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Strengthening Our Deen

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE ISLAMIC CENTER OF FORT COLLINS

Never take some one for granted, hold every person close to your Heart because you might wake up one day and realize that you have lost a diamond while you were too busy collecting stones.

The New Muslim Phenomenon

We, in Fort Collins, are fortunate enough to see many new reverts to Islam. Unfortunately, there is a disturbing trend - - many of the new reverts are turning their backs on Islam in order to return to their previous beliefs. Just as disturbing is the trend of reverts leaving the Muslim community of Fort Collins in order to study Islam on their own.

What is causing these disturbing trends? Why are new Muslims leaving Islam, or at least leaving the community of Fort Collins?

Some among the community would say the answer is simple - - we, in Fort Collins, are harsh and close-minded towards reverts to Islam. I do not feel this is the answer. I feel the answer is much more complex.

It is my belief that the Muslims of Fort Collins try to help new reverts. We try to give them tools, advice, and knowledge. The problem is not necessarily the people of our community, but instead the tools and methods we implement in order to help new Muslims.

Many times, people of our community are so eager to help new

reverts that we come off too strongly. The tendency is to keep a careful eye on new Muslims for a few months, then, when we feel they have adjusted, we leave them to their own devices. Also, we tend to feel responsible for new reverts so we give them advice and pour all of our knowledge onto them.

The problem with all of our eagerness is that new Muslims feel overwhelmed with information and then suddenly abandoned. Of course it is not our intention to make new reverts feel this way - - many times we do not even realize these are the feelings of new Muslims.

In order to solve our dilemma with new Muslims, we must better understand what new reverts need, as well as the best ways to effectively help them.

1. Avoid passing judgment: None of us are perfect so we should not judge others - - especially new Muslims who have led entirely different lives until they accepted Islam.

2. Try to understand new Muslims rather than try to change them: We can learn from everybody

so we should not try to shape others to be like ourselves. In order to bring about change, we must listen to the ideas of others - - including those who were not raised as Muslims.

3. Avoid constantly telling new Muslims what is haram or halal: It can become very discouraging for new Muslims to always hear what is not allowed to them. It can be especially frustrating for reverts to hear about all of the things they are doing incorrectly. Remember that it is better to encourage rather than discourage.

4. Lead by example rather than explain the rules: For new Muslims, it is frustrating to be told how to behave while watching other Muslims behave differently. Reverts lose motivation to live by the way of the Prophet (SAW) because they see Muslims acting differently from how they say people should act. If we are going to teach new Muslims the proper way to live, then we must first implement these ideas into our own lives. *"Do you enjoin right conduct on the people, and forget (To practice it) yourselves, and yet ye study the Scripture? Will ye not understand?" (2.44)*

5. Provide a support system for new

Muslims: It is not acceptable for us to decide that new Muslims no longer need our help after a few months. We must understand that being Muslim is a lifestyle, not merely a religion. Check in on new Muslims, invite them to events, and visit them frequently. Try to become friends with new Muslims instead of merely acting as their guardian who must teach them everything as soon as possible. If we, the Muslims, do not provide support and companionship, how can we expect new Muslims to survive and see the value within Islam? *"Then will he be of those who believe, and enjoin patience, (constancy, and self-restraint), and enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion" (90.17).*

This article is not meant to be a lecture or condemnation of the Muslims here in Fort Collins. Instead it is meant to open our eyes to the dilemma with new Muslims, as well as provide ways to fix our problem.

It is always wonderful to see new Muslims, but it takes commitment on our part in order to help new Muslims stay with Islam. Jazak Alah Khair for your time and inshallah you will be able to contribute to keeping new Muslims active and a part of our community.



IQAMA TIMES: MAY

Week of:	Fair	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
May 2	5:00	1:15	5:10	8:20	9:50
May 9	4:50	1:15	5:10	8:30	10:00
May 16	4:40	1:15	5:10	8:30	10:10
May 23	4:30	1:15	5:10	8:40	10:10
May 30	4:20	1:15	5:10	8:40	10:20

**Juma'ah prayers are fixed at 12:10pm*



Certainly there are times when a judgment is necessary and appropriate. Your judgment at such times can be much more powerful and effective when you haven't wasted it on things that don't matter.

SEEK THE PRAISE OF ALLAH!

HELP FEED THE FASTING THIS RAMADAN AT THE IFTAR FUNDRAISER.

Who? : Anybody interested in volunteering for this year's Iftar fundraiser is welcome

What? : A meeting to organize the volunteers for the fundraiser

When? : Informational meeting on Sunday, 18 May 2010

Where? : Aggie Village at 1:00pm

Why? : Meet all of the other volunteers, as well as assign tasks for the fundraiser

The Life of Idris (Enoch)

Prophet Sheth (Seth) (RA) helped some people believe in Allah, but as time passed, they began to worship the statue of their prophet. They became polytheists, irreligious, and faithless. They adopted indecent ways of life.

In order to guide the people back to Islam, Allah sent the Prophet Idris (RA) for the reformation and guidance of those who had gone astray. The Holy Quran makes mention of him in the following verse: "*Commemorate Idris in the Book, verily he was a man of truth and a Prophet and We raised him to a lofty station*" (19:56).

Idris (RA) was born 100 years after the death of Adam (RA). He (RA) preached monotheism and directed his people to abandon their idol worship. He told them not to be captivated by the love of wealth and property. He advised his people to stop drinking wine and other intoxicants.

Unfortunately only a few people followed his teachings -- most opposed him bitterly.

Idris (RA) did not lose heart and continued preaching to the people. He is appreciated for his firm faith and

forbearance. "*All (Isma'il, Dhul-Kifl, and Idris) were men of constancy and patience. We admitted them into Our mercy, for they were of the righteous ones*" (21:85-86).

In spite of untiring efforts, Idris (RA) could not attain considerable success and felt disgusted with the indifferent attitude of the public. He was directed to migrate to Egypt and settle on the bank of the Nile.

He preached the religion of Allah among various tribes and admonished them to be good and civilized. Consequently, he brought about a remarkable change in the moral and social life of the people.

His lectures were full of admonition and good advice. Some of his sayings were:

- *Do not feel jealous of the prosperity of others.
- *He who has unlimited desires, is deprived of the wealth of contentment.
- *One should be sincere in acts of devotion.
- *It is an act of grave sin to take false oaths.
- *Patience is the key to victory.
- *He who controls his passions is fortunate. Only a good act will be a

living intercessor before Allah on the Day of Judgment.

*One who is desirous of attaining perfection in knowledge should have no concern with immoral acts.

Idris (RA) is thought to be a very learned prophet. He was the first man who learned to write. He was also the inventor of the science of astronomy and arithmetic. It is said that 30 portions of Allah's sacred scriptures were revealed to him.

The death of Idris (RA) was not that of a typical man. He (RA) was taken alive to the Heaven at the age of 365 years. Ibn Jarir relates in *Rauzatul Ahabab* that Idris (RA) was the special friend of one of the angels of heaven.

The angel took him up into the heaven, and when they arrived in the fourth heaven, they met the Angel of Death. The angel asked the Angel of Death how many years were left in Idris' (RA) life. T

he Angel of Death said: Where is Idris because I have been commanded to end his life. Idris (RA) then remained in the fourth heaven. He died in the wings of his angel friend who had taken him from Earth.

Upcoming Events

- *CSU graduation -14-15 May 2010
- *K-8 PSD No School -14 May 2010
- *Last day for all PSD schools (also ½ day for all schools) -27 May 2010

Dua'a

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا
الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ
وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

Our Lord! Forgive us our sins as well as those of our brethren who preceded us in faith and let not our hearts entertain any unworthy thoughts or feelings against [any of] those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness and Most Merciful.

Did you know?

Whoever reads one letter of the Quran gets 10 rewards. Also, the Quran will intercede for people who recited it on Judgment Day.

Hadith

On the authority of Sahih Bukhari:

Narrated Mujahid:

'Abdullah bin 'Umar said, "Allah's Apostle took hold of my shoulder and said, 'Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveler.' The sub-narrator added: Ibn 'Umar used to say, "If you survive till the evening, do not expect to be alive in the morning, and if you survive till the morning, do not expect to be alive in the evening, and take from your health for your sickness, and (take) from your life for your death."

Shall I not inform you of a better act than fasting, alms, and prayers? Making peace between one another: enmity and malice tear up heavenly records by the roots.

Muslim Hands

This month's featured charity is Muslim Hands - - United for the Needy. They are an international organization that works to help those affected by natural disasters, conflict, and poverty.

Muslim Hands believes that everyone - - no matter their race, color, or faith - - has the fundamental right to a life of dignity that is free of poverty or oppression. They believe that literacy, education, and job-skills training are fundamental to the development of needy communities and are the most effective tool for empowering the poor to break out of poverty.

If you are interested in donating to Muslim Hands, you may contact them at:

<http://www.muslimband.org>

or

(0) 115 911 7222

Mind, Body, & Spirit

Follow these health tips to help you survive spring and jump into your summer.

***Allergy relief** - - the natural way: honey and a nasal spray can alleviate allergies from pollen.

***Be sure to clean out your make-up:** Mascara and concealer expire; minimize your risk of eye infection and bacteria-induced breakout.

***Change your pillows:** After five years, 10% of your pillow's weight is made up of bacteria, pollen, fungi, mold, and dust mites.

***Dirt can be good:** Getting dirty exposes you to common bacteria that are good for you. They produce vitamins and proteins that make our immune and gastrointestinal systems work.

***Ease into becoming an early bird:** People who wake-up earlier are healthier than night owls. Waking up early can also reduce symptoms of depression.

***Flip-Flops are a no-no:** They increase your potential for injuries such as ankle sprains. Try wearing a more supportive sandal.

***Go garden:** Gardening burns 250-350 calories an hour.

***Have a walk during your lunch hour:** this will get you outside, as well as provide moderate exercise.

***Involve your kids in swimming lessons:** Drowning is the leading cause of accidents and death in kids. Swim instruction should not start until kids are at least four-years-old.



Kid's Corners

How to make a colorful kite

Ingredients:

- *Construction paper – 9" X 12" – white
- *Washable watercolors
- *Art tissue paper
- *Buttons
- *Easy-Stick glitter shapes

- *Broad-tip markers
- *Pipe stems or string
- *Glue sticks
- *Scissors
- *Hole Punch

Directions:

1. On the white construction paper, trace and cut-out a diamond shape.
2. Paint both sides of the kite with watercolors.
3. Once completely dry, use a marker to divide the kite into four sections on both sides.
4. Cut various shapes out of tissue paper.
5. Decorate the kite by gluing on the tissue paper shapes, buttons, and glitter shapes.
6. Cut long strips of tissue paper, each approximately ½" X 8". Glue the tissue paper strips to the base of the kite as kite tails.
7. Punch a hole at the top and display with a pipe stem or you can attach string and fly your kite.



A Recipe For: Mongolian Beef

Ingredients:

- *4 cups peanut oil
- *15 green onion tops
- *1 tbsp minced ginger
- *1 lb flank or sirloin steak
- *1 ½ tbsp flour
- *2 egg whites
- *1 pinch salt
- *1 tbsp cornstarch paste

Sauce Ingredients:

- *1 tsp chili paste with garlic
- *¼ cup chicken stock
- *2 tbsp dark soy sauce
- *1 pinch sugar

Directions:

1. Combine sauce ingredients in small bowl and stir thoroughly.
2. Cut tops of green onions into 2" long pieces. Cut steak into thin slices about ½" deep by 2" long
3. In bowl big enough to hold meat, combine egg whites, salt, & flour. Beat until frothy. Add steak and coat each slice.
4. In wok, heat oil to moderately hot. When ready, a piece of coated meat will rise to surface immediately. Drop in one slice at a time and cook until lightly brown. Drain on paper towels.
5. Remove all but 2 tbsp of oil from wok. With wok at medium heat, quickly stir-fry green onions and ginger for 20 seconds.
6. Add sauce and bring to boil on high heat while stirring. Add beef all at once and toss with sauce until beef is hot and coated. Push beef out of sauce, drizzle in cornstarch paste to lightly thicken.
7. Recombine. Serve immediately.

Serves 4



If you would like to contact "Strengthening Our Deen" with any questions, comments, or articles, please email strengtheningourdeen@yahoo.com or drop off your ideas in the suggestion box in the Masjid. If you would prefer a personal paper copy of the newsletter, please contact us.



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