

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



IONA
REPENTANCE
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

IONA MASJID COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

March 2022 | Rajab - Shaban 1443

Volume 16, No 3

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

*"This is the book about which there is no doubt,
A guidance for those conscious of Allah."*

[Al-Baqarah, 2:2]

From the Tradition of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

*"Sha'ban is a month between Rajab and Ramadan which is neglected by many people.
It is a month in which actions are raised to the Lord of the Worlds and
I love for my actions to be raised while I am fasting."*

[Ahmad; Al-Nasai]

IONA'S 15th Annual Qur'an Conference

Unraveling the Signs (ayat) of Allah

March 18th | 7:00 PM

SEE PAGE 2

Ramadan Mubarak

The first day of Ramadan is on Tuesday, April 2nd

SEE PAGE 2

IONA Center

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

Masjid Budget

Umrah on March 19th

Join sh. Mustapha Elturk

March 19th to the 28th

SEE PAGE 2

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





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Ameer

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Ramadan Mubarak

The first day of Ramadan is on Tuesday, April 2nd, 2022 (in sha-Allah)
according to the Fiqh council of North America

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IONA's 15th Annual Qur'an Conference

*Unraveling the Signs
(ayat) of Allah*

**Friday, March 18th
7:00 PM**

Speakers:

**Imam Dawud Walid, Dr. Ramzi Mohammed
and Imam Mustapha Elturk**

Allah (SWT) confirmed, "We shall show them Our signs (ayat) in every region of the earth (horizons) and in themselves, until it becomes clear to them that this (Qur'an) is the Truth." (41:53) Many scientific facts regarding the universe, nature, and humans were mentioned in the Qur'an centuries before the advent of science. Exploring the Signs of Allah in the age of science confirms its harmony with the Qur'an, the last scripture and book of guidance to all humankind. Join us as our esteemed speakers dive into the ayat that are most relevant to our time in order to gain confidence in and reverence to our Creator God, Allah almighty, the Omnipotent.

March 2022

Rajab - Shaban 1443

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
		28	29	30	1st	2
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30	31		
24	25	26	27	28		

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Water is LIFE



“It is He (Allah) who sends down water FOR YOU from the sky, from which comes a drink for you, and the shrubs that you feed to your animals.” (al-Nahl, 16:10)

Water is essential to all living things. Water is a blessing, a provision from God and a social good.

Water is a precious gift from God, the Qur'an asserts, “Verily ... the rain that Allah sends down from heavens gives life to the earth after its death...” (2:164).

Deprivation of water threatens the very life of people. It is a basic and fundamental human right.

The two most indispensable things for survival are air and water. These two elements are essential to the health of all humans and living things. Water is the essence of life, “We made out of water every living thing.” (al-Anbiya, 21:30)

Protecting our environment for clean air is just as important as having access to clean water. The trees absorb the carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide we breathe out among other gasses from the air and release oxygen. One large tree can deliver a day's supply of oxygen for four people. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, “If the Hour (the day of resurrection) is about to be established and one of you was holding a palm shoot, let him take advantage of even one second before the Hour is established to plant it.”

Consider this, had it not been for water that saved Hagar and Ismail's lives, an entire race of nearly two billion people today would not have existed. The same well of Zamzam that saved the lives of Hagar and Ismail provides drink to millions of people from all walks of life and unite them under one humanity. Water is the source of life and water is what binds us all.

Not only is Ismail (AS), the son of Prophet Abraham (AS), linked to water, other prophets are connected to water as well. Musa (AS), saw springs gush forth when he was instructed to strike the rock with his staff,

“And [mention, O prophet!] When Moses

prayed for water for his people and We replied, ‘Strike the rock with your staff!’ whereupon twelve springs gushed forth from it, and each tribe (of the 12 tribes of Jacob) knew its drinking place. ‘Eat and drink from God’s provision and do not cause corruption in the land.’” (al-Baqarah, 2:60)

Water is indispensable. It is of the fundamental human rights. The Prophet (SAW) informed, “There are no rights that the son of Adam is more entitled to than these four rights; a house to dwell in, a garment to cover his nakedness, a piece of bread, and water.”

Allah (SWT) says, “Have you seen the water which you drink? Was it you who sent it down from the rain cloud, or did We send it? Were it Our will, We could have made it bitter; why then do you not give thanks?” (al-Waqi'ah, 56:68)

One way to show gratitude to the Provider of this great blessing is to share it with all living beings and things.

We as a nation are deeply lacking in compassion and empathy. Let us be reminded of the prostitute who was forgiven for her compassion. The Prophet (SAW) reported, “Forgiveness is granted to a prostitute who passed by a dog panting near a well. Thirst had nearly killed him, so she took off her leather sock, tied it to her veil, and drew up some water. God forgave her for that.”

A simple act of compassion caused all her sins to be forgiven. What has become of people? We have become desensitized and numb. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, “The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.”

We, people of all walks of life and faith traditions, Muslims, Christians, Jews and other people of faith, and of no faith, black and white, rich and poor, are one community. When a member of the community is afflicted with hardship and suffering, we must feel their pain. people of conscience must stand in solidarity and fight

“We made out of water every living thing.”

(al-Anbiya, 21:30)



Continues on page 6



Repentance

Revitalization of Faith

Renewal of Covenant

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I Choose to be Visibly Muslim so I Can be known as Being Muslim

I choose to be visibly Muslim because Allah (S) asked me to. And, there is no greater honor than being asked to represent Islam by our creator Himself. I could technically end this post here. But, let me explain.

There are obviously many ways a person can be visibly Muslim, even if they do not wear hijab. However, there is no denying that hijab is the most obvious indicator that someone is a Muslim, and so my post is centered around choosing to wear hijab in today's world. When Allah (S) ordained hijab for Muslim women, He said,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْرِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ حُلَاهُنَّ بِهِنَّ
ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

“O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to lower over themselves a portion of their jilbabs. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be harmed. And ever is Allāh Forgiving and Merciful.” (al Ahzāb, 33:59)

When I first started wearing hijab (at 13 or 14 years old), we were taught that women must wear hijab to guard their modesty and beauty. It wasn't until I was in my 20's that I truly learned why Allah (S) asked us to wear hijab – and it made a tremendous difference in my relationship with hijab, and my faith in general.

Yes, modesty is a part of faith. But that is *not* the only reason Allah (S) prescribed hijab. To quote Anse Tamara Gray in her Lean In – Our Feminist Manifesto (which you really must read, by the way!): “There are pat-explanations that people like to throw around about ‘why’ women wear hijab in Islam. They are mostly irritating stories about diamonds and pearls and oranges – equating women to objects of decoration or pieces of fruit. But if we peel back the human interpretation we find that Allah (S) Himself has laid plain the reasoning for hijab. That we may be known. Like a sports team – We recognize each other. Like an ethnic background – we feel comfortable with each other. Like a flag held high in the field of battle – we bravely go out each day – in every country of the world – and represent our Prophet – our religion. We represent our men, who too often blend into the background, and we represent our hurting women who need our activism. We represent any woman of faith unsure how to outwardly express her conviction. We wear the scarf that we may be known.”

Allah (S) wants me to wear the hijab so that I may be known and recognized as a Muslim woman. That's why I choose to be visibly Muslim. I exist to serve Allah (S) and worship Him, and a part of worshipping Him is following His commands.

Wearing hijab strengthens my convictions and is a constant companion, reminding me of Allah (S) and what pleases Him – like standing up for injustice and being a flagbearer for the oppressed. It reminds me to be kind, to be gracious, and to be merciful towards others. It helps me be more empathetic. It reminds me that I cannot be a good servant of Him if I do wrong to unto others or to our planet.

It reminds me of my priorities. It makes me feel strong and makes me stand up taller knowing that if I have been specifically tasked by Allah (S) with the responsibility of being visible, then I am worthy of it. And, that is the most powerful, impenetrable thing a woman can be granted: confidence in her strength and in her self-worth – regardless of what men or greater society thinks, regardless of insane beauty standards. It teaches me that if my strength and self-worth is derived from anything or anyone other than Allah (S), it will be lacking.

I wasn't asked to tone down my strength or my personality – I was gifted specific talents by Allah (S) himself and

tasked with using them to represent Him and put forth His message of justice (adl) and excellence (ihsaan) into the world.

I've grown to *love* being visibly Muslim – and I recognize that this is partly because of my personality and environment, and that isn't the case for every woman. It can absolutely be exhausting to feel like you have to represent an entire [extremely diverse] religion, especially in our post 9/11 post-Trump world where bigotry runs rampant. It can certainly be unsafe in some areas (in which case if you actually fear for your life, you are expected to prioritize safety!).

There were times where I did not feel as confident or comfortable in my hijab or being visibly Muslim. When I first started wearing hijab the summer before ninth grade, as mentioned earlier, I didn't entirely understand why I had to wear it, and I didn't necessarily have a lot of pride in my identity. I postponed wearing it as long as I was able to before puberty, because I didn't want to quit playing softball in my town – something I felt I couldn't do confidently with my hijab on. I didn't like going alone into the grocery store wearing my hijab.

A part of that is also because I wore hijab in a newly post 9/11 world about three-to-four years after it happened. The stares were hard to ignore and hard to endure. The comments, even harder. Suffice it to say, I definitely didn't love being visibly Muslim at first.

So what changed? It wasn't necessarily my understanding of hijab, which I mention wasn't solidified until I was in my 20's. It was more my understanding of Allah (S) and His attributes. In the years following my decision to put on hijab, I attended many halaqas and lectures at my masjid that centered around learning more about Allah (S). The more I learned about my Lord, the more I trusted in His wisdom (which feels like it should just be a given, but it's not). And so, wearing it out of obligation became wearing it out of trust, and eventually, out of love and understanding and even pride. By the time I was in my senior year of high school, I couldn't have been prouder to be a visible and vocal Muslim woman.

Over the years, I've learned to love hijab not just for its beauty and virtues, but also for its struggle. In the hard moments, I remind myself of the reason I'm here on this Earth: to worship Allah (S) and get closer to Him, and that I'm only here in passing. This alone makes a tremendous difference in my faith – remembering that we're only here for a short time, like visitors passing through. Perspective is needed sometimes, and is very sobering. It helps me shift mindsets and reprioritize. Every moment that I struggle to wear hijab, and still choose to, I know that Allah (S) prepares something greater for me than what I lost.

I don't fear being labeled, because I'm going to be labeled anyway – and if I'm going to be labeled, I'd rather be associated with Allah (S).

For anyone who is struggling with wearing hijab or being visibly Muslim, know that it is a struggle – especially living in a non-Muslim country – and it is also a journey. It's not like you wake up one day and everything is great. This is a struggle that every woman who wears it endures, but Allah (S) is always there to lean on, when it is easy and when it is hard. Lean on Him. Trust in Him. My advice to you? Get to know Allah (S). Truly get to know Him. Learn about his attributes. And, speak to Him. Ask Him for help and ease. He will not turn you away.

I end with Anse Tamara's words (again): “Women – lean in to the responsibility. Wear it, and stand proud. You are not an orange. You are not a diamond. You are a Muslim woman. Stand up and be known.”

Noor Suleiman

Article first appeared in Haute Hijab Blog



Funny story of three friends who came to New York City

Not long ago, three friends came to the New York city. They decided to stay in a hotel during the visit. It so happened that their room ended up being on the 60th floor. The policy of the hotel was that every night after 12:00 a.m. the elevators are shut down for security reasons. So on the next day, the three friends rented a car and went out to explore the city. They enjoyed movies, concerts, and other things throughout the whole day. At one point, they remembered that they have to get back to the hotel before 12 a.m. When they arrived, it was beyond 12 a.m. at night. The elevators were shut down. There was no other way to get back to their room but to take the stairs all the way to the 60th floor. All of a sudden, one friend got an idea. He said "For the first 20 floors, I will tell jokes to keep us going. Then another one of us could say wisdom stories for the next 20 floors. Then, we will cover the other 20 floors with sad stories." So, one of the friends started with the jokes. With laughs and joy, they reached the 20th floor. Now, another friend

started saying stories that are full of wisdom. So, they learned a lot while reaching the 40th floor. Now, it was time for the sad stories. So, the third friend started thus, "My first sad story is that I left the key for the room in the car."

Now, what is the point of this story? This story resembles our life cycle. For the first 20 years of our life, we spend time in joking and enjoying whatever is out there. Then, after we reach 20, we go into the work force, get married, have kids and this is the time when we use our wisdom. Then, if we reach 40, we finally see the white hairs and begin to think that my life is coming to an end.

It's better that we start our life in the very beginning by remembering death rather than preparing for it at the end our life when very few of us have the energy to obey Allah completely.

Courtesy of :
<https://islamcan.com/islamic-stories/funny-story-of-three-friends-who-came-to-the-new-york-city.shtml>



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for the rights of the weak and vulnerable, fight for their basic human right, the right to water.

Water is precious and valuable. The Prophet (SAW) was concerned about the environment and the wellbeing of all people. He preached conservation of water even when it is available in abundance. He insists, “Do not waste water even if you were at a running stream.” The Prophet (SAW) one day passed by Sa’d ibn Abi Waqas (RAA) while he was performing wudu’ (ablution). The prophet asked Sa’d, “Why is this wastage?” Sa’d replied “Is there wastage in wudu?” The Prophet said, “Yes, even if you were at a running stream.”

We use water to drink, cook with, and cleanse ourselves with. Allah (SWT) informs, “And He caused rain to descend on you from heavens to cleanse you...” (8:11)

Our body is mainly water. Supply your body with water, not Pepsi or Coke. Water on an empty stomach is healthy, it cools the liver. The Prophet (SAW) said, “The first thing will be said to the person (Allah’s servant) on the Day of Resurrection is, ‘Did I not give you a healthy body and cold water to drink?’”

Giving water to a thirsty person or an animal for that matter is a great charity. Sa’d Ibn Ubadah (RAA) asked the Prophet (SAW), “O Messenger of Allah! My mother died, shall I give charity on her behalf?” the Prophet said, “Yes.” Sa’d then asked, “Which charity is best.” The Prophet replied, “A drink of water.”

The Prophet (SAW) gave the good news of Paradise to those who provide water to thirsty people. He (SAW) said, “Any believer who gives drink to a thirsty believer, Allah will give him a drink from the ‘sealed nectar’ on the Day of Resurrection.”

All humans and living things should have the right and access to clean water wherever they may live. Sadly enough, clean water is lacking in the most privileged of places, right here at home in the US. More specifically, Detroit and the Flint Water Crisis.

Imagine making water accessible to all people, in Detroit, Flint, all cities around the world particularly in areas where water is non-existent. the Prophet (SAW) encouraged digging and building water wells.

The Prophet (SAW) said, “No thirsty soul, be it a jinn, human or bird, drinks from a well dug by anyone except that Allah will reward him on the Day of Judgment.”

Shutting off water to low-income families is not only disgraceful but a violation of human rights according to the United Nations. The United Nations Resolution 64/292 recognized the human right to water and sanitation and acknowledged that clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realization of all

human rights. The Resolution calls upon States and international organizations, “To provide financial resources, help capacity-building and technology transfer to help countries, in particular developing countries, to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all.”¹

Unfortunately, our government has neglected the plight of Flint, Michigan’s residents and their right to clean water. The government failed to intervene and allowed the infrastructure to crumble. This colossal failure has led to the Flint Water Crisis. The city has faced a major public health emergency due to lead poisoning in the water supply that affected thousands of residents.

The voices of the vulnerable residents who are struggling for access to drinking water, water to bathe in and flush toilets with, are ignored.

We must put pressure on state and city governments to put an end to water shutoffs, develop and enforce a water affordability plan and make clean water accessible to all people.

The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, “Allah. The Exalted and Glorious, will say on the day of Resurrection, ‘...O son of Adam, I asked you for something to drink but you didn’t give it to me.’ He will say, ‘O Lord, how can I give You something to drink when you are the Lord of the Worlds?’ He will say, ‘My servant so and so asked you to give him something to drink and you didn’t give it to him. Had you given it to him, you would have surely found that with Me.’” [Muslim]

Water is sacred, Water is Life, Water is a human right.

May God almighty alleviate the suffering of those who are deprived of water, restore water back to those whose water is shutoff, and help us be a voice for the weak and vulnerable, ameen.

1 http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml



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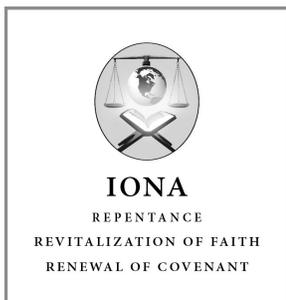
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DATE	Fajr	Iqama	Sunrise	Zuhr	Iqama	Asr (S)*	Asr (H)*	Iqama	Maghrib	Azan	Isha	Iqama
Tue 1	5:36	6:15	7:08	12:50	1:00	3:51	4:37	5:00	6:25	6:30	7:43	8:00
Wed 2	5:34	6:15	7:06	12:49	1:00	3:52	4:38	5:00	6:27	6:32	7:44	8:00
Thu 3	5:33	6:15	7:04	12:49	1:00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

* S = Shafi'i, H = Hanafi | ~ Daylight Savings Time

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.