

*Akhi, the beggar sage, sits at the city gates, instructing all in the dance of life.*

# Ask Akhi...



Dear Akhi,

*The Farmer's Almanac warned us of a wicked November and December. November has come and gone, but now it is getting very cold. The first snow fell today. Have you ever seen snow?*

--From the North Coast

Dear N. C.,

Snow? Never. Ice! . . . now that is a different story.

As long as I have been sitting by the city gate, I have never known a morning like I saw just a few weeks ago. It came during our rainy season. You call it a winter time. The wind blew hard the night before; the sky was perfectly clear. Before the sun came up I took my place (Oh, excuse me! I should say "the place Allah has provided for me) by the gate and found myself shivering from the cold.

And to my right, in the middle of the road that leads through the gate I saw it. Ice. A long patch of ice only as thick as the puddle that was there the night before. It was covered with straw that had blown there during the early morning hours.

I knew it was ice, not because I had ever seen it there before, but because of what I saw when passersby got to it. Feet went up and heads went down. One after the other the buyers and sellers tossed their goods or lost their balance. As quickly as they arrived, they fell. There was no warning them.

The ones who slipped were the ones who never saw me before, so why should they heed my cautions now? In fact, that morning was the first time many of them knew I existed. I was the first to greet them that day and ask how they felt as they lay on their backs. Most said nothing to me, but each of them looked at me. I believe some of them even blamed me for their misfortune. That made Akhi laugh. And my laughing made them all the more angry. Only Allah knows my heart.

There were some who did not fall, however. These were the ones who approached to greet me as they neared the gate. They walked along the side of the gate where the path was not as worn. There had been no puddle, so there was no ice. These kind souls have never been in such a hurry, so they passed safely to their destinations. They were blessed. And before long, the sun arose, and all was well.

So, my North Coast friend, in this season of ice, I pray that you move more slowly, and always in the direction of the poor. It will save you, and it will bless the poor as well.

-- Akhi

Spotlight On:

Pat Hannon

Our new  
office manager



**Involvement with Beacon Street:** Our whole family has been big fans of Beacon Street for several years. I became a more active part of the ministry in mid-September as Office Manager.

**Family:** John, a sweetheart of a husband and a great dad to our daughters, Christie (age 11) and Jessie (age 9). Most everybody else is at least a couple of states away.

**Birthday:** May 2. Jessie and Christie do the math for me if I ever need to know how old.

**Favorite Reading:** Sherlock Holmes, Agatha Christie, et al., though I'm currently reading Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone to see what all the excitement is about.

**Favorite Movies:** Best one I saw recently is "The Straight Story." Favorite oldies I'd watch again and again - anything with Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn, especially "Holiday."

**Hobbies:** I've been sewing for years. Also, all sorts of crafts that I've picked up along the way in order to keep a couple of steps ahead of a couple of very creative kids.

**Best thing about working with Beacon Street:** The people - those I actually get to work with in person; those I get to know on the other ends of many phone lines; and those I may never meet but are the fertile ground for the seeds sown by the ministry of Beacon Street. It's a joy and a blessing to be a part of it all!