

AL~FURQAN 1439/2018

Ramaḍān Mubārak

“Oh you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may attain piety (taqwa) [Qur’an Al-Baqarah 2:183]

The Islamic Center of Tallahassee (ICT) is a vibrant, multicultural community center that caters to the educational, devotional, and social needs of the Muslim communities of Tallahassee and its surrounding areas. Our mission is to serve with established religious guidelines, ethics, and excellence to inspire generations of Muslims with the values of Islam to build a community of solidarity with tranquility. As a demonstration of the inherent pluralism of our faith, Islamic Center of Tallahassee (ICT) endorses [the Amman Message](#) in full as well as [the Common Word initiative](#) to encourage cooperation between all faith communities.

Rendering of Phase I of the ICT 3617 Old Bainbridge Road, Tallahassee, FL 32303.



“Therein come down The Angels and the Spirit by Allah’s permission on every errand.” [Qur’an al-Qadr 97:] “By the Book that makes things clear. We sent it (Al Qur’an) down during a blessed night: for We (ever) wish to warn (against Evil). In that (night) is made distinct every affair of wisdom.” [ad-Dukhan 44: 2-5]. “O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: Eat and drink, but do not waste: verily, He does not love the wasteful!” (al- A’raf 7:31)

ISLAMIC CENTER OF TALLAHASSEE OFFICIALS

<p>SHU'RA (Board) Members Mohammad Ozair - Chairman Abdul Hatim - Property Management, ICT project Salah Bakhshwin - Committees Manager Abbas Abdallah - Funeral, Dawah Assistance Mumtaz Albibi – Finance/Treasurer Abdullah Alman – Administrator Aasim Arif- WEB, Facebook, Masajids' operations</p>	<p>EDITOR of the NEWSLETTER Mazhar M. Islam, Ph.D. Professor of Finance Florida A&M University Email:Mazhar.Islam@famuc.edu (work) Email:mmimomin@yahoo.com (private)</p>
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Understanding the Significance of Ramadhan

Mazhar Islam

“Ramadhan is the month in which was sent down The Qur’an, as a guide to mankind, also clear signs for guidance; and criterion between truth and falsehood...” (al-Baqarah 2:185)

Narrated Abu Huraira(ra): The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: "... whoever fasts during Ramadan out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allah's rewards, then all his past sins will be forgiven." (Imam Bukhari).

The significance of the month of Ramadhan rests upon the revelation of The Qur’an, Ramadan is a blessed month of the year not because of the fasting itself: **this is the month to strive hard for understanding from the Qur’an by searching deeply for the meanings behind each verse (ayah) we recite, so that we can reflect on our lives.** The Qur’an is known as the Book of *Al-Furqaan* in that it makes the distinction *bayna al-Haqq wa al-batil*, between **Truth and Falsehood**. That is why Islam is known as **Din al-Haqq**. For that purpose, the Qur’an in numerous verses urges believers to acquire Knowledge in order to identify between **Truth and Falsehood**.

Ramadhan is also a month for supplications (Du’aa) and for seeking repentance in the light of the Qur’an. Allah (SWT) always listen to our prayers and supplications: *“When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every Supplicant when he calls on Me. Let them also, with a will, listen to My call, and believe in Me, that they may walk In the right way.”* (al-Baqarah: 186).

Allah (SWT) taught us many supplications in The Qur’an: **al-Baqarah(2):127,201,250,286; al-Imran(3): 7,8,16,26,27,147,192,193; al-A’raf(7):23,126,155,156; Yunus(10):85,86; Hud(11):41; Ibrahim(14):41; al-Isra(17):24,80; al-Kahf(18):10; Ta Ha(20):25,26,27,28,114; al-Anbyya(21):83; al-Mu’minun(23): 97,118; al-Furqaan(25):65,66,74;al-Qasas(28):21,24;al-Dukhan(44):12;al-Qamar (54):10; al-Mumtahanha(60):4; at-Tahrim(66):8.** Some are quoted here: *“My Rabb! I take refuge with You – from the prompting of the Shaitan”* (al- Muminin 23:97). *“Our Rabb! We have done wrong to ourselves; and if you do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will surely be among the losers.”* (al-Araf 7:23).

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‘Our Rabb! Give us whatever is good in this world and whatever is good in the hereafter, and save us from the hell fire.’ (al Baqarah 2:201). *‘Our Rabb! Protect me and my parents and the Believers – on the day when the reckoning is set up.’* [Ibrahim 14:41. *‘Our Rabb! Do not cause our hearts to deviate after You have guided us; and grant us mercy from Your Presence, Truly You, only You are the most Merciful.’* al-Imran 3:8.

‘Our Rabb! Condemn us not if we forget, or fall into error; our Rabb! And do not lay upon us a burden as You did lay on those before us; our Rabb! And do not impose upon us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins; and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Protector; help us over the unbelieving people.’ (al-Baqarah 2:286).

The Prophet (pbuh) said: ‘‘Ramadan has come to you. It is a month of blessing, in which Allah covers you with blessing, for He sends down Mercy, decreases sins and answers prayers. In it, Allah looks at your competition (in good deeds), and boasts about you to His angels. So show Allah goodness from yourselves, for the unfortunate one is he who is deprived in (this month) of the mercy of Allah, the Mighty, the Exalted.’ (ImamTabarani).

The Qur’an in the Light of Al-QUR’AN

‘‘If the mankind and the jinn were together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another’’ (al-Israa1 7:88) *‘‘This is the Book; in it guidance sure, without doubt, to those who are Muttaqin’’* (al-Baqarah 2:2).

The Holy Quran is the last (final) Sacred Book of Allah (SWT) that He revealed through ‘‘wahy’’ (inspirations, verbal communication), to the last prophet Muhammad (pbuh) over 23 years of his prophet mission. Muslims assert that The Qur’an is a revelation for all persons irrespective of time and places, the greatest blessings for mankind; and it is not difficult to summon Qur’anic verses to support this claim. It is the fulfilment of Allah’s promise to Adam and his generations as Allah (SWT) Says in surah al-Baqarah 2:38: *‘‘... there comes to you guidance from Me, whomsoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.’’*

The Qur’an is defined by Allah (SWT) by different names: **Al-Furqaan (the Criterion):** *‘‘Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion to His servant, that It may be an admonition to all creatures’’* (al-Furqaan 25:1); **Ummul-Kitaab (Mother of the Book)** in Ar-Rad 13:39; **Al-Qur’an al-Majid (Glorious Qur’an) in** al -Buruj 85:21); **Lawhim-Mahfuuz (Tablet Preserved)** in al -Buruj 85:22; **al-Qur’an al-Karim (most honorable):** *‘‘That this is indeed a Qur’an most honorable’’* in al-Waqi’ah 56:77; **Kitababun -Fussilat and Ara-byya:** *‘‘A Book where the verses are explained in detail, a Qur’an in Arabic, for people who understand.’’* In Fussilat 41:3; **Qur’anaan Ara-biyya:** *‘‘We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’an, in order that you may learn wisdom’’* (Yusuf 12:2). *‘‘We have made a Qur’an in Arabic, that you may be able to understand.’’* (al- Zukruf 43:3); and **al-Huda (the Guide)** in al-Baqarah 2:185.

The Qur’an also defines itself **Kitaa-bim-Mubin (a Clear Record)** (An’am 6:59, Yunus 10:61, Hud 11:6k Yusuf 12:1 & al_Zukhruf 43:2). Allah (SWT) Says in surah Yunus 10:61: *‘‘In whatever business*

thou may be, and whatever portion thou may be reciting from the Qur'an, and whatever deed you may be doing, We are witnesses thereof when you are deeply engrossed therein. Nor is hidden from the Rabb the weight of an atom on the earth or in heaven. And not the smallest and not the greatest of these things but are recorded in a clear record".

The Qur'an is the Central Theophany (a *direct communication of God to human being*) of Islam and the fundamental source of *all Knowledge* - from metaphysics, angelology, cosmology, law, and ethics, arts, science to socio-economic and political structures. It also contains parables from previous nations of the Prophets to learn from them (*historical narrations*) as well as verses that inculcate spiritual cure. As we come more closer and closer to it, we come to an unlimited treasures of knowledge and wisdom to Guide us to a straight path through divine light to purify our souls, leading us success in this world and the hereafter. **The Qur'anic literature** is so vast that no single person in his/her life time can fully comprehend the entire Book. It consists of 114 chapters; 6,236 verses; 77,437 words; and 323,671 letters. There is no Book in the world in whose service so much talent, so much labor, so much time and resources have been spent other than the Qur'an.

The Qur'an should be the constant companion of our daily life. It is the only "way" to come closer to our Creator, Allah (SWT). It tells us of His infinite blessings, greatness, attributes, how He governs the cosmic worlds, how He relates Himself to us, how should we relate to Him and to our fellow beings and to every other creations. Indeed, no treasure is more valuable and precious for us than the Qur'an as Allah (SWT) Says: *"O mankind! There has come to you an admonition (direction), healing for what is in the hearts, and a guidance and a mercy for believers. Say: In the bounty of Allah, and His Mercy – in that let them rejoice:" That is better than the (wealth) they amass (hoard)."* (Yunus 10:57-58). This act of Divine Mercy should inspire us to ever greater heights of gratitude. The Prophet (pbuh) said: *"The best among you are those who learn Qur'an and teach It"* (Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim).

Living by the way to The Qur'an

The purpose of the Qur'an is to guide us, to change ourselves by complete submission to Allah (SWT). As we recite it, we also should live by what it asks us to do. It can make us into an entirely **new "being"** - transforms our **whole person- internally and externally**. If it does not have any impact on our behavior and deeds, if we do not act what it enjoins and what it forbids; then we are not getting its true lessons. What a tragic misfortunate it would be if we read the Qur'an and leave empty – soul untouched, heart unmoved, and life unchanged. As Allah (SWT) says: *"Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, you would certainly have seen it humbled, split asunder out of fear of Allah. We set forth these parables to men so that they reflect."*(al-Hashr 59: 21).

RECITATION (Tilwah)

Other Qur'anic meaning is the "Recitation", as Allah (SWT) Says: *"Those whom We have given the Book, they recite it as it ought to be recited; it is only they who benefit in it."* (al-Baqarah 2:121). We must thus make ourselves more deeply aware of what the Quran means to **"recitation"**. The Qur'an has to be recited not only with tongue and voice, but with the best light that our intellect can supply, with the purest light which our heart and conscious can provide us. How much greater is the joy and sense of wonder and miracle when the Qur'an opens our spiritual eyes! We should recite it as it deserves to be recited. It is

not an impossible task. Otherwise, the Quran could not have been meant for human being; nor could it be the Mercy and the Guidance as Allah (SWT) has promised in it: **“And We have indeed made the Qur’an easy to understand and remember, then is there any that will receive admonition?”** (al-Qamar 54: 17,22,32,40)

Precondition - Presence of HEART

Recitation is an act in which our souls, hearts, minds, tongues, and bodies should participate. The Qur’an was first sent down to the **“Heart” (ruh)** of the Prophet (pbuh). We will therefore reap its full joys only when we are able to involve our inner self (**heart**) in our recitation. Allah (SWT) says: **“And when they hear what has been sent down to the messenger, you see their eyes overflow with tears because of what they recognize of Truth. They cry, our Lord! We believe; you do write us down among the witnesses (to the Truth).** (al-Maidah 5:86).

We should ensure that so long as we are with Qur’an, our hearts remain with us, not merely a piece of flesh, but the center of all our attention, remembrance, emotions, aspirations and activities – our whole *“inner person.”* Only and only then we will have the capability to receive the greatest gift of Allah (SWT) and respond with humble devotion. The Prophet (pbuh) said: *“There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart.”* (Bukhari, Vol. 1, Book 2, No 49).

How to Approach The Qur’an

The Qur’an should be approached with the following conditions/steps to get the Knowledge, Wisdom, and the Guidance for which it was revealed.

- i. **Purify oneself:** *Our body, dress and the place should be clean. We need purity in our intention. The purer we are, the more our heart will remain with us, the more it will open itself to the Qur’an.*
- ii. **Firm Faith and Conviction:** *One should approach the Qur’an with an open mind without having any prejudices, with a deep faith and conviction, with humility, with a sense of utter dependence and devotion upon Allah (SWT).*
- iii. **Seek Refuge with Allah (SWT):** *Shaiten (Iblis) makes barriers between our souls and the word of Allah and tempts us away from obeying the Qur’an. Allah (SWT) says: **“When you recite the Qur’an seek refuge with Allah from Shaiten, the rejected one. Surely, he has no power over those who believe and put their trust in Allah.”** (al-Nahl16:98).*
- iv. **Presence of Allah:** *We are in the very presence of Him who has sent down this Kitaab. **“..He is with you wherever you are.”**(al-Hadid 57:4) . **“We are nearer to him than his jugular vein.”** (Qaf 50:16) **“Remember Me and I will remember you.”**(al-Baqarah 2:152) **“Whatever portion you may be reciting from the Qur’an, and whatever deed you may be doing, We are witnesses therefore when you are deeply engrossed therein.”***

(Yunus 10:61)

- v. **Direct addressee of the Qur'an (Theophany):** *Allow ourselves to receive the Qur'an as if it is talking directly to us, penetrating our hearts and our intellects. "Read, study, and digest the Holy Book. Read slowly, and let it sink into your heart and soul. Such study will, like virtue, be its own reward" (Abdullah Yusuf Ali: **The meaning of the Holy Qur'an**).*
- vi. **Willingness to change attitude and behavior:** *We should have the determination and willingness to change our attitudes and behavior - inwardly and outwardly – in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an. Otherwise, mere intellectual exercises will never bring us near to the treasures of It.*
- vii. **Understand and reflect on every verse of the Qur'an.** *We should try our utmost to apply it to our daily life. It is narrated that companions like **Uthman**(ra) and Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, once they learnt ten verses from the Prophet, didn't move further unless they have learnt it fully, both in understanding and in actions. That is how they and other companions of the Prophet (pbuh) sometimes spent years in learning only one surah. It is thus recommended to the beginners to read only short but authentic commentaries (tafsir).*
- viii. **Ponder and think deeply over the various parts what we read.** *It is vital that we should understand what Allah (SWT) is conveying to us, and reflect over it as much as we can. This requires reciting a particular verse or section slowly or even repeatedly. The more we think and reflect, we will have a better understanding of its meaning. If we recite Qur'an without understanding, we may get some reward because of our sense of devotion and desire to read the Book. But this would not, in the least, fulfil the purpose for which it has been revealed. The Qur'an is a full of exhortations asking (emphatically urging) us as to **why we "hear not", "see not", "think not", "use not reason", "ponder not"**. As Allah SWT says: **"Who do not turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the signs of their Lord, when they are reminded of them."** (al-Furqan 25:73) **"Will they not, then ponder over the Qur'an? Or are there locks on their hearts."** (Muhammad 47:24).*
- ix. **Accept the truth, Knowledge and guidance:** *There must be a total surrender to The Qur'an. We should accept without any doubts every verse, the knowledge, wisdom, and the guidance Quran conveys to us. It demands us to reflect and ponder what it contains. If we can't fully understand or comprehend any verse, we should ask the authentic scholar(s) for further clarifications/explanations. Our own opinions, notions, whims and caprices should not in any way override the Qur'anic verses. As Allah (SWT) warns: **"He it is Who bestowed upon you from on high this Divine writ, containing messages clear in and of themselves (ayat muhkamat) – and these are the foundations of the Divine writ – as well as others that are allegorical (mutashabihat). Now those hearts are given too swerving from the truth go after that part of it which has been expressed in allegory, seeking out confusion, and seeking its final meaning, but no one knows its meaning except Allah..."** (al-Imarn 3:7).*

- x. **Constant Praise & Gratitude:** *We should Constantly praise with gratitude to Allah (SWT) for having us blessed with His greatest gift, Al Quran, and having guided us to Its Mercy. The more we are grateful, the more Allah (SWT) will guide us from the Quran: **".. All praise belongs to Allah who has guided us to this. Had Allah not guided us, we would never have found guidance."** (Al-A'raf 7: 43). **"Our Lord, do not let our hearts deviate after you have guided us. Bestow upon us Your mercy, Surely You alone are the Bestower."** (al-Imran 3:8)*

Thus It is in this spirit we should approach The QUR'AN

We ask ALLAH (SWT), Glorified & Exalted be He, as He commands in **surah al-Ta Ha 114**, ***"My Rabb, advance me in knowledge."*** (AMEEN)

Note: *I have extensively consulted authentic scholarly sources to write the above pieces of article for the benefit of the community. Please contact me if you notice any errors. I am in the learning process. May Allah(SWT) forgive me for any unintentional mistakes.*

Why do we need an Islamic Center

Mazhar Islam

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah’s favors on you.” (al ‘Imran 3:103)

In the days of Prophetic Medina, Masjid al-Quba was an institute for men and women to acquire learning and thus be able to *share Qur’anic and Prophetic teachings* among the diverse community. It was a treasury to raise funds for the poor and the needy; and to empower disadvantaged citizens of Medina. It was a Center for worship and dialogue for all believers. There is no doubt that Islam is both a personal and communal faith, enjoining believers towards spiritual purification as well as good citizenship. The earliest mosques in history were Centers of social, educational, and spiritual activities for believers. Subsequently, wherever the Muslims lived, mosques were built to cater to their needs and the welfare of their communities. Islam encourages diversity to promote mutual understanding and advance our collective knowledge for the betterment of ourselves and our societies. On the other hand, diversity should not lead to disunity among believers. We must be united in our diversity to achieve *taaqa* (piety). As ALLAH warns:

“Be not like those Who are divided Among themselves And fall into disputations After receiving Clear Signs; For them Is a dreadful penalty.” (al ‘Imran 3:105)

The proposed Islamic Center of Tallahassee (ICT) will operate as a space for programs that can aid our community in pursuit of righteousness, irrespective of any denominations or sects. An environment that encourages mature, open dialogue is required to foster the regular intellectual engagement that Islam entails. ICT will be equipped to teach the *values of Islam*, in an engaging environment with the values of love, compassion, and unity that rest at its core. It will play a significant role for interfaith as well as intra-faith dialogues or discussions to demonstrate pluralism in Islam in order to remove misunderstandings among us.

“Verily, this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood, And I am your Lord And Cherisher; therefore Serve me and no other.” (al-Anbiyaa 21: 92)

The **Center** will host educational and career workshops by visiting and resident teachers and professionals to provide counselling and coaching for high school and college students. It will house a reference library accessible to those looking to study the basics of Islam consistent with Prophetic teachings.

The Center will have a place where social functions can be performed, be it is an Iftar, Eid, or other ceremonial party. Worshipping and working together, serving ALLAH, *Glorified & Exalted be He*, and the larger community, the Center can harmoniously build a community for ourselves and our city. **The Center** will have a multi-purpose room with audio-visual equipment for educational purpose with recreational facilities.

The Center will serve the needy and the sick people. Within the community, there are many Muslim physicians. It will have facilities to offer community clinics for unprivileged and underprivileged patients as well as hosting seminars on health care. **The Center** will have a group of volunteers who actively participate in community works. The next generations are eagerly waiting to see such a Center that is truly a House for ALLAH (SWT).

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In order to achieve the above stated goals and objectives, donations from the community with the efforts of shura committee, the ICT has embarked on an ambitious project. Every member of the community is thus requested to donate generously to make this multi-directional project in this blessed month of **Ramadan**.

“Who is he that will Loan to Allah a beautiful Loan? For (Allah) will increase it manifold To his credit, And he will have (besides) A liberal reward.” (al-Hadid 57:11,al-Baqarah 2:245)

Together with our help and the resources, we can raise mu’minin and mu’minat who will navigate the complexities of our society, who will be ambassadors of our faith, and who will help solve the multi-faceted problems of our present day world. Let’s build such a Center and show our Rabb that we are Best of His Creation (Asraful Makhhlukat).

FUND RAISING DRIVE (target \$282,000) June 1 at Masjid Al-Ansar; June 8, at Masjid Al-Fur’qan and Days of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul Adha

ICT Financial Status (March 2018)

Accounts	Balance
Expense	\$14,688.
Funeral	\$16,600.
Land & ICT Project	\$468,000.
Cost for Phase I (estimated)	\$750,000
Shortage (deficit)	-\$282,000

ICT Newsletter encourages its readers to contribute short articles on a wide range of educational topics. Author’s full name and the contact information should be provided. Proper citations with references must be in the paper. Quotations from the Sacred Books must be in italic with chapter’s name and number. The opinion and views expressed by the contributors are their own. **The Newsletter or the ICT** will not be held responsible for views expressed in article. Comments on published articles are highly welcome. The Editor with the approval the chairman the Shura council reserves the rights to edit and correct all articles before publications.

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Note: With the approval of the Shura, business advertisements can be published in this Newsletter. Please check with the chairman, Br. Ozair, for further information. Your contribution for printing cost of the Newsletter, and sharing it others will be recorded as a good deed. The Newsletter will also be available on ICT's Web site.

Get Involved!

Committees	Achievements
Educational	Contact Imam
Family Activities	Financial stability
Fundraising	New website
IT	New committees
Interfaith	Management consolidation for properties
Maintenance	Quarterly General Body
Media	Meetings
Outreach	Transparency
Youth	Teamwork!
Sports	

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