



WAHDAT



"A publication of the Islamic Education Center"

August 2006 (Rajab/Shab'an 1427)

Hamis, Hizbullah and Israel: Everything You Need to Know

By A. Cockburn

As the TV networks give unlimited airtime to Israel's apologists, the message rolls out that no nation, least of all Israel, can permit bombardment or armed incursion across its borders without retaliation. The guiding rule in this tsunami of drivel is that the viewers should be denied the slightest access to any historical context, or indeed to anything that

happened prior to June 28, which was when the capture of an Israeli soldier and the killing of two others by Hamas hit the headlines, followed soon thereafter by an attack by a unit of Hezbollah's fighters. Memory is supposed to stop in its tracks at June 28, 2006.

Let's go on a brief excursion into pre-history. I'm talking about June 20, 2006, when Israeli aircraft fired at least one missile at a car in an attempted extra judicial assassination attempt on a road between Jabalya and Gaza City. The missile missed the car. Instead it killed three Palestinian children and wounded fifteen.

Back we go again to June 13, 2006. Israeli aircraft fired missiles at a van in another attempted extra judicial assassination. The successive barrages killed nine innocent Palestinians.

Now we're really in the dark ages, reaching far, far back to June 9, 2006, when Israel shelled a beach in Beit Lahiya killing 8 civilians and injuring 32.

Muslim Congress Conference September 2-3, '06 Houston



CONFERENCE starts LABOR DAY WEEKEND

www.MuslimCongress.org OR in person at the IEC.

Selected Topics of the Conference:

Islamophobia: Its Causes and Cures
Our Duties in Occultation
Qualities to Look for in Your Spouse
Power of Media and Islam
Masjid and State

... and simultaneous activities for children (childcare) and Youth (with Moulana Baig).

IEC PROPERTY NEWS

To meet high demand of Al-HADI schools enrollment, two additional classes have been added at the first floor of IEC building to accommodate approximately twenty five to fifty new students.

New security camera system for the IEC building is the next project that we need your help. This project would cost around \$6,000. As you know, having a security camera on the property is not an option; it is imperative to have a security camera in place to protect our children and property from unwelcome visitors. So please donate generously to make IEC facility safer place for our community.

New solar screens are being installed on the first floor of IEC building. In addition, the order has been placed to install solar screen on the library on second floor. This will help us to reduce our electric bills especially during summer.

Please contact Brother Mehdi Rizvi propertydirector@iec-houston.com or any board member to donate and for further inquires.

Fatimiyah Fund Update

With the generous donations by the community members the deficit continues to decrease, Al-Hamdu-Lillah. As of July 30th, the deficit stands at \$22,000. May Allah bless all the participants who gave for the sake of Islam. As our 'Ulama have always reminded us that the donations to the Masjid are a Sadaqa-e-jariya (blessing of the charity continue incessantly). However, we need to continue to raise funds and erase the deficit. To that end we will be seeking your donations on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday programs. You can make your tax-deductible donations by dropping your checks or Cash in the designated Fatimiyah Masjid Operations Fund Donation boxes located at IEC. You can also mail your donations to the attention of the IEC treasurer, P.O.Box 572385, Houston TX 77257. To make your contributions on line, please visit the IEC website and make a general donation for Masjid. **Please call Br Ashiq Raza at 713 787 5000 X 56 or email him at treasurer@iec-houston.org if you have any questions. May Allah bless you and your family.**

Community News

Congratulations to Zainab Kayani who graduated from the Wesleyan University Law School at Fort Worth, Texas in May 2006 and received her law degree (JD).

Hisbullah...continued from page 1

That's just a brief trip down Memory Lane, and we trip over the bodies of twenty dead and forty-seven wounded, all of them Palestinians, most of them women and children.

Israel regrets... But no! Israel doesn't regret in the least. Most of the time it doesn't even bother to pretend to regret. It says, "We reserve the right to slaughter Palestinians whenever we want. We reserve the right to assassinate their leaders, crush their homes, steal their water, tear out their olive groves, and when they try to resist we call them terrorists intent on wrecking the 'peace process'". Now Israel says it wants to wipe out Hezbollah. It wishes no harm to the people of Lebanon, just so long as they're not supporters of Hezbollah, or standing anywhere in the neighborhood of a person or a house or a car or a truck or a road or a bus or a field, or a power station or a port that might, in the mind of an Israeli commander or pilot, have something to do with Hezbollah. In any of those eventualities all bets are off. You or your wife or your mother or your baby get fried.

Israel regrets... But no! As noted above, it doesn't regret in the least. Neither does George Bush, nor Condoleezza Rice nor John Bolton who is the moral savage who brings shame on his country each day that he sits as America's ambassador (unconfirmed) at the UN and who has just told the world that a dead Israel civilian is worth a whole more in terms of moral outrage than a Lebanese one. None of them regrets. They say Hezbollah is a cancer in the body of Lebanon. Sometimes, to kill the cancer, you end up killing the body. Or bodies. Bodies of babies. Lots of them. Go to the website www.fromisraeltolebanon.info and take a look. Then sign the petition on the site calling on the governments of the world to stop this barbarity.

You can say that Israel brought Hezbollah into the world. You can prove it too, though this too involves another frightening excursion into history.

This time we have to go far, almost unimaginably far, back into history. Back to 1982, before the dinosaurs, before CNN, before Fox TV, before O'Reilly and Limbaugh. But not before the neo-cons who at that time had already crawled from the primal slime and were doing exactly what they are doing now: advising an American president to give Israel the green light to "solve its security problems" by destroying Lebanon.

In 1982 Israel had a problem. Yasir Arafat, headquartered in Beirut, was making ready to announce that the PLO was prepared to sit down with Israel and embark on peaceful, good faith negotiations towards a two-state solution.

Israel didn't want a two-state solution, which meant -- if UN resolutions were to be taken seriously -- a Palestinian state right next door, with water, and contiguous territory. So Israel decided to chase the PLO right out of Lebanon. It announced that the Palestinian fighters had broken the year-long cease-fire by lobbing some shells into northern Israel.

Palestinians had done nothing of the sort. I remember this very well, because Brian Urquhart, at that time assistant secretary general of the United Nations, in charge of UN observers on Israel's northern border, invited me to his office on the 38th floor of the UN hq in mid-Manhattan and showed me all the current reports from the zone. For over a year there'd been no shelling from north of the border. Israel was lying.

With or without a pretext Israel wanted to invade Lebanon. So it did, and rolled up to Beirut. It shelled Lebanese towns and villages and bombed them from the air. Sharon's forces killed maybe 20,000 people, and let Lebanese Christians slaughter hundreds of Palestinian refugees in the camps of Sabra and Chatilla.

The killing got so bad that even Ronald Reagan awoke from his slumbers and called Tel Aviv to tell Israel to stop. Sharon gave the White House the finger by bombing Beirut at the precise times -- 2.42 and 3.38 -- of two UN resolutions calling for a peaceful settlement on the matter of Palestine.

When the dust settled over the rubble, Israel bunkered down several miles inside Lebanese sovereign territory, which it illegally occupied, in defiance of all UN resolutions, for years, supervising a brutal local militia and running its own version of Abu Graibh, the torture center at the prison of Al-Khiam.

Occupy a country, torture its citizens and in the end you face resistance. In Israel's case it was Hezbollah, and in the end Hezbollah ran Israel out of Lebanon, which is why a lot of Lebanese regard Hezbollah not as terrorists but as courageous liberators.

The years roll by and Israel does its successful best to destroy all possibility of a viable two-state solution. It builds illegal settlements. It chops up Palestine with Jews-only roads. It collars all the water. It cordons off Jerusalem. It steals even more land by bisecting Palestinian territory with its "fence". Anyone trying to organize resistance gets jailed, tortured, or blown up.

Sick of their terrible trials, Palestinians elect Hamas, whose leaders make it perfectly clear that they are ready to deal on the basis of the old two-state solution, which of course is the one thing Israel cannot endure. Israel doesn't want any "peaceful solution" that gives the Palestinians anything more than a few trashed out acres surrounded with barbed wire and tanks, between the Israeli settlements whose goons can murder them pretty much at will.

So here we are, 24 years after Sharon did his best to destroy Lebanon in 1982, and his heirs are doing it all over again. Since they can't endure the idea of any just settlement for Palestinians, it's the only thing they know how to do. Call Lebanon a terror-haven and bomb it back to the Stone Age. Call Gaza a terror-haven and bomb its power plant, first stop on the journey back to the Stone Age. Bomb Damascus. Bomb Tehran.

Of course they won't destroy Hezbollah. Every time they kill another Lebanese family, they multiply hatred of Israel and support for Hezbollah. They've even unified the parliament in Baghdad, which just voted unanimously -- Sunnis and Shi'ites and Kurds alike -- to deplore Israel's conduct and to call for a ceasefire.

I hope you've enjoyed these little excursions into history, even though history is dangerous, which is why the US press gives it a wide birth. But even without the benefit of historical instruction, a majority of Americans in CNN's instant poll -- about 55 per cent out of 800,000 as of midday, July 19 -- don't like what Israel is up to.




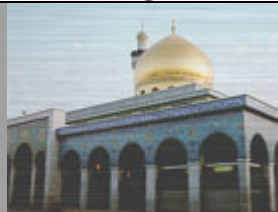
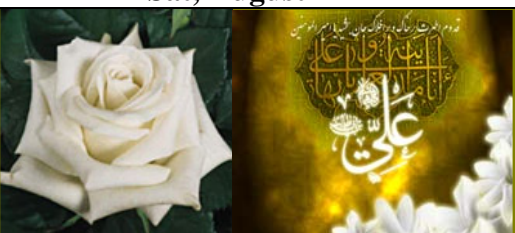
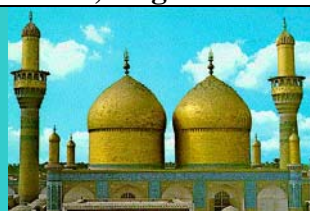
...continued on page 7

Hizbullah...continued from page 2

Dislike is one thing, but at least in the short term it doesn't help much. Israel's 1982 attack on Lebanon grew unpopular in the US, after the first few days. But forcing the US to pressure Israel to settle the basic problem takes political courage, and virtually no US politician is prepared to buck the Israel lobby, however many families in Lebanon and Gaza may be sacrificed on the altar of such cowardice.

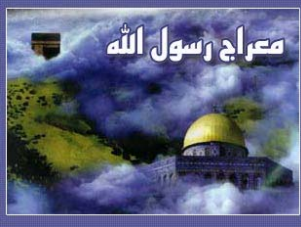
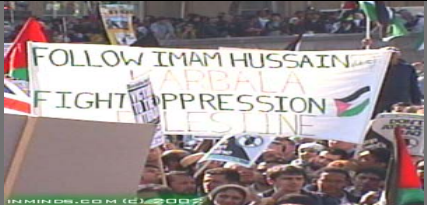

August 2006 SPECIAL EVENTS AT I.E.C.

Please note that the Tabarruk and Dinners are made available contingent on sponsors. Please get in contact with Br Moosa Dhanji (281-813-9487) to sponsor any programs listed below. May Allah bless you.

Sat, August 12th		<p><i>Shahadat of Allamah Arif Hussaini (RA)</i></p> <p>Holy Qur'an 6:45 pm Presentation 7:00 pm Speech 7:30 pm Maghrib Prayers 8:30 pm Dinner 9:00 pm</p>
Sun, August 6th		<p><i>Wiladat Imam Mohammad Taqi (AS) (10th Rajab)</i></p> <p>Qaseedas..... 7:15 pm Speech 7:30 pm Maghrib Prayers 8:29 pm Tabarruk 9:00 pm</p>
Tue, August 8th		<p><i>Wiladat of Imam Ali (AS) (13th Rajab)</i></p> <p>Speech: Moulana Shabirri..... 7:30 pm Maghribain.....8:27 pm Dua Tawassul.....8:50 pm Tabarruk.....9:15 pm</p>
Thu, August 10th		<p><i>Shahadat of Hazrat Zainab (AS) (15th Rajab)</i></p> <p>Holy Qur'an..... 7:00 pm Salam..... 7:15 pm Speech.....7:30 pm Maghribain Prayers.....8:26 pm Dua Kumail.....9:00 pm Tabarruk.....9:30 pm</p>
Sat, August 12th		<p><i>Jashn-e-Moulood-e-Kaaba (AS)</i></p> <p>Holy Qur'an..... 6:30 pm Qaseeda..... 6:45 pm Speech.....7:15 pm Maghribain Prayers.....8:24 pm Dua Kumail.....9:00 pm Dinner.....8:55 pm</p>
Sat, August 19th		<p><i>Shahadat of Imam Musa Kazim (AS) (25th Rajab)</i></p> <p>Holy Qur'an..... 6:45 pm Salam..... 7:00 pm Speech.....7:15 pm Maghribain Prayers.....8:17 pm Tabarruk.....8:45 pm</p>

...More Events Listed on Next Page

...Continued: August 2006 Events

Tue, August 22nd 	<i>Be'that and Me'raj of Rasool (S)</i> (27 th Rajab) Holy Qur'an.....7:00 pm Speech.....7:15 pm Maghrib Prayers.....8:14 pm Du'a Tawassul.....8:45 pm Tabarruk.....9:15 pm
Sat, August 26th 	<i>Wiladat of Imam Hussain (AS)</i> (3 rd Sha'ban) Holy Qur'an.....6:30 pm Qaseedas.....6:45 pm Speech.....7:10 pm Maghrib Prayers.....8:09 pm Dinner.....9:45 pm
Tue, August 8th 	***** <i>Wiladat of</i> ***** <i>Imam Sajjad</i> (5 th Sha'ban) & <i>Hazrat Abbas</i> (4 th Sha'ban) Holy Qur'an.....6:45 pm Speech.....7:00 pm Maghrib Prayers.....8:09 pm Tabarruk.....8:45 pm

Friendship

The Holy Prophet said: "Man is influenced by the faith of his friends. Therefore, be careful of whom you associate with." *Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. 74*

Friendship: A Path of Choice

"To lose a friend is to become a stranger in one's own country."

Imam Ali (AS) --- Nahjul Balaghah

Just as Batman had Robin and Dorothy had Toto, likewise Prophet Musa (AS) had Haroon and Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had Imam Ali (AS). As monumental figures in the lives of many average human beings, each of these idolized individuals had a companion - a friend: a person whom with they could share their sorrows alongside their joys; a person who would stand by them through thick and thin; a person who would support them during both the ups and the downs. The question is frequently posed: What qualities should one look for in a companion or, more commonly, a friend? The answer is not a simple one, especially for those of us living in the United States. While corruption surges throughout the national government in addition to the American economy, the public tends to follow the lead of the country, and finding a true friend has become more and more difficult as time passes.

Many times we think we have found true friendship in someone who ends up letting us down or breaking our trust. Islam solves this problem. Though finding a true friend takes years and years of searching and bond-building, utilizing the definition of friendship provided by Islam quickens the process of finding a true companion while simultaneously decreasing the pain in starting over and betrayal.

One of the most important points to keep in mind while searching for genuine company is that of our ultimate goal. Every Muslim has the eventual goal of accumulating a large amount of good deeds in order to secure an ascent to Jannat after death. As we live, we must remember that every Muslim is here to attain admission into paradise. No one person – not our family, nor our friends – will come to our side on the Day of Judgment to vouch for our actions or justify them. Therefore, a friendship must be

mutually beneficial for both individuals in *this* world because, in the hereafter, everyone accounts for their own deeds.

Keeping this in mind, having similar ideologies and beliefs are very important in any camaraderie. In the Holy Qur'an, it states "*Let not the believers take disbelievers for their friends in preference to believers. Whoso shall do this then nothing of Allah (SWT) is his...but Allah (SWT) warns you to beware of Him; for unto Allah (SWT) is the eventual course (of life's journey)*" (3:28). Here, it clearly states that one's true friend should be a believer, a Muslim, not someone who opposes believing in Allah (SWT).

Friendship is built upon the foundation of love, a highly active force. Love between individuals causes a mutual influential force to be exercised upon each other's habits, thoughts, and feelings. Believers have been warned here not to take unbelievers as friends because, in friendship, love, or any other state of attachment, one may be misled from better judgment by the second party in the relationship - those who highly influence him.

Now, in a multilateral political and economic structure such as the one which surrounds us here in America, dealing with unbelievers as human beings and living in harmony with them in everyday life is absolutely indispensable whereas isolation is most unreasonable. Therefore, Islam's prohibition lies in cases of love or attachment, not everyday dealings. We must remember that there are many levels of friendship: those who are like our acquaintances, those who are closer to us, and those who make up our inner circle of friends. Us Muslims are not advised to keep unbelievers in this inner circle because of the influence they may have on our mindsets and ideologies, causing our faith and iman to slowly disintegrate.

This concept of closely befriending mainly Muslims makes sense. For example, let us visualize Ahmed, a young Muslim boy growing up in America. One Saturday morning, he goes bowling with his best friends: Joseph, an African American Christian, David, a Caucasian Jew, and Ja'far, a Persian Muslim. They leave the house at about 6pm, before the time of

Maghrib salaah has settled in. Bowling lasts about three hours, but, by 9pm, these four youth are starving. They go out for dinner after their three hour bowling session followed by a quick stop for ice cream. By the time these four males return home, they are so utterly exhausted that Ahmed, Joseph, and David collapse on the living room couch without even removing their shoes. Ja'far, however, remembers that he needs to say his evening prayers. After completing his Maghrib and Isha salaah, he wakes Ahmed up, reminding him that he also needs to finish his daily wajaibat.

Now, in this situation, having Ja'far, a Muslim friend, as a regular "hang-out" buddy came in very handy for Ahmed as he was reminded of his duty as a Muslim to worship Allah (SWT). Had Ja'far not been there, Joseph and David would have continued sleeping, and Ahmed would have no doubt done the same. In this connotation, populating our close circle of friends primarily with Muslims makes perfect sense as it advances us towards attaining Jannat.

Many oppose this idea with justifications like "But there aren't enough Muslims at my school" or "What if surrounding myself with disbelievers makes my faith stronger?" or "How can I isolate myself from 75 percent of the population by only weeding out Muslims?" etc. Islam, as usual, provides a plan of action to counter these excuses. In the Nahjul Balagha, Imam Ali (AS) says "*Anyone who loves us must be ready to face a life of austerity*" (p. 284). Therefore, adhering to the "rules" and appointing a Muslim, preferably a practicing Mo'min, as a best friend is rather difficult especially in a population where a majority of people are Kuffar, but this is the exchange we make for the love of the Ahlul Bayt. In the long run, it benefits us as well by preventing us from sinning.

When looking at strengthening one's own faith by surrounding ourselves with non-Muslims in hopes of amplifying our immune system to fighting sin, this is risky a choice. Why take the risk? Sure, finding a practicing Mo'min in the United States is difficult, but remaining true to Sirat al Mustaqeem when surrounded by constant transgression is far more trying. The risk lies in the individual's stamina. In this world, we are given the option to choose between that which is right and that which is easy.....

*THE CONTINUATION OF THIS ARTICLE
WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT HAQQ.....*

Members of IEC's Al-Qasim Youth Group were surveyed and asked the following question:

What qualities do YOU look for in a friend?

"Well, there is a hadith that says a good friend is one who helps you remember Allah (SWT). So that's my main criteria. If someone is going to lead me on the right path, I make them closer, if I think they would try to steer me on the wrong path, I try to keep a good distance." --- *Sr. Sukaina Jafri, 23*

"They need to be honest and trustworthy people...and not be two faced." --- *Br. Ali Totonchian, 17*

"First off, I look for the benefit I will gain from them. Benefit meaning whether they will help me in my goal in life or not. Secondly, I look at their iman and their akhlaq, two key components which can break or build a friendship with me. Lastly, whether they are comfortable with me and are befriending me for me, and not other things." --- *Br. Yunes Golabbakhsh, 21*

"Trust and capability to relate to each other." --- *Sr. Mina Tabatabai, 19*

"Personally, I think a friend should support you even in your darkest hour and at the same time be that hope and inspiration for you to be a better person, whether that person is "better" than you... and makes you strive for more in life or that your good attributes rub off that person." --- *Sr. Butool Jafri, 16*

"Religious. That's about it. The first quality that exemplifies a true friend is his religious fervor, because from there stems the qualities which Islam enforces... such as trustworthiness, patience, love, and honesty to name a few." --- *IEC Youth Member, 19*

"Loyalty, kindness, RESPECT, communication skills, and honor...with right values." --- *Br. Sadiq Amir, 14*

"In a friend, I look if that person is focused in the right direction, such as school and Islam. Also I look for a fellow mo'min as my friend, and that

friend must make me a better mo'min when I hang around or talk with that person.”--- *Br. Nader Zaveri, 17*

“A friend of mine must be able to differentiate between right and wrong, good and bad, and (if Muslim) halal and haraam. Though a true friend may have a difference in opinion, he / she would never push me to do something I do not believe in. I look for an honest human being with a pure heart and a similar sense of morals - someone I can trust.” --- *Sr. Hanna Meghji, 17*

“Of good faith, feel the necessity to become closer to Allah (SWT), and in the process, take others along, so that the entire group is benefiting. Not those who simply look for individual successes but those who want to build a team of strong, united Muslims that will benefit each other in the process.”

--- *Br. Syed Raza Zaidi, 23*

“I personally look for personality, faith, and if the person is interesting. If they're Muslim I enjoy being around a Muslim crowd. But if they aren't religious, I judge them if I just find them interesting and if they're good to some extent, and I won't say who is good and bad because I am not anyone perfect.” --- *Sr. Fizah Naqvi, 19*

“Honesty, trust, faithfulness,
good advisor...”

--- *IEC Youth Member, 16*

“I believe that the main quality a friend should have is trustworthiness. If I can not trust him with my life, he is not my friend, he is a RAT.” -
--- *Sr. Iffat Gillani, 19*

“I believe that trust and loyalty is my biggest concern in a friendship. I have lost and gained friends for that reason. As for being a good person or not I think that a person that has more of my values in common with me the better of a friend he can be, and this implies to my religious value. What I am trying to say is that if I have two friends that are both truly trustworthy but the one is in more in line with the same values that I hold then that person might be a better friend of mine than the other.” --- *Br. Samah Haider, 23*

“A friend must be educated in Islam and should be able to shape your personality in a positive way.” --- *Asad Ghori, 18*

“My (best) friend description: trustworthy, Muslim (but doesn't have to be a hijabi), understanding, who's shoulder I can lean on when needed, who can be fun...but is also very serious, reader, who will tell me loads and I tell her loads, (oh) and a female, you can carry on a convo with them for hours (because you're both random), who I can help...and who can help me back...” --- *Sr. Lina Meghji, 13*

“Bismillahi Rahman nir Raheem. The certain qualities I look for in a friend are as follows. First and foremost I look for religious affiliation: an individual who is a momin and a shia. When you actually divulge into the raw dichotomy of a friendship; you see there are two major pillars or facets that are required; those important pillars being **Trust** and **Communication**. So I would then look for an individual that has those qualities. As a result of this I will feel much more comfortable bringing this individual into my private life and around the members of my family. If you are scared to show your parents the type of friend or friends you have, then that person should not be your friend. If you are married you should keep company with only married individuals. Why is that the case? The reason being is when you are married and discusses certain issues you receive answers and advice from a married individual. The married individual majority of the time will give you wisdom and insight on how certain situations are handled appropriately. So the other quality in a friend I am looking for is an individual who is married. “There is no greater wealth than wisdom, no greater poverty than ignorance, no greater heritage than culture, **and no greater friend than consultation.**” Imam Ali (AS) -- Nahjul Balagha-Keyword: Consultation --- *Br. Zeshan Zaveri, 25*



Scenarios

*Disclaimer: Names do not represent any member of the community. There are there to give a more realistic turn to the situation.

1) Zahra is a strong Muslim girl who is currently attending university. She does hijab, prays, doesn't listen to music, etc. and follows Islamic guidelines. Fatima is one of her best friends but does not care about who she hangs out with (nah mahram, people who use bad language, dress inappropriately, etc...) ? Should Zahra stay friends with Fatima?

What does Zahra think?

Fatima has been her friend for a while now. She used to be just like Zahra, maybe not as religious but still doing hijab and following Islam. But ever since they entered university and Fatima has started not caring about who she hangs out with, Zahra has seen some changes in Fatima. Yes she still follows Islam, praying and fasting, but her hijab isn't that great anymore, she once in a while says an inappropriate word etc. Zahra thinks that Fatima just got a little "influenced" because she wasn't as strong as Zahra, but will soon go back to her "normal" self. She also thinks it might be ok to stay friends with Fatima because after all, she's not the one hanging out with the people who Fatima is hanging out with, right?

What does Islam say?

In the book Lantern of the Path by Imam Sadiq, he states "Do not sit with anyone who obscures what is clear for you, nor with someone who takes the faith lightly." Although Zahra is not hanging out with non mahram etc., her best friend is. Influence is all around you. Did Fatima not get influenced? What is stopping Zahra? In this situation, if Zahra can do amarbilmaruf and nahyanilmukar (encourage right and forbid wrong), and really sees that it is affective (and that Fatima's actions are not affecting and/or influencing herself) , then it is ok. If this does not work, Zahra should keep telling her but keep her distance. Taqwa is the first thing when it comes to choosing your friends. Pick friends that will get you closer to Allah (swt).

2) Batool's best friend is Jenny. They have classes together and hang out all the time. Is it ok to have a best friend who is not Muslim?

What does Batool think?

Batool knows Jenny is not Muslim, but she thinks she's a great, open minded person. Some

people tell her that she might get influenced if she has a non-Muslim best friend, but Batool doesn't think there is anything to get influenced by. Jenny's honest and trustworthy and a really good person. Of course Jenny has a boyfriend, listens to music, and dresses inappropriately. But that's just because she doesn't follow Islam, right? Anyways, Batool thinks if there was anything to get influenced by, she has a strong enough faith. No big deal.

What does Islam say?

Islam doesn't directly say that it's wrong to be friends with a non-Muslim. School, business, etc., requires friends that are non-muslim, but best friends is different. You become like the people you are close to. No if, ands, or buts. It's a proven fact. Yes you may have a strong faith, but isn't it better to have someone to make it stronger? The Holy Prophet [s] said: "Man is influenced by the faith of his friends. Therefore, be careful of whom you associate with." Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. 74, p. 192

3) Amir is in his third year of university. He's a trying his best to be a good Muslim and follow Islam. His friends, also Muslims, ask him to join them to eat out and then go for hookah, etc. Amir gets a feeling it's wrong, and tells them, but they try to persuade him and justify it. What should he do?

What does Amir think?

Amir gets a feeling its wrong, and he really tries his best to tell them this. But they won't listen. If he doesn't go he'll become the outcast, which he really doesn't want to be. Should he just go?

What does Islam Say?

Amir should do his duty of encouraging right and forbidding evil and continue doing it. If his friends still don't listen, he shouldn't go since he knows it's wrong. Like Imam Sadiq said, "keep company with people for the sake of Allah(swt), not for your portion of something which belongs to this world or to seek position or for showing off or to increase your own reputation"- Lantern of the Path

Please pray for the people in Palestine and Lebanon. We condemn all oppressors, and pray for the quick return of our Imam, Mahdi (a.s)

Contributions, suggestions, and/or comments are welcome. Please email youthcouncil @iec-houston .org. Thank You.