

MSA National Continental Conference 2009

Claiming the Present: Grasping and Transforming Today

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Hasten to do good deeds before there come tribulations like pieces of a dark night, when a man will be a believer in the morning and a disbeliever by evening, or he will be a believer in the evening and a disbeliever by morning, selling his religious commitment for worldly gain." (Muslim, 118)

It is easy as Muslim students across North American to focus our time and energies away from the present. When at school we dream about summer vacation, once on vacation we worry about what we have left to take care of when we get back to school. What is forgotten, what is lost, is today. We cannot change the past and we are not guaranteed the next minute, much less the future. What does it mean as Muslims to seize the day? How can we live, experience, and work for the moment?

Friday, July 3rd

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
1:00 – 2:30 PM	LUNCH & JUMMAH	
3:00 – 3:15 PM	INTRODUCTION & WELCOME TO THE 46TH MSA Continental Conference SPEAKERS: Ubaid Banduka, Suhail Dar	GRANDBALLROOM
3:15 – 4:45 PM	MAIN SESSION 1 A Tradition of Change: The Young and the Relentless "The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise." (Qur'an 9:71) Unsatisfied with the current conditions, Muslim youth have served as a catalyst for change and reform despite limited resources. Many of the young Companions of the Prophet and in subsequent generations consistently displayed powerful examples of commitment and dedication to bettering their communities. In North American history, the youth have been monumentally effective in several pivotal times, like the Civil Rights Movement and even in the recent Presidential election. The key is to start working immediately instead of putting tasks off to the future. How did our young role models make working plans on how they could help or make a difference immediately? What can we, as Muslim youth, do today for our communities in North America? SPEAKERS: Keith Ellison & Andre Carson (invited) MODERATOR: Suhail Dar	GRANDBALLROOM
5:00 – 6:30 PM	PARALLEL SESSION 1A Reflecting on Scripture: The Journey of Prophet Musa and Al-Khidr Before Prophet Musa became a leader among men, had a show down with Pharaoh and freed the people of Israel from the shackles of injustice, he took a journey with a wise man. This session follows the footsteps of Musa as he travels with al-Khidr in	RENAISSANCE

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
	<p>an unchartered experience where he picked up a few key lessons about divine will, patience, and protecting the weak.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Yusuf Kavacki, Sulayman Nyang</p> <p>MODERATOR: Atifa Chiragh</p>	
5:00 – 6:30 PM	<p>PARALLEL SESSION 1B</p> <p>From Silence to Healing: A Changing Racial Dynamic</p> <p>Recent local and global events have thrust issues of racism, prejudice, sectarianism, and bigotry into the political limelight. Discussions on racial inequity became topics of casual conversations. Although Muslims are taught to respect diversity and differences across the spectrum, often times these teachings are not put into practice. Tensions run high in many Muslim communities as traditional prejudices are not disputed and challenged. What are the lines that continue to divide our campus communities? How can we unite simply under the banner of Islam?</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Hatem Bazian, Farhan Latif</p> <p>MODERATOR: Awais Khalil</p>	AUDITORIUM
5:00 – 6:30 PM	<p>PARALLEL SESSION 1C</p> <p>Exploring the Literary Gems of the Qur’an (Part One)</p> <p>We’ve been told that the Qur’an is a miraculous scripture. This session will share examples of the literary majesty and beauty of the Qur’an. Come experience the explanation of the Qur’an in such a way that it will be impossible to not be deeply moved with little or no understanding of the Arabic language. If you are trying to gain an increased motivation for reading and understanding Qur’an or for learning Arabic, this is where you need to be.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Muhammad Ninowy, Zaynab Alwani</p> <p>MODERATOR: Mohamed Shiliwala</p>	12, 13, & 14
5:00 – 6:30 PM	<p>PARALLEL SESSION 1D</p> <p>Bringing Success to our World: Exploring Non-traditional Education</p> <p>There is no doubt that our responsibility lies in fulfilling our duties to our creator. As Muslim students we also need to look deep into non-religious activities that may allow us to be successful in this life and the hereafter. This session will introduce to students different opportunities in the realms of studying abroad, non-profit, internships, and graduate programs.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Johari Abdul-Malik, Nasir Al-Amin, Faisal Matadar</p>	8 & 9
6:30 – 8:30 PM	DINNER & MAGHRIB	
9:00 – 10:30 PM	<p>MAIN SESSION 2</p> <p>Defeating Depression with the Light of God</p> <p>“and the faithful ones whose hearts are comforted by the remembrance of God. Remembrance of God certainly brings comfort to all hearts.” (Qur’an 13:28)</p> <p>As young Muslims we often struggle with feelings of insecurity. Difficult circumstances can compound these insecurities into depression leading our youth to doubt their abilities, their value in society and the destiny God has for them. How can we as young</p>	GRANDBALLROOM

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
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Muslims use our faith to strengthen our self-confidence, our hearts, and minds against a society which constantly reinforces our insecurities? What can we do to help our brothers/sisters lift themselves in order to make the most of what we can change today? How can MSA's and Muslim communities be supportive to young Muslims struggling with insecurity and depression?

SPEAKERS: Altaf Husain, Ingrid Mattson, Omar Mahmood

LATE NIGHT SESSIONS

11:00 – 12:30 AM

**Living the Single life:
Benefiting from Your Time Before You get Married**

AUDITORIUM

Being single, we are stewards of an amazing period in our lives. We are young, flexible, and more free to focus, learn and improve on ourselves and our religion. Some Muslim youth are actively seeking a spouse and others have chosen to leave that decision for another day. While fulfilling the sunnah by seeking a spouse should be a priority for Muslim youth, making the best use of one's time when single is essential. Come learn how to take charge, enjoy, and most wisely use this precious time while looking forward to "married" days ahead.

SPEAKERS: Asma Rehman, Khalid Latif, Faraz Rabbani

MODERATOR: Awais Khalil

11:00 – 12:30 AM

Living the Married Life: How to Stay Married and Stay Happy 12, 13, & 14

Many of us are mesmerized with glorious visions of living happily after only to find ourselves confused and dazed once the realities of marriage settle in. Now what do we do? Who is this person I've married and what is my life really like now? How do I balance my relationship with my in laws? Learn some tips for what it really takes to stay married and stay happy.

SPEAKERS: Zaynab Alwani, Mohamed Shiliwala, Altaf Husain

11:00 – 1:00 AM

**ENTERTAINMENT SESSION
Resonate: MSA Entertainment**

GRANDBALLROOM

What happens when you put together some of the country's most gifted Poets and performers under one roof? You get RESONATE! RESONATE is a lyrical, smart, hilarious, entertaining, and an exciting new approach to bring entertainment to the students, as well as to our invited guests all across the country. MSA members from all over the continent will perform some of most original and entertaining pieces you have ever heard. Get ready for a night of entertainment of creativity and unique talents!

M.C.: Aatif Sharieff

1:00 – 3:00 AM

QIYAM UL-LAYL 12, 13, & 14

Imam Ahmad al-Haddad in his excellent book "Key to the Garden" defines tafakkur as follows: "And tafakkur is the focus and movement of the heart and mind through the meaning of things in order to reach the underlying intention, and by this, the pearls of truth is reached." Tafakkur is the art, if you like, of churning a matter around in one's mind. He says, "Knowledge comes from tafakkur and from knowledge adoration, and from adoration love". Abu Darda says that "An hour of contemplation is worth a night of salah."

SPEAKER: Faraz Rabbani

Saturday, July 4th

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
5:30 – 6:00 AM	AFTER FAJR SERIES Translation and Explanation of Surah Al-Hijr (The Rocky Tract, Chapter 15) SPEAKER: TBD	12, 13, & 14
9:00 – 10:00 AM	CORNELL UNIVERSITY ALUMNI	8 & 9
10:00 – 11:30 AM	MAIN SESSION 3 Mars and Venus: Changing Gender Roles “The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise.” (Qur’an 9:71) As believers, men and women, we are friends and protectors of one another. This means treating our brothers or sisters with respect, tolerance and good will. And yet gender relations can often deteriorate to unnecessary tension, competition, and narrow expectations of the Muslim or Muslimah personality. This session explores the Islamic gender construct. How have the roles of men and women changed today? How do we balance our duties, obligations, and ambitions? How does the decline in masculinity/femininity affect the Muslim student? What is the ideal Muslim/Muslimah and where does individuality factor into today’s equation? SPEAKERS: Zaid Shakir, Aisha Al-Adawiya, Sulayman Nyang MODERATOR: Asma Rehman	RENAISSANCE
12:00 – 1:30 PM	WORKSHOP SESSION 1A COMPASS: Embracing Diversity & Inclusion Learn how to build bridges across differences in race, ethnicity, age, gender, and other cultural characteristics under the umbrella of the religion. Many MSAs struggle to balance sectarian issues on campus. The divides comes as a product of cultural differences and religious understanding and interpretation. Come learn how to engage and create a more inclusive environment on campus which embraces diversity. SPEAKER: Farhan Latif MODERATOR: Atifa Chiragh	12, 13, & 14
12:00 – 1:30 PM	WORKSHOP SESSION 1B Political Action Task Force: Yes, We Can: Investing in Our Country’s Future As American Muslims, what are we contributing to the country that we grew up in? Change starts at home. As Muslims, we must take a stand on domestic issues such as the rising cost of higher education, criminal justice, social security, health care etc...rather than focusing solely on ‘Muslim centric’ issues. As the young generation of America, it is our turn to contribute to making change happen on a domestic level.	8 & 9

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
	<p>SPEAKERS: Asma Rehman, Sami Elmansoury, Awais Khalil</p> <p>MODERATOR: Farha Tahir</p>	
12:00 – 1:30 PM	<p>WORKSHOP SESSION 1C</p> <p>Dawah Task Force:</p> <p>Taking Islamic Awareness Week to the Next Level</p> <p>Ever have trouble explaining an aspect of Islam to your classmates or professors? Holding an interfaith or dawah event on campus? Learn about resources has to help you effectively reach out to the broader campus community.</p> <p>SPEAKER: TBD</p> <p>MODERATOR: Nasreen Badat</p>	10 & 11
12:00 – 1:30 PM	<p>WORKSHOP SESSION 1D</p> <p>Transforming the Soul:</p> <p>Practical Steps for Purifying the Heart</p> <p>Purifying our hearts is a necessary step towards sincere action for the sake of Allah and worship of Him. This session will discuss practical steps towards overcoming things that may weaken our faith and sincerity such as purifying our intentions, ostentation, envy, and struggling with our desires.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Khalid Abdul Sattar, Usama Canon, Khalid Latif</p> <p>MODERATOR: Tauqeer Zaidi</p>	AUDITORIUM
1:30 – 3:00 PM	LUNCH & ZUHR	
2:00 – 3:00 PM	<p>MSA Executive Roundtable and Constitution Discussion</p> <p>Are you an MSA leader? Network with fellow MSAers from across the US and Canada and learn about the resources and services MSA National has to offer!</p>	10 & 11
2:00 – 3:00 PM	University of Michigan Alumni	8 & 9
3:00 – 4:30 PM	<p>PARALLEL SESSIONS 2A</p> <p>Reflecting on Scripture:</p> <p>Lessons from the Reconquest of Mecca</p> <p>Scripture often provides textual support for our advocacy of the weak, downtrodden, oppressed and forgotten. It is a voice reminding us to protect the rights and interests of orphans, women, children, the elderly, and poor. The most compelling of such examples comes from the Reconquest of Mecca. Come discover the beauty of Islam dedication to upholding human rights.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Zaynab Alwani, Hatem Bazian</p> <p>MODERATOR: Sami Elmansoury</p>	RENAISSANCE
3:00 – 4:30 PM	<p>PARALLEL SESSIONS 2B</p> <p>From Silence to Healing: Home the Safe Haven?</p> <p>An investigation into the status of far too many Muslim households quickly leads to the conclusion that everything isn't peaches and cream. There is no denying that the Muslim marriage and family system isn't immune to many of the problems facing the</p>	AUDITORIUM

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
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American family. Issues such as domestic violence and sexual abuse are two such taboos that are widespread and affect over 2 million Americans personally each year. What are some of these concerns facing our community and how we can make a change in these far reaching statistics?

SPEAKERS: Aisha Al-Adawiya, Altaf Husain

3:00 – 4:30 PM

PARALLEL SESSION 2C

12, 13, & 14

Exploring the Literary Gems of the Qur’an (Part Two)

Attendance at the previous sessions is not required for understanding this session. We’ve been told that the Qur’an is a miraculous scripture. This session will share examples of the literary majesty and beauty of the Qur’an. Come experience the explanation of the Qur’an in such a way that it will be impossible to not be deeply moved with little or no understanding of the Arabic language. If you are trying to gain an increased motivation for reading and understanding Qur’an or for learning Arabic, this is where you need to be.

SPEAKERS: Muhammad Ninowy, Faraz Rabbani

MODERATOR: Tauqeer Zaidi

3:00 – 4:30 PM

PARALLEL SESSION 2D

8 & 9

Bringing Success to our World: Being Tactical for the Practical

Join an entertaining session on how to live life in a powerful and fun way pursuing those things that are most important. Recognize your own individual greatness. Imagine attaining more confidence in your personal and professional life. This session is aimed to provide you with tips and strategies leading you towards resources you may need to stabilize your financial situation, manage student loans, achieve a work-life balance, and be more time efficient.

SPEAKERS: Tariq Al-Muhtasib, Yasir Qadi

MODERATOR: Mohamed Shiliwala

5:00 – 6:30 PM

MAIN SESSION 4

GRANDBALLROOM

From Isolation to Integration: Befriending our America

“We sent not an apostle except (to teach) in the language of his (own) people, in order to make (things) clear to them. Now Allah leaves straying those whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases: and He is Exalted in power, full of Wisdom.” (Qur’an 14:4)

As Muslim students we enjoy our MSA networks and benefit from the company of our Muslim friends. This does not absolve us of the responsibility of positively engaging with our greater communities beyond our MSA world. In order to do this effectively, we must proactively seek out avenues promoting meaningful engagement. This means increasing and strengthening our ties with people of other faiths, enriching the understanding of our own American culture, and integrating with our greater communities. What steps can we take today to be a part of our American Society?

SPEAKERS: Yasir Qadi, Hatem Bazian

MODERATOR: Asma Rehman

8:30 – 9:00 PM

MAGHRIB

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
9:00 – 10:00 PM	ALIM REUNION	10 & 11
	LATE NIGHT SESSIONS	
11:00 – 12:30AM	<p>Passing the Test: Getting the Parental Stamp of Approval</p> <p>Young Muslim adults and parents don't always see eye to eye when it comes to marriage. Race, age difference, nationality, finances, ambition, education/occupation, or even a particular person may come into play. What is important for us as young Muslim adults is to take proactive steps to engage our parents, with excellence, as allies. This session will address the importance of seeking consent from our family when choosing a spouse. We will also provide some practical tips for helping the parental negotiation process go as smooth as possible.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Khalid Abdul Sattar, Omar Mahmood, Altaf Husain</p>	AUDITORIUM

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11:00 – 12:30AM	<p>Picking up the Pieces: Breakups and Divorce</p> <p>First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes...wait a minute...no it doesn't; at least not all the time. The realities of today's world have left many Muslim students to deal with the pains of broken engagements and divorce. These, though not pleasant, were common during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The good news is that there will be brighter and better days ahead. Come to engage in a discussion of how to overcome this test from Allah, how to get back into the swing of things, and maybe even give marriage another shot.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Saliha Shakir, Faraz Rabbani</p>	12, 13, & 14
1:00 – 3:00 AM	<p>QIYAM UL-LAYL</p> <p>Imam Ahmad al-Haddad in his excellent book "Key to the Garden" defines tafakkur as follows: "And tafakkur is the focus and movement of the heart and mind through the meaning of things in order to reach the underlying intention, and by this, the pearls of truth is reached." Tafakkur is the art, if you like, of churning a matter around in one's mind. He says, "Knowledge comes from tafakkur and from knowledge adoration, and from adoration love". Abu Darda says that "An hour of contemplation is worth a night if salah."</p> <p>SPEAKER: TBD</p>	12, 13, & 14

Sunday, July 5th

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
5:30 – 6:00 AM	AFTER FAJR SERIES Translation and Explanation of Surah Ar-Rum (The Romans, Chapter 30) SPEAKER: Muhammad Ninowy	12, 13, & 14
10:00 – 11:30 AM	PARALLEL SESSIONS 3A Reflecting on Scripture: The Story of 'Ukasha 'Ukasha bin Mihsan's simple act of asking for the right thing at the right time earned him eternal bliss in Paradise, without any questioning on the Day of Judgment. Come learn how you can also benefit from taking advantage of the opportunities that present themselves before you in your everyday lives. Prevent stagnation in your life in this world and improve your station in the Hereafter. Let these reflections on the story of 'Ukasha guide you towards this success. SPEAKER: Khalid Abdul Sattar	RENAISSANCE
10:00 – 11:30 AM	PARALLEL SESSIONS 3B From Silence to Healing: Resisting the Ills of Pills Muslims connected to the college scene routinely see behavior involving substance abuse swept under the rug. Whether it's drugs, alcohol, steroids, or even growth hormones; situations can seem sticky and too personal for intervention. As responsible Muslim students we have an obligation to help our brothers and sisters deal with the pressure and dangers of substance abuse. How can we be better protectors of one another and help deal with these issues? SPEAKERS: Mohammad Magid, Zaynab Alwani, Omar Mahmood	AUDITORIUM
10:00 – 11:30 AM	PARALLEL SESSION 3C Exploring the Literary Gems of the Qur'an (Part Three) Attendance at the previous sessions is not required for understanding this session. We've been told that the Qur'an is a miraculous scripture. This session will share examples of the literary majesty and beauty of the Qur'an. Come experience the explanation of the Qur'an in such a way that it will be impossible to not be deeply moved with little or no understanding of the Arabic language. If you are trying to gain an increased motivation for reading and understanding Qur'an or for learning Arabic, this is where you need to be. SPEAKERS: Muhammad Ninowy, Mokhtar Moghraoui, Usama Canon MODERATOR: Mohamed Shiliwala	12, 13, & 14
10:00 – 11:30 AM	PARALLEL SESSION 3D Bringing Success to our World: Seeking Sacred Knowledge Islam has made the pursuit of Sacred Knowledge a form of worship. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) mentions: "The one who treads on a path in search of sacred knowledge, Allah will make the path to Paradise easy for him" (Muslim, 14) It is crucial that all Muslims learn the proper process and etiquettes of seeking knowledge. The speakers will present these methods, mannerisms, and share their personal stories	8 & 9

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on their experiences. They will also examine traditional and non-traditional routes of seeking knowledge while offering practical advice on each route.

SPEAKERS: Yasir Qadi, Hadia Mubarak

12:00 – 1:30 PM	MAIN SESSION 5	GRANDBALLROOM
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Live, Learn, and Prevail: Conquering Today without Regret

“ If something befalls you, do not say, ‘If only I had done such, things would have been different’ but rather say, ‘Whatever Allah will will come to pass’, for ‘if only’ unlocks the work of shaytan.” (Muslim, 100)

As Muslims individuals it is important to remember that triumph lies only with Allah (swt). The events of the past are written and done; the ink has dried. What we can change, how we can control are our actions today and construct them in a manner which pleases Him. How can we overcome our past mistakes? What can we learn from our harbored regrets? How can we as Muslim students learn to live our lives today without regret?

SPEAKERS: Yasir Qadi, Muzammil Siddiqi, Tariq Al-Muhtasib

MODERATOR: Awais Khalil

1:30 – 3:00 PM	ZUHR & LUNCH	
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1:30 – 2:30 PM	MSA College & Career Fair	8 & 9
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Are you an MSA leader? Network with fellow MSAers from across the US and Canada and learn about the resources and services MSA National has to offer! Various exhibits will be set up to share information about opportunities that are widely available.

3:00 – 4:15 PM	WORKSHOP SESSION 2A	10 & 11
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COMPASS: Gender Interaction

Contributions from both brothers and sisters are necessary and relevant in Islamic work. What are some appropriate guidelines when working with the opposite gender? What is your MSA doing that works and what can be improved on? This workshop will boil down common concerns regarding Islamic interaction between female and male Muslims into a three part analysis. Furthermore, the workshop will allow all interested parties to develop interaction guidelines for specific common scenarios. There will also be a brief question answer period to discuss any relevant concerns specific to your MSA.

SPEAKER: Mohamed Shiliwala

MODERATOR: Atifa Chiragh

3:00 – 4:15 PM	WORKSHOP SESSION 2B	AUDITORIUM
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Political Action Task Force:

Reconciling the Reality of Civil Liberties in U.S. Law Enforcement

In our schools and masjid, cases involving FBI informants and agent provocateurs generate enormous attention increasing our feelings of distrust towards law enforcement agencies. This panel will discuss both sides of the issue: the hesitancy within the Muslim community to put full trust in law enforcement agencies, as well as the earnest efforts by these agencies to protect the rights of Muslims in all situations. Representatives from the FBI Washington DC Field office along with Muslim lawyers and advocates will present what actions they each take in protection of individuals in such situations.

TIME	EVENT/SPEAKERS	ROOM
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SPEAKERS: Asad Ba-Yunus, Special Agent Greg Bristol
MODERATOR: Asma Rehman

3:00 – 4:15 PM	WORKSHOP SESSION 2C	12, 13, & 14
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Community Service Task Force: Project Downtown

Discover the community service phenomenon sweeping the Nation! Come join the Community Service Task Force and discover different ways to start and get involved with Project Downtown. Already involved in any of these projects? Come and network with other MSAs and learn how they are serving their local community

SPEAKER: Wajiha Akhtar, Bilal Ahmed

3:00 – 4:15 PM	WORKSHOP SESSION 2D	RENAISSANCE
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Transforming the soul: Everyday Steps to Reviving our Iman

Reviving our iman is critical in growing closer to Allah (swt) and strengthening our relationship with Him. This session will discuss practical every day steps towards reviving our iman such as visiting the sick, remembering Allah, fasting, and so forth.

SPEAKERS: Khalid Latif, Omar Mahmood

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4:30 – 5:00 PM	Conclusion and farewell to the 46th MSA	GRANDBALLROOM
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Continental Conference

SPEAKERS: Suhail Dar

5:00 – 7:00 PM	MAIN SESSION 6	HALL D
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New Beginnings: Mobilizing and Motivating a Generation

It was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “O people, you should do whatever good deeds you can, for Allah does not get tired (of giving reward) until you get tired. And the most beloved of good deeds to Allah is that in which a person persists, even if it is little. If the family of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) started to do something, they would persist in it.” (al-Bukhaari, 43; Muslim, 782)

As Muslims in a tumultuous age, we must develop the methods and tools necessary to improve our community’s condition. How can we utilize our various individual strengths and approaches to jointly propel our community into a brighter era? What can we do today to energize and mobilize ourselves? How do we get ourselves moving? What are ways that we can ensure the continuity of our actions?

SPEAKERS: Hamza Yusuf, Siraj Wahhaj, Zaid Shakir

MODERATOR: Asma Mirza