



NEWSLETTER

Volume 18 | Issue 3

March 2024 | Sha'ban - Ramadan, 1445

"There is no moving creature on earth but its sustenance depends on Allah" [Hud,11:6]



"Dispensers of justice will be seated on pulpits of light beside God." [Muslim]

In This Issue

Announcements _____ 2

Synopsis:

The Great Trial of Gaza Pt 2 ____ 3

News Release:

Interfaith Voices of Gaza _____ 5

Sisters:

Tips for a Healthy Ramdan: A Guide for Mothers _____ 4

Kids:

The Lost Ring _____ 6

Prayer Times _____ 8

RAMADAN 2024

IONA is pleased to announce, based on the Fiqh Council announcement, the dates of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr for the year 2024/1445 AH.

First Taraweeh Night: Sunday, March 10

First Day of Fasting: Monday, March 11

Eid-al-Fitr (First day of Shawwal): Wednesday, April 10

| More on page 2

First Friday sermon starts at 12:10 PM and the second sermon starts at 1:20 PM



Ramadan: A Guide for Mothers

As the holy month of Ramadan approaches, many mothers find themselves ...

| More on page 4



Interfaith Voices for Gaza

IONA played a vital role in sponsoring the event, underscoring its commitment to promoting peace and justice in the region....

| More on page 5



17th Annual Qur'an Conference

UNLOCK THE SPIRITUAL ESSENCE: RAMADAN AND THE DIVINE WISDOM OF AL-QUR'AN

| More on page 2



Mustapha Elturk
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Announcements

Ramadan Mubarak

We Wish You A Blessed Ramadan

First Night if Tarawih:
Sunday, March 10 (after Isha)

First Day of Fasting:
Monday, March 11 (Ramadan 1)

Community Iftar Dinners:

Friday, March 15 (Ramadan 5)

Saturday, March 16 (Ramadan 6)

Friday, March 22 (Ramadan 12)

Saturday, March 23 (Ramadan 13)

Friday, March 29 (Ramadan 19)

Saturday, March 30 (Ramadan 20)

Friday, April 5 (Ramadan 26)

Saturday, April 6 (Ramadan 27)

ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION OF NORTH AMERICA 17TH ANNUAL QUR'AN CONFERENCE

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First Night of Tarawih: Sunday, March 10

Daylight Saving time will begin at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 10, 2024

IONA's Friday Lunch

Visit the IONA Cafe every Friday from 12 PM to 2:30 PM and indulge in our freshly



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All proceeds generated from this catering service will directly contribute to the IONA Masjid. For inquiries or to place your order, please feel free to call us at 248-462-6244.



The Great Trial of Gaza - Part 2

The Trial of Loss of wealth

Trials with the loss of wealth acknowledges that one of the challenges or tests that believers may encounter in life is the experience of losing wealth.

The trial of the loss of wealth refers to situations where individuals may experience a decline in financial resources, possessions, or material well-being. This loss could be due to various reasons, including economic challenges, business setbacks, or unforeseen circumstances.

This is one of the hardest tests. Allah (SWT) in many places in the Quran alerts the believers, *"And know that your wealth and your children are only a test and that with Allah is a great reward."* [al-Anfal,8:28]

One of the weaknesses of man is the love and attachment to wealth. *"You love wealth, an immense love."* [al-Fajr, 89:20]

Losing wealth becomes a test of one's attachment to material possessions. Islam encourages believers to view wealth as a means rather than an end, and the trial of loss helps individuals evaluate their relationship with worldly possessions.

The Quran teaches that wealth is a trust (*amanah*) from Allah (SWT). The loss of wealth serves as a reminder that individuals are temporary custodians of their worldly possessions, and they will be held accountable for how they managed and utilized this trust.

Experiencing a loss of wealth becomes a test of contentment and gratitude. Believers are encouraged to be content with whatever Allah grants them, even in times of financial difficulty.

As with other trials, the trial of losing wealth provides an opportunity for believers to strengthen their trust in Allah. It becomes a test of faith and reliance on Allah's wisdom, knowing that Allah is the ultimate Provider and Sustainer.

Similar to other trials, the loss of wealth is a test of patience (*sabr*). Believers are encouraged to endure financial difficulties with patience, recognizing that life's challenges are temporary and that Allah's plan is encompassing.

"Trials with the loss of wealth" alerts the believers to the diverse challenges one may face in their material lives.

Our brothers and sisters in Gaza are challenged with such immense trial. The war in Gaza caused catastrophic damage to infrastructure and economy. The socio-economic impact of the conflict is huge.

Most businesses, including modest shops, have been destroyed leaving many people penniless and homeless. At least 60% of homes or housing units in Gaza have been "destroyed or damaged". Nine in every 10 schools have suffered "significant damage". Hospitals, public buildings, and electricity networks have also been hit.

Unemployment is extremely high. "The unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip now exceeds three-quarters of the labour force, and around a third of the West Bank's labour force is unemployed, reaching the highest level of unemployment in decades." Business owners in Gaza are concerned about the

future of their business after Israel imposed a ban on all exports from the Gaza Strip.

Indeed, the war in Gaza inflicted catastrophic damage on infrastructure and economy. Despite all this, you hear the Gazans cry, *"Hasbunallah wa ni'mal wakeel, Allah is enough for me, and he is the best disposer of my affairs."*

Trials of Loss of Lives

"And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits but give good tidings to the patient." [al-Baqarah,2:155]

"Trials with the loss of lives" may refer to a specific type of trial or test that believers may undergo in their lives.

The loss of lives refers to the experience of losing loved ones or facing situations where lives are at stake. This trial could manifest in various forms, such as the death of family members, friends, or any circumstances where individuals are exposed to the threat of losing their lives.

The loss of lives is often accompanied by intense grief and emotional turmoil. It tests the believers' ability to endure such emotional pain with patience and faith in Allah's wisdom.

Experiencing the loss of lives prompts believers to reflect on the transient nature of human existence and the inevitability of death. It serves as a reminder that life is temporary, and death is an integral part of the human experience.

The loss of lives becomes a profound test of patience (*sabr*) and perseverance. Believers are encouraged to endure the emotional pain and challenges associated with loss while maintaining their faith and trust in Allah's plan.

The experience of losing lives also tests believers in terms of their compassion and support for one another. It is a time when communities and individuals are called upon to provide comfort and assistance to those affected by the loss.

Believers are reminded that trials, including the loss of lives, are part of Allah's decree. *"No calamity befalls (anyone) except by Allah's Will. And whoever has faith in (the Qadar of) Allah, He will guide their hearts. And Allah has full knowledge of everything."* [al-Taghabun, 64:11]

Similarly, Allah (SWT) said, *"No misfortune can happen, either in the earth or in yourselves, except inscribed in a Book before We make it manifest. Surely, this is easy for Allah."* [al-Haqqid, 57:22]

Understanding and accepting Allah's wisdom in the face of such trials is an essential aspect of the believer's response.

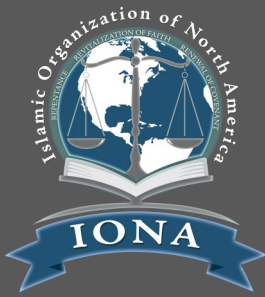
It is amazing how the Palestinians are responding to such awesome trial. Nearly one in every 100 people in Gaza has been killed since the war between Israel and Hamas erupted on October 7.

More than 30,000 people have been martyred in the war in Gaza with 70% women and children, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. Among the martyred are doctors, nurses, aid workers, professors, teachers, journalists and media workers. Nearly 100,000 Palestinians have been injured, and thousands more are missing and presumed dead.

| Continued on page 6

Sisters Corner

Tips for a Healthy Ramadan: A Guide for Mothers



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As the holy month of Ramadan approaches, many mothers find themselves engulfed in a whirlwind of preparation. Decorating the home, shopping for iftar and suhoor meals, and preparing for religious activities are common tasks that require extra time and effort. However, amid the busyness of Ramadan, it is important for mothers to remember the importance of taking care of their own health and well-being. To help you stay healthy and nourished during this blessed month, here are some tips for a healthy Ramadan:

Balance your diet

Ramadan is a period of fasting, but that doesn't mean you have to forego healthy eating. Make sure to include a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in your iftar and suhoor meals. Eating a balanced diet will help keep your energy levels up during the long days of fasting.

Stay hydrated

Water is essential during Ramadan. Make sure to drink plenty of fluids, such as water, juices, and soups. Avoid too much caffeine and sugar, as they can make you feel sluggish and dehydrated.

Exercise regularly

Exercise is important for overall health, and it can help keep your energy levels up during long days of fasting. Take a brisk walk outside, or do some light exercises in your home.

Get enough sleep

Sleep is essential for physical and mental well-being. Make sure to get at least seven to eight hours of sleep every night.

Take breaks

Ramadan can be a busy and hectic time, but don't forget to take breaks throughout the day. Spend some time with your family, relax, or even take a nap.

Limit your caffeine intake

Caffeine can make you feel more alert and energized, but too much can be detrimental to your health. Try to limit your caffeine intake to one cup of coffee or tea a day.

Avoid processed foods

Processed foods are high in sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats, which can cause health

problems. Stick to natural and nutritious foods during Ramadan.

Connect with family

Spend quality time with your family during Ramadan. This is a great opportunity to have meaningful conversations with them and strengthen your relationship.

Be mindful of your mental health

Ramadan can be a time of emotional and spiritual growth, but it can also be a period of stress and exhaustion. Make sure to take time to relax, meditate, and reflect.

Preparing Spiritually For Ramadan

During the holy month of Ramadan, mothers should not only maintain a healthy lifestyle, but they should also engage in spiritual activities to deepen their faith and connection to Allah.

- Start preparing spiritually for Ramadan by focusing on Islamic teachings and values. Make sure to read the Quran and Hadith to understand the importance of this holy month.
- Make dua for yourself and your family to be able to make the most of Ramadan and to get the blessings of Allah. Make sure to ask for forgiveness for any wrongdoings and for Allah to grant you the strength to make the most of Ramadan.
- Take out time to make a plan for how you want to spend Ramadan. This includes setting specific goals for the month such as reciting a certain amount of Quran or performing extra Salah. This will help you stay focused and motivated throughout the month.
- Spend time with your family to discuss Ramadan and its importance. Talk to them about the rewards of fasting and other acts of worship that can be done during Ramadan. This will help you and your family stay on track and get the most out of this blessed month.
- Make sure to plan for iftar and suhoor meals in advance. This will help you save time and energy so that you can focus on worship and spirituality.

Finally, it is important to remember that Ramadan is a time of peace and reflection. Make sure to take

| Continued on the next page

Interfaith Voices for Gaza

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Voices of Compassion: IONA Joined “Interfaith Voices for Gaza” Event to Advocate for Ceasefire and Freedom

[WARREN, MI] - In an exceptional display of unity and empathy, a diverse assembly of individuals from different faiths and background came together in an event titled “Interfaith Voices for Gaza: An Evening of Learning, Lamentation and Liberation”. Hosted by the Steering Committee of Friends of Sabeel – Southeast Michigan and held at the Christ Episcopal Church in Dearborn (1/24/2024), this event aimed to address the ongoing conflict in Gaza and foster understanding, compassion, and unity.

The Islamic Organization of North America (IONA) played a vital role in sponsoring the event, underscoring its commitment to promoting peace and justice in the region. Imam Mustapha Elturk, the President (Ameer) of IONA, also took the stage as one of the esteemed speakers, sharing his insights and heartfelt message with the attendees.

The event featured a distinguished lineup of speakers, including Jonathan Kuttab (Director of Friends of Sabeel North America); Rabbi Alana Alpert of Congregation T’chiya; Huwaida Arraf (Palestinian Christian Activist and co-Founder of the International Solidarity Movement); Dr. Soraya (Layla) Saatchi (Philosopher, Middle East Historian, and Assistant Professor of Teaching with the Irvin D. Reid Honors College at Wayne State University); Rosina Hassoun (Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Sociology at Saginaw Valley State University); and Joshua Feinstein of Jewish Voice for Peace – Detroit.

Throughout the evening, the speakers explored the historical context of the Palestine-Israel conflicts, emphasizing a time when diverse communities coexisted harmoniously in the region. They also shared deeply personal experiences related to the ongoing conflict, providing insight into the profound impact it has had on individuals and society as a whole.

A resounding message from the event was a call to governments worldwide to take proactive steps in initiating a ceasefire and securing freedom of Palestinians. Imam Mustapha Elturk emphasized that “the current conflict in Gaza is a test of humanity, a moral challenge that calls upon the conscience of the global community.” He presented heart-wrenching statistics, such as the devastating loss of at least 23,000 Palestinian lives, many of whom were innocent children; the relentless bombardment, restrictions, and abuse endured by the people of Gaza, as well as the widespread destruction of homes, schools, farms, and hospitals. Most strikingly, it was revealed that 93% of Gaza residents are grappling with hunger.

Imam Mustapha Elturk and the other speakers fervently urged the international community to intensify their efforts toward achieving a ceasefire and liberating the Palestinian people from the persistent oppression they endure.

This event served as a powerful reminder that unity, understanding, and empathy can pave the path towards peace and justice in times of conflict. IONA’s significant role in sponsoring and speaking at the event exemplifies its dedication to building bridges and fostering positive change.

End



Tips for a Healthy Ramadan: A Guide for Mothers (cont’d)

time out of your day to relax and reflect on your life and how you can become closer to Allah.

Wrapping Up

Ramadan is an important time of spiritual growth and reflection, and it’s important for mothers to be prepared. The above tips and techniques are just a few ways to help mothers prepare for Ramadan. With the right guidance and planning, mothers can make the most of this blessed month and reap its spiritual rewards.

By following these tips, you can make sure that you stay healthy and nourished throughout the month of Ramadan. Enjoy the blessings of Ramadan and have a healthy and blessed month!

| Courtesy: <https://themothercare.pk/blogs/blog/tips-for-a-healthy-ramadan-a-guide-for-mothers>

The Lost Ring

Once a young man lost his ring. He went to search for it under the bright street light. Others who saw him desperately searching for a missing ring, came to help him.

When no one was successful in finding the ring, people asked him if he was sure that he dropped the ring in this place. He said, "No, I lost it there," and pointed to his house.

Furious, the people asked: "Then why are you looking for it here?"

The young man, trying to look clever said, "Because it is dark where I lost it, and this place is bright with light!"

Everyone thought he was a fool and told him to go and search for the ring where he actually lost it.

What we can learn from this story is that while our success lies in preparing for the hereafter, we are too busy looking for it in this world. If we spend all our lives only looking for success in this world, we will soon leave empty handed and take nothing with us.

Courtesy Islamcan.com

The Great Trial of Gaza - Part 2 (cont'd)

Entire generations of Palestinian families in the besieged Gaza Strip — from great-grandparents to infants only weeks old — have been killed in airstrikes in the war.

1.9 million have been displaced, with tens of thousands living in the streets of Rafah after Israel ordered civilians to flee south.

The perseverance of the Palestinians and faith in the divine decree (*qadar*) of Allah have left many people around the world dumfounded and speechless. Their grief and emotional distress is eased by uttering the famous expression of the Islamic gratitude, *Alhamdulillah*, Praise be to God. These two words coming out of the victims have stunned the world.

The Palestinians resoluteness and perseverance is amazing. They resign to Allah and say, this is *qadarullah*, (Allah's decree).

Trials of loss of crops

The last of the trials, Allah (SWT) promised the believers, is loss of crops or fruits.

"And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits but give good tidings to the patient." [al-Baqarah,2:155]

"Trials with the loss of fruits" is another type of trial or test that people may experience in their lives.

This aspect of the trial refers to agricultural losses, including the failure of crops, fruits, or harvests. It is a test that can impact livelihoods, sustenance, and economic well-being.

Losing fruits or crops can have significant economic implications, affecting the income and resources of individuals and communities dependent on agriculture. It tests believers in their ability to cope with economic hardships.

In societies where agriculture is a primary source of livelihood, like in Gaza, the loss of crops becomes a critical trial. It challenges individuals to find alternative means of sustenance and to navigate through the difficulties brought about by the agricultural loss.

Like other trials, this type of trial becomes a test of contentment and gratitude. Believers are encouraged to remain patient and content, even in the face of economic challenges, recognizing that contentment is not solely dependent on material abundance.

Believers are reminded that such a trial is by the will of Allah (SWT) and are reminded to trust in Allah's plan, recognizing that trials, including the loss of fruits, are part of a broader divine decree.

Since the start of the Israeli war on October 7, farmers have been unable to access their farmland and crops. Near the southern city of Khan Younis in Gaza, the agricultural lands span an area of nearly 10,000 acres. There are 7,000 farms in the Khan Younis governorate, according to the Ministry of Agriculture in the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli army targets and bombs farmland during times of war or sprays it with pesticides, killing crops and rendering the soil unsuitable for farming.

| Continued on the next page

The Great Trial of Gaza - Part 2 (cont'd)

Farmers in the Gaza strip are enduring such trials with great and immense fortitude and resilience.

If there are any people in the world who are facing all these trials simultaneously, it is our brothers and sisters in Gaza, May God increase their courage and keep them firm, steadfast and resolute.

The ayah of trials ends with, "Give glad tidings to the patient." The next ayah, Allah (SWT) describes the patient ones. "They are those who, when afflicted with a misfortune (resign to God) saying, to God we belong and to Him is Our return." [al-Baqarah, 2:156]

The resilience of the Palestinians in Gaza is remarkable. Strength, determination, and ability of the people, particularly women and girls, to endure and overcome adversity in the face of considerable challenges is unprecedented.

Such individuals are promised blessings and compassion from God. "It is they who have their Lord's grace and mercy, and they are guided." [al-Baqarah, 2:157] God willing, the Palestinians will be guided to the liberation of Palestine.

They are indeed a source, of inspiration to all Muslims, rather all people.

May God shower His mercy upon our brothers and sister in Gaza and the West Bank, ameen.

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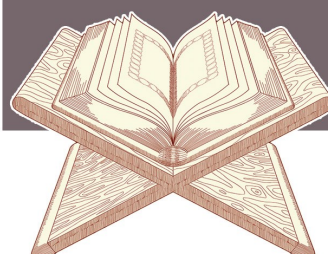
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MARCH 2024

IONA Masjid - Salah and Iqamah Timing

Date	Fajr	Iqamah	Sunrise	Zuhr	Iqamah	Asr (S)*	Asr (H)*	Iqamah	Maghrib	Iqamah	Isha	Iqamah
Fri 1	5:35	6:15	7:06	12:49	1:00	3:51	4:37	5:00	6:26	6:31	7:43	8:00
Sat 2	5:34	6:15	7:04	12:49	1:00	3:52	4:39	5:00	6:27	6:32	7:44	8:00
Sun 3	5:32	6:15	7:03	12:49	2:00	3:53	4:40	5:00	6:28	6:33	7:45	8:00
Mon 4	5:31	6:15	7:01	12:49	2:00	3:54	4:41	5:00	6:29	6:34	7:46	8:00
Tue 5	5:29	6:15	7:00	12:48	1:00	3:54	4:42	5:00	6:31	6:36	7:47	8:15
Wed 6	5:27	6:15	6:58	12:48	1:00	3:55	4:43	5:00	6:32	6:37	7:48	8:15
Thu 7	5:26	6:15	6:56	12:48	1:00	3:56	4:44	5:00	6:33	6:38	7:49	8:15
Fri 8	5:24	6:15	6:55	12:48	1:00	3:57	4:45	5:00	6:34	6:39	7:50	8:15
Sat 9	5:23	6:15	6:53	12:48	1:00	3:57	4:46	5:00	6:35	6:40	7:51	8:15
Sun ~ 10	6:21	6:45	7:51	1:47	2:00	4:58	5:47	6:15	7:36	7:41	8:52	9:15

RAMADAN - First Day of Fasting

Please Refer to Ramadan Prayer Schedule

* S = Shafi'i, H = Hanafi | Athan is 10 minutes before Iqamah except for Maghrib

~ Daylight Saving time will begin at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 10, 2024

First Friday sermon starts at 12:10 PM and second sermon is at 1:20 PM

First Night of Tarawih: Sunday, March 10



IONA aims at transforming its members and surrounding communities to righteous, God-fearing people, who collectively strive for the highest moral standard and constantly seek God's forgiveness to earn His pleasure. IONA members seek His mercy and grace in this life and in the hereafter. They rejuvenate their souls through internal struggle (jihad) and spiritual exercise in worship of the Creator, God most glorified. The strength of their belief in God almighty gives them the courage to promote good and forbid evil, and to engage in the struggle to establish social, political, and economic justice.

