

FOC
PRINTS FULL COLOR

Editorial

SUMMER / FALL ISSUE

What happened to the Summer Issue? It didn't. The reasons:

1. Our Website (www.Dialoguetoday.org) has been completely reorganized and modernized by a professional company to meet today's world. It looks "awesome," as today's young people say. It will attract Facebook.com and Twitter.com followers. It will give people the opportunity to ask questions. It will eventually make our magazine available electronically.

2. Finally, I finished my latest book on Catholic-Jewish Issues and Insights (available very soon).

3. I celebrated my 75th Birthday in New York with family and friends.

I apologize and hopefully you will forgive me. I needed the time to accomplish these tasks.

The new reorganization and modernization took most of our financial reserves. I felt it was very necessary if our grass-roots magazine is going to survive. It has to reach a much bigger audience. Let's hope I was right.

In January, we will have Financial Appreciation Month to help defray the new expenses.

FOR THE FUTURE ISSUES - We would like to hear from you. Please send us your suggestions, questions and insights.

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Dialogue Today

2009

CATHOLIC-JEWISH ARTICLES

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE - WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?

By Monsignor John McMahon

I have been involved in interfaith dialogue for over 25 years. The first thing I learned was there are things that we have in common and here's what we can work on together. Every tradition has some shared values such as mercy or hospitality. Secondly, I've come to realize there are two levels of dialogue. One is the stuff we're never going to agree on, like ritual, worship and doctrine. They're the private spaces or religious community. Thirdly, there are always going to be parts of other people's traditions and parts of our tradition that we're going to have to struggle with and that's part of a full relationship. Namely, in some part of history this is what you've done to us and in some part of history here is what we've done to you.

Fourthly, in interfaith dialogue, I believe our philosophy is that we should not expect relationships with people or different religious traditions to be fully satisfying. What relationships are fully satisfying? Also, don't we have particular relationships with our parents and a different relationship with our spouses? Similarly, we have different types of relationships with members of other religions.

Why have I been involved in interfaith dialogue over all these years? I see three basic models of people in faith engage the world of diversity. Whether we like it or not, we live in a pluralistic diverse religious society.

One is we can play the isolation game in which we associate and live only with people of our own particular religious tradition and outlook. The second way is we can play the opposition game; and, therefore we attack anybody that has different religious thinking than ourselves. Thirdly, we can play the pluralism game. In this third model one decides that it's our job to be rooted in our tradition and to be in relationships with people with different backgrounds. Namely, it's a way of being religious, true to our tradition, that is relevant in a world of diversity.

In conclusion, facts are facts. From birth until we die, we're going to be in contact with Jews and Christians, Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists and people from all various religious traditions. Simply put, being involved in interfaith dialogue, I have to ask myself what does it mean to be a Catholic in relationship with the world, not just a relationship with a doctrine that was handed down to me thousands of years ago. Interfaith dialogue forces me to undertake a difficult task of passing on a religious tradition, namely my faith, in a way that recognizes that my religious identity is immersed in interaction with people in other religious backgrounds. What I don't want is for people to forget about their religion when they engage other people. My hope is providing people with a way of how their religion engages positively with other people from different traditions.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Recently, Msgr. John McMahon retired as pastor of St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church in Delray Beach, Florida. He is a close friend and a pioneer in Catholic-Jewish Relations in Southern Florida for twenty-five years. During those years he brought Catholics and Jews closer in their mutual love of God and an appreciation of one another. He has built a permanent bridge of respect and understanding for future generations of Catholics and Jews. He is a giant in Catholic-Jewish Interfaith Dialogue.

REFLECTIONS ON THREE FAITHS (JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM)

By Rev. Marcus Braybrooke

Five Approaches to Interfaith Work

Interfaith work is necessary at all levels-local, national and international. Interfaith organizations also differ in their approach. A major task is to remove bitterness, prejudice and ignorance, which stand in the way of good interfaith relations. On this foundation we need also to affirm the values that enable us to work together for a more just and peaceful world.

1. BITTERNESS

Most communities need to repent for past behavior and to seek mutual forgiveness, which is why it was right for the Churches to apologize for their role.

Religious relations today are scarred by memories of past conflicts, such as the Holocaust, the Crusades, and the Israeli-Arab wars, for example. It is vital that we break free from the bitter memories of the past in order to progress toward an interfaith ideal.

2. PREJUDICE

Deliberate prejudice needs to be challenged and, despite difficulties of definition, I support legislation against stirring up religious hatred. Prejudice arises from inherited attitudes, fear of the stranger and sociological factors. Presently, special attention should be paid to matters involving Islam. It is necessary to dispel false images of Islam and the Muslim community too often found in current media.

3. EDUCATION

In the long run education is the key to improving interfaith relations. We are still very ignorant of those who belong to religions other than our own. I was surprised when I started lecturing on Christianity at the Muslim College in London that almost none of the trainee Imams had ever seen a Bible or entered a church. Conversely, most Christian clergy have never opened the Quran.

Many churches finally are now seeking to learn more about Islam. There are also scholarly groups engaged in serious theological dialogue between the two communities. Presently most universities that teach about Islam are limited just to introductory courses that usually concentrate on the Qurans the Prophet Muhammad and the Five Pillars. It is vital that we learn more about the great extent to which Western cultural and intellectual traditions are indebted to each other and to the wisdom of the East.

4. PERSONAL MEETING

Many have argued that the most fruitful approach often, however, is not to focus on theology, but to concentrate on issues of common concern, such as medical ethics. Additionally, another intersection of shared need and mutual learning can occur by learning about each other's artistic heritage.

This leads to the key point that there is no substitute for personal meeting and often friendship. We can learn about other religions from books and study, but personal encounter changes attitudes. It should be a strong focus of local and national bodies to encourage such meetings for young people and by visits to temples and mosques.

5. A PROPHETIC ROLE

As we reflect on and engage in projects to heal the past and reduce prejudice and ignorance, including through encouraging personal meeting among members of other faiths, we must remember that interfaith work is not just remedial, but prophetic as well.

Religions together have a vital contribution to make towards realizing a more just and peaceful world, ultimately a harmonious society.

Religions should inspire us together to seek reconciliation rather than revenge, to "live more simply that others may simply live" and to revere all life with which we share this planet.

Finally

If we can together make that commitment, we shall be faithful members of our religion, good citizens of our country and good citizens of the world.

Editor's Comment: Rev. Braybrooke wrote this article for the Dialogue & Alliance magazine (Spring/Summer 2007 issue). I believe you will find it as interesting and challenging as I did. While I condensed the article because of space, the words and ideas belong to him.

BIBLICAL INFORMATION

1. SANHEDRIN

In the time of Jesus, Palestine (Israel-today) was ruled by the Romans who generally allowed the Jews to take care of their religious matters. The Sanhedrin (Council of 71 Jewish priests, scribes and political leaders) had the power to arrest and try people in both civil and criminal cases. The Council also settled disputes over the interpretation of the Jewish Law. The Council was led by the High Priest. The Romans did not allow the Sanhedrin to condemn a prisoner to death without the permission of the Roman governor.

2. CAPERNAUM

This fishing city on the Sea of Galilee was where Jesus preached many months. It became Jesus' headquarters during His public ministry.

Capernaum was the home of the Apostles Matthew, Peter and Andrew and probably, James and John. Jesus taught in its synagogue and performed several miracles in the city.

3. INCENSE

It is a mixture of spices and resins and gives off an aromatic smoke when it is burned. The ancient Jews believed that this pleasant odor soothed God's anger toward sinners. So burning incense became a form of praying for forgiveness.

In the Great Temple at Jerusalem only the High Priest could burn the incense, although later other priests could do it.

Interestingly, if anyone misused the holy incense of the Temple (holy because it was blessed by the priest), he was put to death.

4. ISHMAEL

He was the son of Abraham and his servant, Hagar. When Abraham and his wife, Sarah had a child called Isaac. Hagar and Ishmael were forced to leave Abraham's home.

The Arabs, who regard themselves as descendants of Ishmael, are enemies of the Jews, the descendants of Isaac. Very interesting situation to say the least.

5. NAZARETH

It is a village where Jesus grew up after His family's flight into Egypt. Located in Galilee about seventy miles north of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, it was a very small town. Jesus never performed a miracle in his town because they did not believe in Him.

CATHOLIC NEWS

MORE FOREIGN BORN PRIESTS

The Georgetown University based Center for Research in the Apostolate says that approximately one quarter of priests ordained for the United States were born outside the U.S., with the largest numbers coming from Mexico, Vietnam, Poland and the Philippines.

According to their statistics, the ordination class of 2009 claims 11% Asian born men; 6% are from Vietnam, and 2% are from the Philippines. The number of Foreign Born Priests is growing steadily and are more conservative than their predecessors.

Their statistics also reveal that young women joining a religious order are twice as likely to join an order where wearing a religious habit is demanded.

THE VATICAN - THE UNITED NATIONS

The Vatican delegation noted with deep concern predictions by the World Bank that during 2009 an additional 53 to 65 million people will be trapped in extreme poverty and that 800 million will be chronically hungry.

The Vatican delegation also noted that the Catholic Church sponsors approximately 5,500 hospitals, 18,000 health clinics, 15,000 homes for elderly and disabled, and other health care programs throughout the world, but especially in the most isolated and marginalized areas.

LOW CONFESSION NUMBERS

The Georgetown Research Center reveals that three quarters of Catholics reported they never go to Confession (Reconciliation) or they do so less than once a year.

The Diocese of Colorado Springs, CO. has taken an innovative approach to remedy this: Go to where people are, such as the shopping malls.

Staffed by five Capuchin Franciscan priests, the Catholic Center in

the Mall provides general Catholic information, Mass twice a day and confessions from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m.

Since the Catholic Center opened in 2001, there have been 12,000 people attending the 12 noon Mass and 72,000 attending the 6 p.m. Mass. It's impossible to count the number of Confessions.

This novel approach has been extremely successful. (Editor's note - Time for many dioceses to seriously take up this approach.)

JEWISH NEWS

THE HOLOCAUST - UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN

The Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano, reviewed historical documents that the U.S. and British governments ignored or minimized reports of the Nazi extermination plans to exterminate all the Jews of Europe in 1942.

The article (August 13, 2009) quotes heavily from the diary of Henry Morgenthau Jr., U.S. secretary of the treasury during World War II who said that as early as August 1942 administration officials "knew that the Nazis were planning to exterminate all the Jews of Europe."

The Vatican newspaper article also cites a series of State Department orders apparently aimed at preventing reports on Nazi atrocities from reaching the public, which would have increased pressure on the administration for action.

MUSLIM-JEWISH TIES

An international delegation of 29 Rabbis and Imams under the leadership of Rabbi Schneier and Imam Hussaini met in New York City to build support for an initiative to twin Mosques and Synagogues in Europe for joint programs. It is a beginning to building bridges.

POPE BENEDICT XVI'S EXTRAORDINARY DECISION

To heal the open wound between the Jewish community and the Vatican over the lifting of the excommunication of Bishop Williamson who denied the Nazi extermination of six million Jews, the Pope fired (gently) the commission officials who held back information on Bishop Williamson's Anti-Semitic statements. Both Cardinal Castrillon-Hoyos and Monsignor Perl were removed as heads of the Commission.

Monsignor Guido Pozzo was appointed the new head of the Commission responsible directly to the Pope.

A TAX PROBLEM FOR ISRAEL AND THE VATICAN

The taxation matter for Holy Places became Israel's headache in 1948, right after it declared statehood. The United Nations insisted that Israel sign a declaration stating, "No form of taxation shall be levied in respect of any Holy Place, religious building or site which was exempt from such taxation on May 14, 1948."

Tax exemption for all places came to an end with the 2002 Budget Law, which stripped away many but not all exemptions previously enjoyed by religious institutions. Today, these institutions pay one third to one half of the property taxes non-exempt owners would need to pay for the same property.

Rabbi Rosen, director of the American Jewish Committee's Department for Interreligious Affairs said "to the best of anyone's knowledge, Israel never signed the document. Israel has exempted some churches from paying taxes for decades "out of magnanimity."

The problem still remains unresolved despite the Pope's visit to Israel in May.

THE POLISH FRANCISCANS

In an effort to preserve Poland's Jewish heritage, Polish Franciscan priests have opened the nation's first private Hebrew academy in Torun, a university town in Poland. It will focus on Hebrew literature, Israeli history, Polish Jews and modern, Rabbinical and biblical Hebrew.

Prior to World War II, Poland was home to 3.5 million Jews. Some 3 million perished in the Holocaust which claimed more than 6 million European Jews.

THE SPIRIT OF TEREZIN CONCENTRATION CAMP

Terezin (Theresienstadt) in the Czech Republic, a town infamous for its use as a transit ghetto by the Nazis in the 1940's housed more than 150,000 Jews. Most of the Jews were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp while tens of thousands died in Terezin of disease and despair.

What was found in one of the storerooms was a forbidden prayer room which became a small house of worship for the Jews. The walls reveal the faded but still legible symbolic drawings and Hebrew letters of the Talmud. One Hebrew inscription asks for God's mercy.

This former storeroom (forbidden prayer room) was restored and is open to the public, though few know of its existence in the Czech Republic.

PEOPLE

Mehmet Ali Agca

Agca who shot the late pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Square in May 1981, has asked to be baptized as a Catholic. When he is released from prison in Turkey, his baptism will take place in St. Peter's.

Rabbi Jonathan Pearl

He has revived Jewish Life in an aged Astoria, New York Conservative Synagogue. Rabbi Pearl started a singles program, a monthly lunch, Shabbat children's program and special prayer services. He said, "Synagogues have a function to inspire Jews, not just to be there when Jews want to come in."

Archbishop J. A. DiNoia

Pope Benedict XVI appointed a New York born priest, Archbishop DiNoia, as the number two man to the Vatican's Liturgy office. He will have a direct role in the final stages of approval of the new English translation of the Mass prayers.

Susan Stein

Ms. Stein, the writer and performer of the new one woman show, "Etty," based on the writings of another Dutch Holocaust victim, Etty Hillesum, has given a compelling story.

Ms. Hillesum, like Anne Frank lived in Amsterdam, Holland. She kept a diary beginning in early 1941, and continued to write even after she was imprisoned in Westerbork and then to the Auschwitz death camp.

Her diaries and letters were published in the early 1980's in a 900 page book. She was 15 years older than Anne Frank.

Ambassador Miguel Diaz

Catholic Theologian and former Academic Dean at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, Florida, was confirmed by the US Senate as the ninth US Ambassador to the Vatican. Diaz is the first Hispanic to serve in the post. He and his wife, Marian, have four children. The Vatican has accepted the appointment.

Ed McMahon

Known as the longtime sidekick to Johnny Carson on "The Today Show," Ed McMahon was raised and died a Catholic on June 23 in Los Angeles at 86.

Farrah Fawcett

The Charlie's Angels superstar and fashion icon died on June 25 in Los Angeles at 62. She received the Catholic Church's last Rites and had a Mass of the Resurrection at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels.

CATHOLIC - JEWISH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Q. Why do some Orthodox Jews wear a skullcap under hats?

A. The practice of wearing a yarmulke (skullcap) under one's hat began in the Middle Ages around the 17th century when it was customary in German lands for one to doff his hat to a government official as a sign of respect. In order not to be without a head covering for even a moment, Orthodox Jews wore a skull cap under hats. This custom continues today by ultra Orthodox Jews.

2. Q. Why do some Jews pray with the Talit (prayer shawl) draped over their heads?

A. The custom is based in the writing (Torot 4:1) which says, "it is customary for scholars and their students not to pray without first wrapping themselves in their prayer shawls."

3. Q. Why does the Mezuzza on the doorpost contain a piece of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah?

A. It is done to remind Jews to reach towards God: upper one third (eye level) on the right because most people are right handed: slanting position so that it is pointing into the house.

4. Q. Why do Western Jews face east in prayer?

A. The Temples of Jerusalem were central to Jewish life. As a sign of respect, Jews face Jerusalem (to the east for Western Jews) when they pray.

5. Q. Why do some Jews sway when they Pray?

A. Several explanations: a) swaying keeps time to the rhythm of the prayer; b) When Moses received the 10 commandments, people were so moved in awe, they trembled and shook.

6. Q. What is the Jewish Gravesite tradition?

A. It is an ancient custom which has practical origins. Jews were originally a desert people. Jews buried their dead in the sand covering the grave with stones, to mark the spot, but also to prevent animals from digging up the body. Upon visiting a grave, it is considered a "mitzvah" or good deed to add stones to replace those moved by wind or animals. This helps to

preserve the integrity of the grave and the deceased.

Another reason for leaving the stones on the graves is to give charity instead of buying flowers. It is also a visible sign that someone has visited the grave.

7. Q. Why are there 100 blasts on the Shofar?

A. The shofar is an animal horn that is blown like a trumpet on the Jewish Holyday - Rosh Hashanah. Some congregations insist the shofar be blown 100 times. The reason came from Rabbi Meir's comment that a Jew must recite 100 blessings everyday. The hearing of the shofar blown is considered a blessing (Psalm 89:16); many congregations insist that the shofar be blown 100 times.

8. Q. I'm Jewish. Can you tell me how there can be a God who permitted the Holocaust?

A. A very good question to answer. Let us try. First, God gave us a free will to act. As we know, we do not always use it well. Sometimes, people allow the evil within them to rule their lives. The Holocaust happened because some people did evil things. Evil controlled their lives. God can not interfere with our free will. It sounds strange to say it. That is the way he made us and we must respect his work plan.

People did the evil things, not God. Therefore, our aim is to destroy prejudice and hate. That is why we have the Catholic-Jewish relations group. Slowly, good will conquer evil. Do not blame God for the Holocaust. Blame the people who allowed evil to dominate their lives.

9. Q. What is Chanukah (Hanukkah)?

A. Chanukah is the Festival of Lights and is celebrated for eight days in December. It is the remembrance of the victory of Judah Maccabee over the forces of tyranny and the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem. On that day, Jews celebrate religious freedom and affirm God's saving power. The candelabra or menorah that Judah Maccabee relit in the Temple in Jerusalem has seven lamp stands on it with an oil lamp on top of each lamp stand, the Chanukah lamp.

10. Q. What is Shiva?

A. For seven days following a burial of a loved one, the members of the immediate family refrain from leaving the home (except for the Sabbath). In some homes, the mirrors are covered as a gesture of turning away from human vanity. No work is done by family members, their needs are attended to neighbors who bring food, care for the little children and see to it that a minyan (ten Jews who have made their bar/bat mitzvah) to say the prayers in the home. A candle is kept burning in memory of the deceased. These seven days of mourning are known as "sitting Shiva". Shiva is the Hebrew word for seven.

11. Q. Do Jewish people fast like Catholics do?

A. Yes. The main time for Jews to fast is their holy and sacred day - Yom Kippur. On that day, Jews keep a complete fast, no food or drink from sunset to sunset. All Jews from approximately 13 years of age fast unless there is a health threatening reason.

12. Q. What are Rabbis?

A. A Rabbi is not a priest, neither in the Jewish sense nor in the Catholic sense. In Catholicism a priest is a person ordained with special authority to perform certain religious rituals. A rabbi has no authority to perform religious rituals. A rabbi is a teacher, a person educated in Jewish Law and tradition to instruct the Jewish community and to answer questions and resolve disputes regarding the Jewish Law; He can also lead the community in religious services.

INSIGHTS INTO ISLAM

1. Does Islam tolerate other beliefs?

The Quran says: God forbids you not, with regards to those who fight you not for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them; for God loveth those who are just. (Quran, 60:8)

It is one function of Islamic law to protect the privileged status of minorities, and this is why non-Muslim places of worship have flourished all over the Islamic world. History provides many examples of Muslim tolerance towards other faiths: when the caliph Omar entered Jerusalem in the year 634 Islam granted freedom of worship to all religious communities in the city.

2. What do Muslims think about Jesus?

Muslims respect and revere Jesus, and await his Second Coming. They consider him one of the greatest of God's messengers to mankind. A Muslim never refers to him simply as 'Jesus', but always adds the phrase 'upon him be peace'. The Quran confirms his virgin birth (a chapter of the Quran is entitled 'Mary'), and Mary is considered the purest woman in all creation. The Quran describes the Annunciation as follows:

'Behold!' the Angel said, 'God has chosen you, and purified you, and chosen you above the women of all nations. O Mary, God gives you good news of a word from Him, whose name shall be the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, honored in this world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near to God. He shall speak to the people from his cradle and in maturity, and shall be of the righteous.'

She said: ‘O my Lord, How shall I have a son when no man has touched me?’ He said: ‘Even so; God creates what He will. When He decrees a thing, He says to it, “Be!” and it is.’ (Quran, 3:42-7)

Jesus was born miraculously through the same power which had brought Adam into being without a father:

Truly, the likeness of Jesus with God is as the likeness of Adam. He created him of dust, and then said to him, ‘Be!’ and he was. (Quran, 3:59)

During his prophetic mission Jesus performed many miracles. The Quran tells us that he said:

I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I make for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it and it becomes a bird by God’s leave. And I heal the blind, and the lepers and I raise the dead by God’s leave. (Quran, 3:49)

Neither Muhammad nor Jesus came to change the basic doctrine of the belief in One God, brought by earlier prophets, but to confirm and renew it. In the Quran, Jesus is reported as saying that he came:

“To attest the law which was before me. And to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden you; I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, so fear God and obey Me.” (Quran, 3:50)

The Prophet Muhammad said:

Whoever believes there is no god but God, alone without partner, that Muhammad is His messenger, that Jesus is the servant and messenger of God, His word breathed into Mary and a spirit emanating from Him, and that Paradise and Hell are true, shall be received by God into Heaven. (Hadith from Bukhari)

3. Why is the family so important to Muslims?

The family is the foundation of Islamic society. The peace and security offered by a stable family unit is greatly valued, and seen as essential for the spiritual growth of its members. A harmonious social order is created by the existence of extended families; children are treasured, and rarely leave home until the time they marry.

4. What about Muslim women?

Islam sees a woman, whether single or married, as an individual in her own right, with the right to own and dispose of her property and earnings. A marriage dowry is given by the groom to the bride for her own personal use, and she keeps her own family name rather than taking her husband’s.

Both men and women are expected to dress in a way which is modest and dignified; the traditions of female dress found in some Muslim countries are often the expression of local customs.

The Messenger of God said:

‘The most perfect in faith amongst believers is he who is best in manner and kindest to his wife.’

5. Can a Muslim have more than one wife?

The religion of Islam was revealed for all societies and all times and so accommodates widely differing social requirements. Circumstances may warrant the taking of another wife but the right is granted, according to the Quran, only on condition that the husband is scrupulously fair.

6. Is Islamic marriage like Christian marriage?

A Muslim marriage is not a ‘sacrament’, but a simple, legal agreement in which either partner is free to include conditions. Marriage customs thus vary widely from country to country. As a result, divorce is not common, although it is not forbidden as a last resort. According to Islam, no Muslim girl can be forced to marry against her will: her parents will simply suggest young men they think may be suitable.

7. How do Muslims treat the elderly?

In the Islamic world there are no old people’s homes. The strain of caring for one’s parents in this most difficult time of their lives is considered an honor and blessing, and an opportunity for great spiritual growth. God asks that we not only pray for our parents, but act with limitless compassion, remembering that when we were helpless children they preferred us to themselves. Mothers are particularly honored: the Prophet taught that “Paradise lies at the feet of mothers”. When they reach old age, Muslim parents are treated mercifully, with the same kindness and selflessness.

In Islam, serving one’s parents is a duty second only to prayer, and it is their right to expect it. It is considered despicable to express any irritation when, through no fault of their own, the old become difficult.

The Quran says: “Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and be kind to parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, do not say ‘uff to them or chide them, but speak to them in terms of honor and kindness. Treat them with humility, and say, ‘My Lord! Have mercy on them, for they did care for me when I was little.’” (17:23-4)

CREDIT: The Islamic Affairs Department, The Embassy of Saudi Arabia, Washington, D.C. Consultants The Islamic Texts Society, Cambridge, UK. 1989.

SPIRITUAL INSIGHTS

Is God not hearing you?

When God Waits

There are a lot of *why* questions that we lift up to God. Every day people are looking to heaven and crying out in frustration, “Lord, why aren’t you doing something about this? Why is this happening to me?” We saturate the airwaves with the *why* questions of life.

I’m convinced that God has one answer for almost every one of those questions. He says, *I’m just waiting on you.*

When Moses and the Israelites stood on the edge of the Red Sea watching the Egyptian army close in on them, they cried out to God in fear. They began praying that God would somehow rescue them. And look what God said: “Tell the people to get moving!” (Exodus 14:15). To paraphrase, “I’m just waiting for you.”

Too often we spend our days waiting for a miracle. When trouble comes, we cry out to God for help. When things don’t move fast enough, we blame God for taking his time. And all the while God is saying to us, *I haven’t gone anywhere. I’m just waiting on you.*

And what is it that God is waiting for? Often he is waiting for us to lay aside our own agenda and trust him ... Whenever God waits, he waits for a purpose.

And when we finally come to our senses and do the thing that we know He wants us to do, He moves with a vengeance. The Red Sea parts, and things start to happen.

CREDIT: by Frank M. Martin in Embracing Eternity

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- WILLIAM JOSEPH & WILLIAM ANTHONY REHREN req. by Mrs. Anne Rehren
- DAVID AARON SMITH req. by Nora & Don Smith
- ERWIN STIEGLITZ req. by Margaret Stieglitz (Wife)
- RALPH X. STONE req. by Mr. & Mrs. James Perri
- CARLA FRANCESCA TODARO req. by Mom & Dad
- MSGR. WILLIAM A. VARVARO req. by Jennie Varvaro (Mother)
- ANTHONY ZOTOLLO req. by Marion Zotollo (Wife)
- GRACE WALSH req. by Carla & Thomas Walsh
- GRACE WALSH req. by Melissa & Thomas Walsh
- GRACE WALSH req. by Amy & Marge (Sisters)
- GRACE WALSH req. by Ary & Jennifer Simpadian
- JOHN C. WALGENWITT req. by Lorraine Walgenwitt

*A loved one may be enrolled for one year - \$100 donation

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