

## **Statement by Imam Mohamad Joban**

**December 27, 2019**

I write to sincerely apologize, first to my Jewish siblings and then to my students and community, for inappropriate and offensive commentary I made during a recent weekly lecture. My Jewish siblings should never have to hear that kind of commentary. I am very sorry for any pain I have caused. I pray that Allah/God forgives me for my shortcomings. I also ask my Jewish siblings, my students, and the community for forgiveness.

I recognize the high honor that the Quran gives to the “Children of Israel” (i.e., Jewish people) and the honorific title of “People of the Book” that is used throughout the Quran to describe Jews (and Christians). I further know that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught love, honor and respect for all of our fellow human beings. The language and tone I used in my lecture does not reflect the level of love, honor and respect that Islamic teachings dictate.

Please know that I do hold that love, honor and respect, even if I failed to show it in this instance.

In the lecture I gave, I discussed a Quranic story of an ancient Jewish town, where some of the community members repeatedly broke the Jewish Sabbath, even after over a year of warnings, by their Jewish brethren. Eventually, the Sabbath-breakers were punished by God. Among other personal errors in telling this story to my class, I referred to conduct by “the Jews,” when I should have referred to the specific people in the story. And I used improper imagery and language that is not based on any sound theology. I should know better, and should have provided a more appropriate explanation and proper language, tone and attitude.

I am currently traveling, but I commit to learning from this situation, including meeting with some of our Jewish siblings when I return to Washington. I believe that we human beings make mistakes, but as a person of faith, I similarly believe in redemption and reconciliation. I have asked for forgiveness and recommit myself to living the love, honor and respect for all human beings shown in the Quran and by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).