

كنيسة مار نقولا الأنطاكية الأرثوذكسية

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

Antiochian Archdiocese of North America
Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

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His Beatitude **Patriarch JOHN X**, Patriarch
of Antioch and All of East

Pastor, V. Rev. **Fr. George Baalbaki**

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Sub-Dn. **Ilyan Baalbaki**

Sub-Dn. **Tariq Rantisi**

Parish Council Chairman: **Salim Qaru**

Parish Council Vice Chairman: **Azar Azar**

Sunday, January 22, 2023

House Blessings

As the tradition of our Orthodox Church, V. Rev. Fr. George Baalbaki will start his visitation for house blessings. To schedule a visit, please call the church office or Fr. George's cellphone: 586 214-4428

MEMORIAL SERVICES:

✠ Forty Days Memorial Service for the Servant of God, **Mansour Kawkab** will be held on **Sunday, January 29th**, offered by his family. *May His Memory be Eternal!*

THE EPISTLE: Timothy (4:9-15)

Timothy, my son, the saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, Who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things. Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties; devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress.

الرسالة: تيموثاوس (4:9-15)

يا ولدي تيموثاوس، صَادِقَةٌ هِيَ الْكَلِمَةُ وَجَدِيرَةٌ بِكُلِّ قَبُولٍ فَإِنَّا لِهَذَا نَتَعَبُ وَنُعِيرُ، لَأَنَّا أَلْقَيْنَا رَجَاءَنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْحَيِّ الَّذِي هُوَ مُخَلِّصُ النَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ، وَلَا سَيِّمًا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ. فَوَصَّ بِهَذَا وَعَلَّمَ بِهِ. لَا يَسْتَهِنُ أَحَدٌ بِقُوَّتِكَ، بَلْ كُنْ مِثَالًا لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الْكَلَامِ وَالتَّصَرُّفِ وَالْمَحَبَّةِ وَالْإِيمَانِ وَالْعَفَافِ. وَاضْطَبْ عَلَى الْقِرَاءَةِ إِلَى حِينِ قُدُومِي، وَعَلَى الْوَعْظِ وَالتَّعْلِيمِ، وَلَا تُهْمِلِ الْمَوْهَبَةَ الَّتِي فِيكَ، الَّتِي أُوتِيَتْهَا بِنُبُوَّةٍ، يَوْضَعُ أَيْدِي الْكَهَنَةِ * تَأْمَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ وَكُنْ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفًا لِيَكُونَ تَقَدُّمُكَ ظَاهِرًا فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ.

THE GOSPEL: Luke (19:1-10)

At that time, Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. And there was a man named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. And he sought to see Who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus, for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. And when they saw it they all murmured, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have

defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost.”

الإِنْجِيل: لوقا (10-1:19)

في ذلك الزمان، فيما يسوع مُجْتَازٌ في أريحا، إذا برجلٍ اسمُهُ زَكَا كانَ رَئيساً على العَشَّارينَ، وكانَ غَنِيّاً وكانَ يَلْتَمِسُ أَنْ يَرى يسوعَ مِنْهُ، فَلَمْ يَكُنْ يَسْتَطِيعُ مِنَ الْجَمْعِ لَأَنَّهُ كَانَ قَصِيرَ الْقَامَةِ فَتَقَدَّمَ مُسْرِعاً، وَصَعَدَ إِلَى جُمَيْرَةٍ لِيَنْظُرَهُ، لَأَنَّهُ كَانَ مُزْمِعاً أَنْ يَجْتَازَ بِهَا فَلَمَّا انْتَهَى يسوعُ إِلَى الْمَوْضِعِ، رَفَعَ طَرْفَهُ فَرَأَاهُ، فَقَالَ لَهُ: يَا زَكَا أَسْرِعِ انْزِلْ، فَالْيَوْمَ يَنْبَغِي لِي أَنْ أُمَكِّثَ فِي بَيْتِكَ فَأَسْرِعْ وَنَزَلَ وَقَبْلَهُ فَرِحاً* فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْجَمِيعُ ذَلِكَ تَدَمَّرُوا قَانِلِينَ: إِنَّهُ دَخَلَ لِيَحِلَّ عِنْدَ رَجُلٍ خَاطِيٍّ. "فَوَقَفَ زَكَا وَقَالَ لِيَسُوعَ: هَاءَنْذَا، يَا رَبُّ، أَعْطِي الْمَسَاكِينَ نِصْفَ أَمْوَالِي. وَإِنْ كُنْتُ قَدْ غَبَنْتُ أَحَدًا فِي شَيْءٍ، أَرُدُّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَضْعَافٍ فَقَالَ لَهُ يسوعُ: الْيَوْمَ قَدْ حَصَلَ الْخَلَاصُ لِهَذَا الْبَيْتِ لَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَيْضاً ابْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَنَّ ابْنَ الْبَشَرِ إِنَّمَا أَتَى لِيُطَلِّبَ وَيُخَلِّصَ مَا قَدْ هَلَكَ.

قناديل الهيكل ALTAR CANDLES



Offered by **Nadim, Janan, Jim, Ivette, Jennifer, Brandon & Matthew Howell, Jane & Oscar Moran** for the speedy recovery of **Basma Howell** on the occasion of her 84th birthday on January 18th. *God Bless and Many Years!*

Holy Bread of Oblation is Offered by:

✠ **David Hanhan and his family**, in loving memory of his mother **Afdokia Hanhan** and his son **Joseph David Hanhan**.
May Their Memories Be Eternal!

CONGRATULATIONS:

Congratulations to the newly elected Parish Council Chairman: **Salim Qaru**,
Vice Chairman: **Azar Azar** and the officers. *God Bless you all!*

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS:

- **GENERAL PARISH MEETING & INSTALLATION OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS:** **This Sunday, January 22**, following Divine Liturgy.
- **ST. NICHOLAS ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY:** **Saturday, February 11, 2023.** Premium Dinner, Open Bar and Mezza. Featuring famous singer: **Zuhair Francis** and **Maestro Radwan Shakshir + ensemble**. More details to follow.
- **ST. NICHOLAS CRAB FEED:** **Saturday February 25th**, more info to follow.
- **CAMP THREE HOLY YOUTHS 2023:** **June 19th – 22nd**. Save the date! Campthy.com
- **ANNUAL PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE 2022:** **June 28th – July 2nd** taking place in Garden Grove, Ca. at Irvine Marriott Hotel. For more information, please visit: <https://antiochianevents.com/la>

2023 GREAT LENT

Day	Date	Celebration
Monday	February 27	First Day of Great Lent
Sunday	March 5	Sunday of Orthodoxy
Sunday	March 19	Sunday of the Holy Cross
Sunday	April 9	Western Easter / Orthodox Palm Sunday
Sunday	April 16	GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA

2023 St. Nicholas Church Events

SAVE THE DATES:

Month	Day	Event
June 19 th – 22 th		Camp THY
June 28 th – July 2 nd		PLC in Garden Grove, Ca.
July	23 rd	St. Nicholas Annual Day Picnic
October 7 th – 8 th		St. Nicholas Annual Festival
November	18 th	St. Nicholas Annual Thanksgiving Family Night
December	10 th	Parish Council Elections
December	23 rd	St. Nicholas Christmas Party

Archdiocese Receiving Applications for Prospective Antiochian Seminarians

A Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree from an Orthodox Theological School is the required educational qualification for ordination to the holy priesthood in our archdiocese. Now that the Antiochian House of Studies (AHOS) offers an accredited MDiv, we have received several questions about how this new degree program fits into our archdiocesan educational program. Therefore, we are providing the following guidance.

As has been the longstanding policy of our archdiocese, all men who wish to study for an MDiv in preparation for ordination to the holy priesthood must apply for the blessing of the Metropolitan before applying to a theological school. If they are approved, the Metropolitan will bless them to apply to a school of his choice. Candidates do not normally indicate a preference of which school they wish to attend; rather, they obediently attend the program chosen by the Metropolitan.

However, the distinctive features of the AHOS MDiv program argue for a slight modification of this procedure. The program utilizes a hybrid-learning model, which is different from traditional, on-campus seminary; these two different models each have different advantages and benefits and thus may be suited to students in different life situations or with different future goals. Therefore, when applying to the Metropolitan for a blessing to begin MDiv studies, applicants may include a statement explaining why studying through AHOS might make more sense in their particular case (no such statement is necessary if they are willing and able to attend a traditional, on-campus seminary). Of course, providing such an explanatory statement must be done with the understanding that the Metropolitan will have the ultimate decision.

All men who wish to study in preparation for priestly ministry should begin by discussing this vocation with their pastor. The pastor may then request an application packet from the archdiocese and pass it on to the applicant. The application deadline each year is January 31, in advance of a fall commencement of studies.

Time for House Blessings

Theophany has passed for those of us following the new calendar. The waters have been blessed. Our souls have been cleansed and refreshed by the drinking/sprinkling thereof. And now it's time! Time to clean our house. Literally.

Why should we clean our home at this time of year? We want to prepare for the special event that will happen soon within our walls: our house blessing! The traditional "after Theophany" visit from the parish priest to bless each home with holy water has been part of Orthodox Christian practice for centuries. We work to prepare our homes for this blessing, just as we work to prepare our hearts for other blessings (like communion) that we receive from God. While the house blessing is not a sacrament, it is an important part of helping us to live the Faith at home, and so we need to take time to prepare accordingly!

Zaccheus welcomed Christ into his home with generosity. "Do they (your children) see you welcoming Christ into your home by giving what you can to those who need it?... Is it clear to everyone who lives there and visits there that your house is a house of prayer?" Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick challenges his listeners to welcome Christ as Zaccheus did, not just for the house blessing, but all year around in [this homily from January 2017](#).

The house blessing is a special time for each family. It is unique because of the prayers requesting God's sanctification of our home, and also because of the personal time that it offers with our parish priest. Every member of the family can participate (and even help!) with the house blessing, and each person will benefit from it. You may wish to print this [prayer from the early church](#), and allow your child(ren) to decorate it as you talk about your upcoming house blessing. Talk together about all of the things we are asking God to do when we pray this prayer and when we have our house blessed. Perhaps your family will find it helpful to incorporate this prayer for the blessing of your house into your prayers more regularly than once a year!

[Author Jane G. Meyer wrote a beautiful, child-centered piece about house blessings](#). "There may be a few rituals in the Orthodox Church that we struggle to explain to a young child, but the house blessing is not one of them. Many of the elements that accompany this tradition are appealing to a little one. Here are a few things we've discovered over the years that make this tradition especially meaningful..." You can read the ways that she incorporates children into the house blessing in her article posted on [pemptousia.com](#)

Families with young children may find this [information and lesson about Holy Theophany](#) (which talks a bit about house blessings) helpful to use to teach the children about this wonderful event. Here is a [useful printable](#) that can help us teach our children about Theophany and house blessings. It also provides a checklist that we can go over together to be sure that we have everything ready!

Draw Near Designs offered a [simple guide to prepare for your house blessing](#), complete with a "map" of where on your prayer table to place each item needed for the blessing. They have also included ways to incorporate children in the preparation for the blessing, for example: "Have your kids pretend to be the priest and walk around the house blessing or censing it. Have them remove any toys that are in their way and in turn would be in the priest's way as he walks through the house."

Print your own copies of the [house blessing service in its entirety](#) to follow along during the priest's visit.

Following the house blessing, consider showing [this video of an Indonesian house blessing](#) to

your children and talking about how our brothers and sisters around the world worship as we do. Look and listen for things that are the same from your house blessing! "...By sanctifying our home, we extend the grace of God to the neighbors."

So, let us do all that we can to prepare our home, our family, and our hearts for our house blessing! And then, let us participate with joy. We will be the better for it.

From the Antiochian Orthodox Department of Christian Education

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

SUNDAY OF ZACCHEUS

Today's Gospel is about vanity and about the way in which it can be overcome, indeed about the condition and the cost of it. Zacchaeus was a rich man, a powerful man known in his town, a man whom everyone would recognize; he was a man of unrighteous ways, and yet something stirred within him when he heard of Christ and he wanted to see Him. It probably was to a certain extent a desire to see the New Prophet of Israel, but this would not have been enough to prompt him to do what he did; in the crowd, because he was too small of stature, he climbed into a tree; sure, he was surrounded with laughter, with mockery and yet, he so wanted to see Christ, it mattered so much to him to see Him that he was prepared to be mocked, laughed at rather than let Him pass by. And in all this crowd through which Christ was passing Christ saw only one man: Zacchaeus, and He called him down and He went to stay with him.

Vanity is that condition of our soul, that miserable condition of our soul, in which we are afraid of human judgment, in which we derive our sense of worth from the judgment of those who surround us. And indeed it is vanity, because the things for which we are praised are vain, empty, unworthy of the greatness of man; and also, we do not turn for praise to those people capable of a sound and at times severe judgment; we turn to the people who are ready to offer us the praises which we want. This makes these praises doubly vain, its substance is naught, and the people from whom we receive it are also empty, in our own eyes, until they speak of us good. St John Climacus says that vanity is the attitude of one who is afraid of men and is arrogant before the face of God, who thinks God's judgment matters little, provided that he has the approval of those who surround him.

Is that not a true description of the way in which we stand in life, of the way in which we are prepared to forget the judgment of God provided we feel supported by the judgment of men? And what is the way then? Zacchaeus shows us one way: care nothing about the judgment of men because the judgment of God, the presence of God, or perhaps the judgment of the one who will not praise us but is a person of integrity and of truth matters more. Zacchaeus did not know Whom Christ was and that He was the Son of God become the Son of man, but he knew that Christ was a man of integrity and he wanted to see Him, to meet Him face to face.

But then there are also two other ways of shaking off the fear of man, this dependence upon human's judgment at the cost of our own wholeness. St John Climacus says to us that the way to get rid of vanity is humility; St Isaac of Syria strangely says the way is also pride, and both are true, only that the one will give us life and the other will give us death. If we choose the way of pride we will assert ourselves arrogantly, not only in the face of men, but also in the face of God; our own judgment shall be the only thing that counts, and then we will find death at the end of the road. The way of humility is that of bowing before the judgment of God. If we are incapable of soaring Godwards, lie before Him like the parched earth is before the face of the sky, abandoned, helpless, thirsty, hungry, longing, desperate not to be able to achieve what we wish to achieve,

this is the beginning of humility.

But even that may be too much for us, even that may be too difficult for us because we are not used to let go, to abandon ourselves, offer ourselves to an act of God. Then we can begin to overcome vanity by gratitude. Whenever we discover that there is in us a moment of vanity, let us ask ourselves: why? Very often, it is because we have, inadvertently quite often, said the right thing, or inadvertently done the right thing; we can then turn to God and thank Him that He gave us the opportunity, that He gave us eyes to see the need, ears to hear the cry, a mind to

understand, a heart to respond, good will to bring us into motion and the mean to do the right thing. Is not that reason enough for us to be grateful, do we not know, all of us, from experience that it is not the need that will call out of us always, inevitably the right response? How often there is a need and our heart is parched, and cold, and indifferent? How often someone cries for help and we understand nothing, how often our heart has been stirred and our mind began to understand, but we are not used to compel ourselves, and our will wavers, and wavers too long, until it is too late. And we could go on describing our condition in many more details. Let us learn first of all to be grateful that God gives us the possibility to do right instead of preening ourselves and be proud of the fact that for once we have done what should be natural to us always, and then gradually we may outgrow even that level and still remaining grateful, still remaining amazed at God's goodness. We may then learn to be humble in a way in which no one knows, not declaring that we are unworthy, but in adoration of God's greatness, in veneration of other people, in the readiness to forget ourselves completely for the sake of God, for the sake of any person who meets us and challenges us to be compassionate, to be loving, to be understanding. And the blindness might fall off our eyes, vanity will leave us free at least for a moment and we will be able to face ourselves and to face God and others as the Publican did when he entered the Temple, and did not dare to come unto into it because it was the place of holiness where God abides, the place where he thought only the worthy ones can come. And we will be accepted by God because of this recognition of His holiness and the reverence, with which we will treat Him and our neighbour. Amen.



شراكة الله والإنسان:
من مائدة الحياة إلى مائدة الخلاص
+ سلوان مطران جبيل والبترون وما يليهما

يدفعنا إنجيل توبة زكا إلى التأمل بواقعا على خطيئ. الأول هو خط أمتال زكا، أي الذين أخطأوا بحق أنفسهم وبحق الآخرين وبحق الله. أما الثاني فهو خط معاصريه، نابذيه والشامتين به وبمن يخالطه. يأتي لباس التوبة في هذا الإنجيل ليعرضه يسوع على هؤلاء وأولئك معاً حتى يرتدوا لباس الفضيلة التي بحسب المسيح.

جمع زكا، في ذاته، عييين كبيرين بنظر أترابه. فهو قصير القامة وهذا أمر يحتمل الاستهزاء به. وهو أيضاً رئيس العشارين في منطقة أريحا، فكان موسوماً بالسمعة الرديئة بحكم ممارسته الغبن والظلم والجشع في أداء وظيفته.

على المقلب الآخر من هذا الواقع النتن، هناك فرحة بانته معالمها مذ قرر زكا، بلهفة ظاهرة، أن يصعد إلى الجميزة ليرى يسوع: «ركض متقدماً، وصعد إلى جميزة لكي يراه لأنه كان مزماً أن يمر من هناك» (لوقا ١٩: ٤). قادته لهفته إلى أن يتضع عملياً - بصعوده إلى جميزة - أمام نفسه وأمام الآخرين، إذ كان مدفوعاً، لربما بفضوله، إلى رؤية المسيح. إنه اتضاع

لفت نظر يسوع وأراد أن يترسخ أكثر في نفس زكا، فبادلته النظرة وشق له الطريق ليسلك فيها: أولاً، بأن ناداه باسمه، فلم يحتقره بل كرمه؛ وثانياً، بأن دعا نفسه إلى منزله: «يا زكا، أسرع وانزل لأنه ينبغي أن أمكث اليوم في بيتك» (لوقا ١٩: ٥)، فلم يتجنبه بل رغب في أن يحلّ ضيفاً عليه. بهذا أحاطه يسوع بتواضع فائق ومحبة خالصة، ما ولد لدى زكا استعداداً جديداً

أتى ليرفعه من التنانة التي يقبع فيها. لذا «أسرع ونزل وقبله فرحاً» (لوقا ١٩: ٦). شكّل هذا الاستعداد الواعد درجة من الفرح أعلى من اللهفة والذي بدأ يتكوّن في نفس هذا الإنسان القصير القامة والخاطي جداً.

إذا كان زكا لفت نظر المسيح، فإن المسيح لفت نظره إلى ضرورة الكفّ عن مشاهدته من فوق، بالعمل على النزول إلى أسفل، إلى بيته، إلى واقعه، إلى نفسه. هذا كان يجب أن يحصل بسرعة حتى يستفيد ممّا ظهر في قلبه من استعداد حسن، فلا تتبخر الفرصة السانحة بأن يتخطى واقعه بداعي ما يُلْبِسُه إياه مركزه وسلطته وسطوته بين الناس من مجد باطل وحبّ للذات وتكبر وعجرفة.

تلّف زكا أمر يسوع إليه بحكمة ونباهة وفرح، وتقدّم الطبيب الشافي إلى مكان العلاج الذي اختاره له، إلى بيته. في هذا الاختيار فائدتان. من جهة، يوفّر يسوع الفرصة لزكا لتكون بينهما عشرة فيشفي يسوع بمحبته ضمور الشعور بالآخرين عند زكا؛ ومن جهة أخرى، يوفّر له المناخ الصالح ليقوم بتصحيح ما اعوجّ في سلوكه وممارسته مهنته فيشفي يسوع برحمته غياب العدل في حياة زكا.

بنزول زكا عن الجميزة، نزل إلى نفسه. بقاؤه على الجميزة ما كان ليمنحه الرؤية الصحيحة ليسوع. فالمسيح ليس «فرجة»، وليس غرضاً للفضول. بنزول زكا إلى نفسه على ضوء ما وفّره له الطبيب الشافي من مناخ ملائم ودعم واضح، استطاع أن يرى خللين فطعيين لديه: غياب الرحمة وغياب العدل. فهم أنّ عليه أن يصلحهما على ضوء ما وفّره له حضور يسوع، فأعلن: «ها أنا يا رب أعطي نصف أموالي للمساكين، وإن كنت قد وشيت بأحد أردّ أربعة أضعاف» (لوقا ١٩: ٨). اتسع

قلب زكا إلى درجة فاض معها رحمة على المساكين، فلم يُغلق غناه أحشائه عنهم، ثم أجزل عدلاً على المظلومين، أضعاف ما كانت الشريعة تطلب في مثل هذه الحالة، فلم يترك للجشع والمجد الفارغ مكاناً في قلبه. هكذا خبر درجة الفرح التي يحدثنا عنها المزمور: «الرحمة والحق النقياء، البرّ والسلام ثلاثاً» (٨٥: ١٠). إنها درجة المصالحة التي يؤسّس عليها زكا مسيرته مع يسوع ومع أترابه من الآن فصاعداً.

بنتيجة هذه المسيرة، بان الفرح الأخير، فرح الطبيب الشافي، فوضعنا يسوع في حقيقته حتى نلمسها بدورنا فيعيدنا زكا بالنقلة النوعية التي اختبرها: «اليوم حصل خلاص لهذا البيت، إذ هو أيضاً ابن إبراهيم» (لوقا ١٩: ٩). فمن منبؤ من الجماعة ومحترق منها صار زكا محط نظر العناية الإلهية حتى ضمّه يسوع إلى عائلة إبراهيم بالإيمان. ومن كان قزماً في عين أترابه صار عملاقاً في المسيح، وتحول واقعه - منذ الآن - من واقع هلاك إلى واقع خلاص.

أصاب يسوع هذه المرأة مأكلاً، فله طعام لسنا نعرفه، وهو أن يعمل مشيئة أبيه الذي أرسله ويتمّ عمله (يوحنا ٤: ٣٢ و ٣٤). نعم، هذا ما أعلنه يسوع في نهاية ضيافة زكا له: «ابن الإنسان قد جاء لكي يطلب ويخلص ما قد هلك» (لوقا ١٩: ١٠)، داعياً بشكل غير مباشر منتقديه هو ونابذيه زكا (لوقا ١٩: ٧) إلى الانتقال من صلاح وبرّ ذاتيين إلى البرّ الذي فيه. فبرّ المسيح

وصلاحه مفتوحان على الشركة به، وعلى الخلاص الذي يمنحه مجاناً للهاكين، وعلى الفرح بنمونا فيه. كان زكا أول الغيث، فهل تكون أنت التالي؟ يسوع ينادينا بأسمائنا ويدعو نفسه لأن يكون شريكاً على مائدة حياتنا، فهل نصير شركاءه على مائدة خلاصه؟

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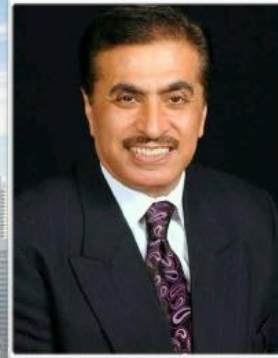


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