

Belief Systems - Applying our Knowledge to Current Events

Directions: Read the following excerpt from *The New York Times* below. Then, thoughtfully answer the prompts on the back of this page.

Muslim Groups Raise Thousands for Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting Victims

By Matthew Haag

Two Muslim organizations have raised nearly \$200,000 to help victims and their families following the shooting massacre at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh on Saturday.

Tarek El-Messidi, a Chicago-based activist, said he learned of the synagogue shooting in a call Saturday morning from a friend who runs the Muslim fund-raising website LaunchGood. His friend asked Mr. El-Messidi if he could do something to help the victims, and he agreed....

“Putting our religious differences or even your political differences aside, the core of all of us is that we have a shared humanity,” Mr. El-Messidi said in an interview. “We really wanted to reach out as human beings to help.”...

One person who jumped at the chance to help was Shay Khatiri, an Iranian-American who immigrated to the United States four years ago. Mr. Khatiri, who lives in Washington, created a GoFundMe campaign for the synagogue on Saturday.

Over the weekend, donors contributed more than \$100,000. Then \$200,000. And by Tuesday evening, the campaign had raised nearly \$900,000. The latest goal is to bring in \$1 million.

Among the donors, “there are Steins and Bergs, and there are Mohammeds. There are generic American names, and there are Asian ones,” Mr. Khatiri wrote on GoFundMe. **“It is only fitting that Americans of all backgrounds — immigrant, native-born, Jewish, atheist, Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, Muslim, etc. — are uniting against this hateful act.** America is beautiful!”...

Mr. El-Messidi said that while Judaism and Islam have their differences, they were linked by a tragic similarity: Followers of both faiths have been targeted in bigoted attacks. “The shared discrimination has brought both communities closer,” he said.

Source:

Haag, Matthew. “Muslim Groups Raise Thousands for Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting Victims.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 29 Oct. 2018, www.nytimes.com/2018/10/29/us/muslims-raise-money-pittsburgh-synagogue.html.

1. In just one sentence, summarize the main idea of this article.
2. What fact that you learned about Islam does this story remind you of?
3. Re-read the **bolded** statement in the sixth paragraph. Based on your knowledge of belief systems, do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
4. How can we use history to correct modern-day misconceptions? Use specific examples from our belief systems unit in your answer.