

In the name of Allah, the most Compassionate, the ever Merciful



IONA
REPENTANCE
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

IONA MASJID COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

February 2022 | Jumada Al-Akhirah - Rajab 1443

Volume 16, No 2

Image: Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) first revelation was in the cave of Hira' on the Mount of Light (Jabal an-Nur)

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From His Glorious Book

"But Allah would never punish them while you O Prophet were in their midst. Nor would He ever punish them if they prayed for forgiveness."

[Al-Anfal, 8:33]

From the Tradition of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

"When anyone of you stands for the prayers, Satan comes and puts him in doubts till he forgets how many rak'at he has prayed. So if this happens to anyone of you, he should perform two prostrations of Sahu while sitting."

[al-Bukhari]

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

WILL RESUME ON FEBRUARY 6TH

SEE PAGE 2

IONA Center

encourages you to continue supporting the Center during the pandemic by donating to the Masjid Budget

Umrah has been Postponed to March

SEE PAGE 2

Join us **Live** for both Virtual Friday Sermons 12:10 & 1:30 PM





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Sunday School

Due to rise in COVID cases we were forced to shut down the Sunday School.
We will RESUME classes on Sunday, February 6, In sha Allah.
We are accepting students ages 5 to 13 (limited space available).

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February 2022

Jumada Al-Akhirah - Rajab 1443

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		1	2	3	4	5
		29	1st	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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Can There Be Any Doubt About God?



People of faith and of no faith at one time or another reach a stage in their life where they question the existence of God.

On the onset, let us be clear, the Qur'an does not prove the existence of God. The Qur'an wants us to use our intellect, to ponder upon the creation and ourselves, and come out with the conclusion that there has to be someone behind this creation. It is impossible that it came by mere accident. *"Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the day and night are signs for people of reason."* (Aal 'Imran, 3:190)

Allah reveals Himself through the signs of His creation

Most Muslims have blind faith. While blind faith is good, it is not sufficient. It is necessary to have faith with an intellectual dimension in this era of knowledge, science and technology.

People of understanding, knowledge and intellect, think of Allah (SWT) in all circumstances and situations, while standing, sitting and while reclining or lying down. They contemplate and reflect on the dazzling creation of Allah (SWT), the creation of the heavens and the earth, i.e. the world of matter.

"(They are) those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth (and pray), 'Our Lord! You have not created (all of) this without purpose. Glory be to You! Protect us from the torment of the Fire.'" (Aal 'Imran, 3:191)

Their conclusion is, 'Our Lord you have not created this, (the universe and everything in it) in vain,' without any purpose. They come to the realization that there is a creator. That yes, God exists.

There is a definite purpose to every creation we see around us. No human mind can accept that the vast universe with the tiny planet earth and all creation we see around us came by sheer accident. Therefore, *"Can there be any doubt about Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth?"* (Ibrahim, 14:10)

Allah (SWT) put forth the evidence of His existence before the eyes of people through His signs (*ayat*). Consider and ponder on the following passage. *"In the creation of the heavens and the earth; the alternation of the day and the night; the ships that sail the sea for the benefit of humanity; the rain sent down by Allah from the skies, reviving the earth after its death; the scattering of all kinds of creatures throughout; the shifting of the winds; and the clouds drifting between the heavens and the earth; are surely signs for people of understanding."* (al-Baqarah, 2:164)

It is true people have a choice to believe or disbelieve. It is their God given right that has been granted to them since the dawn of humanity. *"And*

say (O Prophet) this truth is from your Lord, so let those who wish to believe in it do so, and let those who wish to reject it do so." (al-Kahf, 18:29)

Some do believe while others become either agnostics or atheists. Sadly, there is a rise in Atheism among Muslims.

What is agnosticism and atheism?

The dictionary definition of agnosticism is, "The view that any ultimate reality (such as a deity) is unknown and probably unknowable; a philosophical or religious position characterized by uncertainty about the existence of a god or any gods."

Atheism on the other hand is,

1. A lack of belief or a strong disbelief in the existence of a god or any gods.
2. A philosophical or religious position characterized by disbelief in the existence of a god or any gods.

Atheism, in the broadest sense, is an absence of belief in the existence of deities. Less broadly, atheism is a rejection of the belief that any deities exist. In an even narrower sense, atheism is specifically the position that there are no deities.

Atheism has one "official" belief: the belief that there are no gods or super natural entities. This view is diametrically opposed to our belief. We believe in a supernatural deity called Allah, or God, the Originator and Creator of the entire universe and beyond.

Their claim 'there is no god' is absolutely true. As a matter of fact, we claim the same. We negate all gods and deities. Our attestation (*kalimah*) starts with, 'there is *no* god,' but then we confirm the existence of the One God with the expression, 'except Allah (*illa Allah*).' This testimony of faith negates any possibility of partners/associates with God, Allah almighty. It is *kalimatu tawheed*, affirmation of the Oneness of God.

It is the same dogma and creed of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad and all of God's prophets who are mentioned in the Qur'an and those who are not mentioned in the Qur'an, may God's peace and blessings be upon them all.

Evidence of His Existence

Unlike the dichotomy between the bible and science, one finds science to be in total harmony with the Qur'an, the last scripture and Book of Guidance for all people.

It may be of surprise to some agnostics and atheists to find that many scientific facts were mentioned in the Qur'an centuries before the advent of modern science.

For example, the beginning of creation commonly known as 'the big bang theory' of Albert Einstein and the expanding universe can be affirmed by the following ayah:



"Can there be any doubt about Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth"

(Ibrahim, 14:10)



Continues on page 6



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Discovering Our Mother ‘Aisha’

As a newer Muslim, I recently had two family members approach me very concerned about the Prophet Muhammad’s (ﷺ) Marriage to our mother ‘Aisha (RAA). I actually hadn’t had the opportunity to learn much about our mother ‘Aisha (RAA) yet so hearing that she was as young as 6 years old when they married and about 8 years old when the marriage was consummated was shocking news to me to put it lightly.

Truth be told, I felt a pit in my stomach as the family members showed me the information. I felt embarrassed that I didn’t already know about this, but also at the same time, devastated because surely this didn’t feel acceptable to me being a mother of preteens myself in today’s American society.

My devastation led me to delve into a few resources on this topic that same night. At first, I was honestly just hoping to hear or read that our mother ‘Aisha (RAA) wasn’t actually 6, 8 or even 12 years old for that matter. Instead, what I discovered was that it is certainly true that she was 6 years and 8 years of age, but that not only was this customary and appropriate during those times, the marriage of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) And our mother ‘Aisha (RAA) was one that we can all look to as an excellent example. Of course, we would follow the appropriate customs and laws of our times today in doing so.

According to Sh. Omar Suleiman, 1400 years ago, a woman was considered ready to marry when she began her menstrual cycle since she was physically capable of having children at that point. Sh. Suleiman further explains that 11 or 12 year olds back then looked and were much different than 11 and 12 year olds are today. Back then, this was the age when both boys and girls were becoming adults and starting their own families. Over the last several centuries, we have seen the age of adulthood change, and it may continue to change as we know it now.

Paul Williams, a Vlogger and Bibliophile from Europe, further explains in one of his YouTube channel episodes titled, “Was Prophet Muhammad a pedophile?”, that 1400 years ago, it was very common for children to be promised to another for marriage pretty much at birth, therefore our mother ‘Aisha (RAA) getting married at age 6 was not unusual at all back then. He further points out that there is zero evidence that points to our mother ‘Aisha (RAA) and the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) not waiting until she reached puberty and had begun her cycles to consummate their marriage. In fact, it is said that she entered his home only after reaching this stage in her life. Since the age of puberty, age of adulthood and age of consent were all at the same time, consummating their marriage at that point, was considered fully appropriate and acceptable.

In addition to the question that comes up about our mother ‘Aisha’s (RAA) age when she and the Prophet (ﷺ) Married, some people, typically non muslims, will say that being 53 years old and marrying a 6 six year old is pedophilism. In more recent years, this has become a quick shot used to portray the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) poorly and continue the spread of Islamophobia.

We must remember that we cannot apply our

standards, customs and laws to a society that had their own standards, customs and laws back then. This simply is not fair to do so. As Sh. Omar Suleiman points out in his lecture titled, “Ending The Debate on ‘Aisha’s Age”, our mother Aisha’s (RAA) age was never of any concern or issue for anyone until the 21st century, simply because this was the norm of the time of their marriage.

Now knowing that our mother ‘Aisha (RAA) was considered old enough to marry, why would she and the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) marry since he was so much older than she was? Well, I learned that this too, was customary of those times as it still is in many societies today. It was extremely common for a man to have a much younger wife, and as many Christians believe, Paul Williams shared that the Catholic Encyclopedia states that Mary, mother of Jesus was 12-14 years of age while her husband, that Catholics refer to as Saint Joseph, was 90 years of age. Condemning the marriage of the Prophet (ﷺ) and our mother ‘Aisha (RAA) just doesn’t make any sense once we look back in history and at the customs of that time.

Once I had learned enough to wrap my own head around what certainly was a beautiful marriage (that wouldn’t present in this exact fashion in today’s society in terms of age), and after sharing with my family members what I had learned, I kept thinking about how Sh. Omar Suleiman mentioned in his lecture that he knew a woman that was extremely dismayed about the age of our mother ‘Aisha (RAA) at the time of her marriage but later went on to become very fond of ‘Aisha (RAA) and as a result of her learning accepted Islam, ma sha Allah! I, myself, came to realize that I had been personally invited by Allah (ﷻ) through my non muslim family members to discover an amazing woman who Allah (ﷻ) named as our mother.

Surely the Prophet has a greater claim over the believers than they have over each other, and his wives are their mothers. (33:6)

I decided to go back and learn more about our mother ‘Aisha (RAA), and this time I was able to focus on who she was as a person, a woman, a wife, a mother, a scholar and most importantly, a Muslim who apparently set an amazingly beautiful example for us all to look to, ma sha Allah.

Among other qualities, I learned from Sh. Omar Suleiman’s lecture about our mother ‘Aisha’s (RAA) willingness to speak up and stand up for what was right, her great love and admiration for her husband, the Prophet Muhammad, (ﷺ) how she gave up almost everything she ever had in charity, how many orphaned children were found in her home under her care, how she narrated over 2,000 hadith about the Prophet (ﷺ) and memorized the Qur’an in its

Continues on next page



Discovering Our Mother 'Aisha' (continued)

entirety, how she became a scholar in medicine by learning how to care for her husband when he was ill, how she was active and loved to foot race with her husband, how amazingly she emulated the Prophet (ﷺ) in her prayers, how she was considered the most knowledgeable of all the men and women of her time and how she is one of the greatest scholars of all time. She was confident, strong, almost genius in her ability to acquire and share knowledge, and she was steadfast in her faith and devotion to Allah (ﷻ). she spoke about how loving her husband was to her and how gentle he was to everyone and everything. As Sh. Suleiman said, "Through 'Aisha, we know The Prophet (ﷺ). Through 'Aisha, we know our religion."

My sharing here of our mother 'Aisha (RAA) certainly doesn't do justice to her contribution to Islam and the influence Allah (ﷻ) granted her to have on each and every one of us every single day as Mus-

lims. May Allah (ﷻ) truly be pleased with her.

Those who know me also know that I find great joy in finding the silver lining in any struggle, and now as a Muslim, I, too, call this qadr. Our struggles and challenges are truly blessings in disguise. My family contentiously bringing their concern to me about the Prophet (ﷺ) marrying our mother 'Aisha (RAA) as a young girl shined the light for me to discover the truth about her, and in turn, I was able to share my discovery with them and grow in my understanding of our deen in the process. Alhamdulillah for our struggles that are actually our blessings. Alhamdulillah for everything.

I invite everyone to watch the lecture by Sh. Omar Suleiman about our mother 'Aisha (RAA) as he truly does an amazing job sharing about who she really was. Ma sha Allah.

Stephanie Turner

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Kids Corner

Death of a Friend

Ferdows Ahmed was one of our close friends who died last week on this day (Sunday June 29, 2003) at the age of 35. He recently got married and had one son. Even just a few days ago, he was playing with his little son in front of us. One day he approached us and said that someone asks him strange questions from the unseen. We wanted to know what type of questions he hear but he only mentioned one of them which is "Who is your God?" Soon after, he started offering his salah regularly and participated in various Islamic events. Then came the day when he is to breath his last. He came home from work at around 5 p.m. and told his family that he wasn't feeling good. He ate some food and went to the washroom. There he vomitted but made wudhu to perform salah. As he approached his bedroom, the angel of

death came and took his life. He fell on the ground lifeless. Everyone was in utter shock after hearing about his demise. No one knew that he would die at this early age. As we were washing his dead body, we realized how short this life could be. His doctor told him even few days before that he had no disease. However, death doesn't rely upon any disease or accident. It depends on the command of Allah. Anytime it could come and take our lives. My friends, take warning from this incident and prepare for death before it comes.

Please remember to pray for his forgiveness.

<https://islamcan.com/islamic-stories/death-of-a-friend.shtml>



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Can There Be Any Doubt About God? (continued)

“Do the disbelievers not realize that the heavens and earth were (once) one mass then We split them apart? And We created from water every living thing. Will they not then believe? And We have placed firm mountains upon the earth so it does not shake with them, and made in it broad pathways so they may find their way. And We have made the sky a well-protected canopy, still they turn away from its signs. And He is the One Who created the day and the night, the sun and the moon—each travelling in an orbit.” (al-Anbiya, 21:30-33)

In fact, our entire solar system orbits around the center of the Milky Way Galaxy.

For centuries, it was believed that the earth is fixed and does not rotate. It is said that Nicolaus Copernicus, the polish astronomer, revolutionized astronomy with his discovery that the earth moved around the sun. Copernicus takes the credit when credit in fact goes to Abu Rayhan Biruni (d. 973). Five hundred years before the birth Copernicus, Al-Biruni discussed the possibility of whether the earth rotated about its own axis and around the sun.

His contemporary, Abu Sa'id al-Sijzi, accepted that the Earth rotates around its axis. Al-Biruni described an astrolabe invented by Sijzi based on the idea that the earth rotates. Several works of Islamic astronomy were translated to Latin starting from the 12th century and thus had an influence on European as well as Chinese astronomy.

Regarding the expanding universe, the Qur'an informs, *“We built the universe with might, and We are certainly expanding (it).”* (Al-Zariyat, 51:47)

“And He shows you His signs. Now which of Allah's signs will you deny?” (Ghafir, 40:81)

Allah (SWT) declared, *“We shall show them Our signs in the horizons (regions of the earth and universe) and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that this (Qur'an) is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a Witness over all things?”* (Fussilat, 53:41)

If the disbelievers, agnostics and atheists do not see God in the horizons, the skies, and the universe, let them then look into themselves. *“So let man observe from what he was created.”* (al-Tariq, 86:5)

The Qur'an, over fourteen centuries ago, informed us of the precise stages of our creation in the wombs of our mothers. *“And indeed, We created man from an extract of clay, and then placed him as a drop of sperm (Nutfah) in a safe place (the womb), then developed the sperm-drop into a clinging substance ('Alaqah), then developed it into a chewed-like substance (Mudghah), then developed it into bones, then clothed the bones with flesh, and then We produced it as another creation. So blessed be Allah the best of creators.”* (al-Mu'minoon, 23:12-14)

These stages were revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) at a time when science was nonexistent. They were revealed to unlettered people.

Keith Moore (d. 2019) was a professor in the division of anatomy in the faculty of surgery, at the University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He was regarded as the father of embryology. Professor Moore was invited to Saudi Arabia to lecture on anatomy and embryology. He was asked to interpret the ayat and hadith about the human reproduction and the development of the embryo. Moore said that he was amazed at the scientific accuracy of some of the statements which were made in the 7th century AD. He said, “For the past three years, I have worked with the Embryology Committee of King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah,

Saudi Arabia, helping them interpret the many statements in the Qur'an and Sunnah referring to human reproduction and prenatal development. At first, I was astonished by the accuracy of the statements that were recorded in the 7th century AD, before the science of embryology was established.”¹

Moore was even more astounded at how the Qur'an described each of the early stages, for instance, the mudghah stage. Moore states, “By golly, it does, sorta,” agreeing and signaling to the knowledge we have about the structure and appearance of the actual embryo, which actually comes into a stage where it resembles the size of a small thing which can be chewed by teeth.”²

Keith Moore had to admit that the knowledge we have regarding the stages of the embryonic development had to have come from God.

The following ayah regarding the three veils of darkness of the embryo in surat al-Zummar further confirms that the Qur'an is indeed the revealed word of God. *“He makes you in the wombs of your mothers in stages, one after another, in three veils of darkness.”* (al-Zummar, 38:6) The scientific terms concerning the three veils of darkness may be referred to as the anterior abdominal wall, the uterine wall and the amnio-chorionic membrane.

It is common knowledge that the male is responsible for gender determination of the fetus. Remarkably, the Qur'an informed us of this fact over 1,400 years ago. *“Was he not a drop of ejaculated semen, and thereafter became a clinging form (alaqah), which God shaped in due proportion, then He made from him (the sperm of the male) the pair (the two sexes), the male and the female.”* (al-Qiyamah, 75:37-39)

This can be scientifically understood as; the man's sperm contains one X and one Y chromosome while the woman's egg (ovum) contain two X chromosomes. Therefore, if any of the woman's two X chromosomes from the egg unite with man's X-chromosome from the sperm cell, a female gender is the result. On the other hand, if the man's Y-chromosome from the sperm cell unite with any of woman's two X-chromosomes (from the egg) a male gender is the outcome. This is what is meant by, *“Then He made from him (the sperm of the male) the pair (the two sexes), the male and the female.”*

It does not take a rocket scientist to discover that God exists. A desert nomad was asked about the existence of God. He replied, “Camel droppings point to the existence of a camel. Footprints in the sand tell of a traveler. The heavens with its stars, the earth with its mountains and valleys and the sea with its waves, don't they point to the Maker, all-powerful, knowing, wise and caring?”

¹ <https://islam-papers.com/2012/03/16/moore/>

² <https://islam-papers.com/2013/06/12/moore/the-mudghah-stage/>



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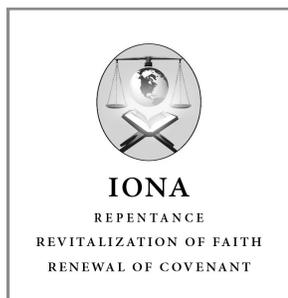
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IONA Masjid - Salah and Iqama Timings for February 2022

DATE	Fajr	Iqama	Sunrise	Zuhr	Iqama	Asr (S)*	Asr (H)*	Iqama	Maghrib	Azan	Isha	Iqama
Tue 1	6:12	6:45	7:46	12:41	1:00	3:24	4:04	4:15	5:50	5:55	7:13	7:45
Wed 2	6:11	6:45	7:45	12:41	1:00	3:25	4:05	4:30	5:51	5:56	7:14	7:45
Thu 3	6:10	6:45	7:44	12:42	1:00	3:26	4:07	4:30	5:52	5:57	7:15	7:45
Fri 4	6:09	6:45	7:43	12:42	1:00	3:27	4:08	4:30	5:53	5:58	7:16	7:45
Sat 5	6:08	6:45	7:42	12:42	1:00	3:28	4:09	4:30	5:55	6:00	7:17	7:45
Sun 6	6:07	6:45	7:41	12:43	2:00	3:29	4:10	4:30	5:56	6:01	7:18	7:45
Mon 7	6:06	6:45	7:39	12:43	1:00	3:30	4:12	4:30	5:57	6:02	7:20	7:45
Tue 8	6:05	6:45	7:38	12:44	1:00	3:31	4:13	4:30	5:59	6:04	7:21	7:45
Wed 9	6:04	6:45	7:37	12:44	1:00	3:32	4:14	4:30	6:00	6:05	7:22	7:45
Thu 10	6:03	6:45	7:36	12:45	1:00	3:33	4:15	4:30	6:01	6:06	7:23	7:45
Fri 11	6:01	6:45	7:34	12:45	1:00	3:34	4:17	4:30	6:03	6:08	7:24	7:45
Sat 12	6:00	6:45	7:33	12:45	1:00	3:35	4:18	4:30	6:04	6:09	7:25	7:45
Sun 13	5:59	6:45	7:32	12:46	2:00	3:36	4:19	4:30	6:05	6:10	7:26	7:45
Mon 14	5:58	6:45	7:30	12:46	1:00	3:37	4:20	4:45	6:07	6:12	7:27	7:45
Tue 15	5:56	6:45	7:29	12:46	1:00	3:38	4:21	4:45	6:08	6:13	7:28	7:45
Wed 16	5:55	6:45	7:28	12:47	1:00	3:39	4:23	4:45	6:09	6:14	7:29	7:45
Thu 17	5:54	6:45	7:26	12:47	1:00	3:40	4:24	4:45	6:10	6:15	7:31	7:45
Fri 18	5:52	6:45	7:25	12:48	1:00	3:41	4:25	4:45	6:12	6:17	7:32	7:45
Sat 19	5:51	6:45	7:23	12:48	1:00	3:42	4:26	4:45	6:13	6:18	7:33	7:45
Sun 20	5:49	6:45	7:22	12:48	2:00	3:43	4:27	4:45	6:14	6:19	7:34	7:45
Mon 21	5:48	6:30	7:20	12:48	1:00	3:44	4:28	4:45	6:15	6:20	7:35	8:00
Tue 22	5:47	6:30	7:19	12:49	1:00	3:45	4:30	4:45	6:17	6:22	7:36	8:00
Wed 23	5:45	6:30	7:17	12:49	1:00	3:46	4:31	4:45	6:18	6:23	7:37	8:00
Thu 24	5:44	6:30	7:16	12:49	1:00	3:47	4:32	4:45	6:19	6:24	7:38	8:00
Fri 25	5:42	6:30	7:14	12:49	1:00	3:48	4:33	4:45	6:20	6:25	7:39	8:00
Sat 26	5:41	6:30	7:13	12:50	1:00	3:48	4:34	4:45	6:22	6:27	7:40	8:00
Sun 27	5:39	6:30	7:11	12:50	2:00	3:49	4:35	5:00	6:23	6:28	7:41	8:00
Mon 28	5:38	6:30	7:09	12:50	1:00	3:50	4:36	5:00	6:24	6:29	7:42	8:00
Tue 1	5:36	6:15	7:08	12:50	1:00	3:51	4:37	5:00	6:25	6:30	7:43	8:00

* S = Shafi'i, H = Hanafi

Join us LIVE on YouTube for Friday Sermons at 12:10 PM and 1:30 PM



IONA's objective is to help the Muslims of North America understand and fulfill their divinely ordained obligations, in order to please Allah (SWT) and thereby achieve success and salvation in the Hereafter. The aim is to seek the forgiveness and mercy of Allah (SWT) in the hereafter.

On the basis of the best scholarly understandings of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* IONA has recognized that our divinely ordained obligations are as follows:

- (1) the cultivation of a strong and authentic faith;
- (2) the loving and sincere obedience to the will of Allah (SWT);
- (3) calling all of humankind towards Islam in the most beautiful and convincing way; and,
- (4) engaging in the struggle to establish social, political, and economic justice.