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## “Coexistence”

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### **Abstract**

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"I had a dream a couple of weeks ago, where I was at the mosque that I usually attend; it seemed enormous and filled with spiritual light, which we refer to as —Noor ll. I could feel the profundity in the atmosphere as I wondered around. Then I found myself baffled by the fact there were Christian congregations as well as Jewish, along with Muslims, each group gathered around their religious leaders and praying and singing. However, to my astonishment they all were singing the same religious song. As I approached a couple of members of the Jewish faith, I realized they were singing familiar lyrics that I could easily understand. I soon began singing with them. I felt the warmth that captured everyone's heart. I told them we have the same prayer in the Islamic faith. We all prayed for a long time, enjoying each other's company. I said to myself, this is how it should be; we should be able to breathe the same air, understand and respect our differences and be able to remain under one roof."



*Sule Yilmaz*

## **“Coexistence”**

I had a dream a couple of weeks ago, where I was at the mosque that I usually attend; it seemed enormous and filled with spiritual light, which we refer to as “Noor”. I could feel the profundity in the atmosphere as I wondered around. Then I found myself baffled by the fact there were Christian congregations as well as Jewish, along with Muslims, each group gathered around their religious leaders and praying and singing. However, to my astonishment they all were singing the same religious song. As I approached a couple of members of the Jewish faith, I realized they were singing familiar lyrics that I could easily understand. I soon began singing with them. I felt the warmth that captured everyone’s heart. I told them we have the same prayer in the Islamic faith. We all prayed for a long time, enjoying each other’s company. I said to myself, this is how it should be; we should be able to breathe the same air, understand and respect our differences and be able to remain under one roof.

Furthermore, mainly we all are creations of God, regardless of how we refer to him, we all pray to the same God and we all have the same purpose in life, to serve him. Hence, we are like the branches of one big tree, we have the same roots, and grow the same fruit but just grow in different directions. Yet, we must still share our food, and land. Nevertheless, no need for competition, because we all are the children of Adam and Eve. Hence, we must cooperate and work as a whole for the good of humanity.

Moreover, going back to the example of the tree, I believe in reality that all three faiths resemble the tree, especially regarding the city of Jerusalem considered a holy city by all three Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). However, sadly we often hear about the negative events that take place among people of these faiths. Is it so difficult to unite and learn to tolerate one another and not become an object of hatred-filled eyes? Or simply don't hate or fear but rather love each other for who we are? There is a saying in my faith that illustrates this perfectly: "Love all creation for the sake of the Creator, no matter what."

As a result, I feel delighted when I see people from all three faiths come together for a certain occasion and celebrate it together. For instance, we share a parking lot with the Catholic Church next to our mosque in Charlotte, which makes us neighbors. During Ramadan we invite them to *if tar* (evening meal when Muslims break their fast) and they in return invite us and we meet their congregation and spend time together and get to know each other. Also, when they have a big event we accommodate and plan ahead so we don't have problem with the parking space, and they do the same.

Ultimately, I think we all need to acknowledge the importance of faith and role of religion in our lives and don't try to associate any certain event with religion. I believe there is good and bad in every society, but faith should not be held accountable for people's mistakes. Faith is the path to God and it can only reflect goodness. Thus, coexistence is necessary among the faiths to unite the society and not divide it.