month of repentance. Here is another chance given to us to start a new and clean era of our life by sincerely regretting our misdeeds and mistakes and turning to Allah for His Forgiveness and Mercy. Let's also forgive each other's mistakes and put aside any ill feeling towards one another.

We ask Allah (SWT) to give us the health and strength to do all what pleases Him so we may get His Forgiveness and Mercy. **Abu Omar**

HIC's Expansion Project

Your help is needed ... Your support is needed ... Your Du'aa is needed

Let's achieve our goal of collecting: \$450,000 during Ramadan

Our children will have more "less crowded" classrooms...

Will solve the problem of the overcrowded community hall...

Will provide a basketball and activity hall for our youth...

For more information: contact Br. Javid Haider

DAWAH AFFAIRS

Br. Jamil Naser

It's Time for Repentance

"Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful 39:53" .

What a great call and a great opportunity for repentance that is always open till the Day of Judgment. No matter who you are, where you are, or how far you went a way from the straight path of Allah, the repentance door is still open and will remain open. Now, in this blessed month of Ramadan, this door is wide open for those who seek repentance. Those who seek repentance Allah (SWT) will be there to answer their call and to forgive their sins as long as they are sincere. Though Allah (SWT) is not in need for our worship, yet He will be greatly pleased by the repentance of his servant, because He is the most Merciful, the Most Forgiving. *Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, reported: Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: Allah is more pleased with the repentance of a servant as he turns towards Him for repentance than this that one amongst you is upon the camel in a waterless desert and there is upon (that camel) his provision of food and drink also and it is lost by him, and he having lost all hope (to get that) so he lies down in the shadow and is disappointed about his camel and there he finds that camel standing before him. He takes hold of his nose string and then out of boundless joy says: O Lord, Thou art my servant and I am Thine Lord. He commits this mistake out of extreme delight " Al bukhari, no.1595".* Yet we need to be merciful with ourselves and seek the guidance of Allah (SWT) and repent. Now it is you and only you who will take this decision, be honest to your self and be merciful with your self and please Allah (SWT) with your repentance. Do not postponed it because it's too early, I'm still young and healthy!!, may be next Ramadan I'll repent!!. Allah only knows whether you'll make it even for the end of this Ramadan. Remember that if the time comes for your departure, NO one can delay it for one single minute, so we better be prepared!!.

Repentance, however, should not be just a temporary reaction for the days of Ramadan and then going back to square one. The first step in repentance is to stop doing what we need to repent from, that might be a evil act or behavior "this should end" or it might be a short coming of leaving an obligatory duty for us as Muslims, like not performing the prayers "so keep the prayers". The second step in repentance is to regret what was been done before repentance and ask Allah (SWT) for forgiveness from these deeds. The third step is to decide NOT to go back for any of the bad deeds before repentance and again here we need to remember and realize that Allah (SWT) knows and sees all what we do.

Brothers and sisters, let's all decide to make this Ramadan make a difference in our life, repent to Allah and remind whom we care about to do the same.

Fatwa

Are we allowed to help our relatives with the Zakaah money? Name of Mufti: Muzammil Siddiqi

It is permissible to give Zakat to the needy relatives. The relatives to whom Zakat cannot be given are wife, children, grandchildren, parents and grandparents. It is one's duty to take care of them first and then if there is any money left and it reached the Nisab of Zakat, then one should give Zakat on that amount. Thus all non-dependant relatives such as brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces etc. can receive the Zakat if they are poor and need help. The person who gives the Zakat must make an intention that the amount he/she is giving is for the purpose of Zakat. The recipient does not have to be informed about it. It is better to give charity to an individual in a respectful manner without hurting his/her dignity.

Our Youth...Our Future

HIC Youth Group's Column

Sr. Umber & Br. Shuaib Hanief

One of the goals of the HIC board members for this year is to make our youth group more active. This column should give you an insight on the youth groups' activities. The boys youth group held a car wash (proceeds go to the Masjid) on Saturday November 11. The car wash was initially delayed because of the cold weather, but it eventually got started. The number of cars washed were not as high as expected. A few item on the agenda for this month are elections, an open discussion meeting. The elected members will decide on activities for the youth group. Meetings will be held right after Duhr prayer on Sundays. More activities during Ramadan are being planned. One of the main goals of this youth group is to promote friendship, cooperation and unity among the group. It is very important that parent encourage their children to participate in the youth group activities. The girls' youth group, FAITH, has been quite active and continues to be so, Alhumdulillah. For the upcoming month of Ramadan, they have planned several activities. They will assign several girls to babysit the children at the masjid during Tarawih prayers on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. This way, parents can pray without worrying about their children and the musalah will be free of noise by the children. The youth group will also continue their regular meetings during Ramadan, during which they discuss different Islamic and youth group issues. Rubina Khan, the president of FAITH, is also in the process of collecting information about the upcoming MYNA Olympics in Florida. The youth group needs our community's support and help. If you have any questions or constructive comments, please contact any of the FAITH board members: Rubina Khan, Dana Ajurri, Fatima Qureshi, and Yasmin El-Hady.

- Join us every Friday for a community pot-luck Iftar and Dinner
- Register your children for HIC's Weekend Islamic School's Qur'an Memorization Contest.
- Be part of the adults' Qur'an Memorization Contest. Registration forms are available at HIC.



Muslimah...

HIC Sisters' Page
Editor: Sr. Zakiyyah Shakoore

"The Muslim Woman & Her Rabb During Ramadan"

"For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's remembrance, for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward."

Qur'an (33:35)

One of the most prominent and distinguishing features of the Muslim woman is her love for Islam, and her deep faith in Allah (swt). With the blessed month of Ramadan only a few days away, now is the time to plan a month that will reap the most reward. The wise Muslim woman must strike a balance during this all-too-short blessed month, between her domestic duties and the opportunity this month brings to draw closer to Allah (SWT) through worship and good deeds. She should not let her household chores distract her from performing the obligatory prayers at the appointed times, or from reading Qur'an or praying nafil prayers. Nor should she let traditional late-night family gatherings keep her from praying qiyam al-layl and tahujjud, or making du`a'. She knows the great reward and abundant forgiveness that Allah (swt) has prepared for those who stay up to pray during the night in Ramadan. Rather than spending the days of Ramadan cooking huge Iftar meals, shopping for materialistic E'id gifts, or sleeping to suppress the cravings of favorite foods, she should devote as much time as possible doing things which please Allah (swt) such as Dhikr, salah, religious study, spiritual development, as well as performing the neighborly deeds of visiting the sick and tending to the less fortunate.

Ramadan is supposed to be a great month for the worship of Allah, but unfortunately many Muslims today do not take this as seriously as they should. When we eat so much until we can hardly move, we should give thanks to Allah (swt) and remember those who have nothing and are dying of hunger, among other things. When we throw food away, we should stop and ask ourselves: How many people could use this food? We should also remember the children who go to sleep with barely anything to eat if anything at all. We should take of what Allah has blessed us with and give to others. May we also pray that Allah has mercy on them and help us follow in the footsteps of the Sahabah before us. Of course, the month of Ramadan requires fasting for most Muslims, however, in our emphasis on refraining from food, drink, and marital relations during the daylight hours, we sometimes forget many other important aspects of this sacred time. Perhaps, it would help us to remember not only the outward act of fasting,

but also its underlying purpose, that is to gain nearness to Allah, to learn to discipline ourselves from our physical desires, and to be generous to the less fortunate. We should remember, Ramadan is Not just Hunger and Thirst.

The wise Muslim woman fasts the month of Ramadan, with her soul filled with faith, hope, and forgiveness. She has the attitude of one whose faculties keep away from all kinds of sins that may invalidate the fast or diminish its reward. If she finds herself exposed to the trials of hostility or argument, she follows the Prophet's advice to men and women who fast: "When any of you is fasting, he should not utter foul words or raise his voice in anger. If then anyone provokes or fights him, he should say, "I am observing a fast". She quickly draws to mind Prophet's words when he said "Whoever does not give up false speech and evil actions, Allah has no need of his giving up his food and drink".

During Ramadan, the true Muslim woman should feel that she is immersed in the atmosphere of a month unlike any other, when good deeds should be multiplied and the gates of goodness should be opened wide. She knows that her fasting during this month should be only for Allah (SWT) and that He will give the reward for it, that this blessed month is a time that is purely for Allah alone. The serious-minded Muslim woman has no time to spend on chatting and idle pursuits. She should not be among those who waste away the day until the approach of Maghrib, whereupon she offers her family something to eat and they fall into a deep sleep, and miss Tarawih, or even the Fajr prayer. The true Muslim woman and her family should live an Islamic life during Ramadan, striving to organize themselves in such a way that when they all come back from Tarawih prayers, they do not stay up for too long because in a few short hours time, they will get up to pray qiyam al-layl and then eat suhur, for the Prophet commanded us to eat Suhur as there is much benefit in it. The wise Muslim woman helps all the members of her family to get up for suhur in obedience to the Prophet's command. It is incumbent on the Muslim woman to strive in all earnestness and help her family to continually be conscious of this blessed month and its true meaning and purpose. By doing this, she will enthusiastically worship her Lord, and understand that she is obliged to observe all the commandments that Allah (swt) has enjoined upon every Muslim, male or female. She can then carry out her Islamic duties properly, without being negligent, or by making excuses or compromises so when the blessed month ends, she can truly rejoice and feel a "real" sense of accomplishment for having obeyed Allah (swt). **Ramadan Mubarak!**

Support Huntsville Islamic Center's Expansion Project...
 With Allah's Help and Your Generous Donations, it will happen.

A message from the Muslim Students Association (MSA)

The Muslim Students Association at UAH is comprised of a diverse group of Muslim students from all over the world. The purpose of the MSA is to bring all of these Muslim students together, enhance our knowledge of Islam, help us strengthen our Iman, while at the same time establish a prominent chapter of the MSA here at UAH. We elected officers in October and since then have organized two lectures in which community members, Br. Majdi Saleh, and Dr. Nauman Qureshi, spoke to us on various Islamic topics. Insha'Allah, we plan on organizing similar lectures every two weeks for the remainder of the school year. Additionally, we would like to organize an Islam Awareness Week, where for an entire week, we would set up a booth at the student center, hold lectures, invite a speaker, and pass out flyers to educate our fellow students and faculty about Islam.

Also, in past years, during the month of Ramadan, each weekday various community members volunteered their time and prepared *Iftar* and dinner for the International Muslim students. Therefore, our next task is to organize this program again for this year. As we all know, there is much reward in feeding those who fast during this blessed month. So, *Insha'Allah*, if anyone would like to volunteer this year, they may sign upon the MSA calendars posted around the Masjid.

If any of you have other questions regarding the MSA, or would like to volunteer to speak at one of our lectures, please get in touch with our President, Br. Shahzad Akhtar at shahzad82@hotmail.com.

Jazakum Allahu Khairan, Wassalamu Alaikum,

Nazia Abbas
Social and Public Affairs Director



Selected Islamic Web Sites

- [Http://www.islam-online.net](http://www.islam-online.net)
Daily updated news, Fatwa online, and many important Islamic articles. (Arabic/English)
- [Http://www.islamway.com](http://www.islamway.com)
More than a thousand islamic lectures online. (Arabic/English).



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