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The Lord's Prayer

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name."

There is a prayer which is part of the service in almost every Christian denomination. It is called "the Lord's prayer." It is one of very few Christian prayers which does not either begin or end with "in Jesus' name" or "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

I believe that this is because this is one prayer, perhaps the only one, which has survived intact from Jesus. It is the prayer Jesus taught to his disciples when they asked him specifically what to say in prayer [Luke 11:1-4].

What I find most interesting about the Lord's prayer is its similarity to the prayer submitters are taught to pray in the Quran—*Al-Fatehah* (The Key). This should not come as a surprise to submitters. We know that Jesus was a true messenger who preached to his people the worship of God alone. We know that Jesus delivered the very same message as all messengers before and after him.

In the New Testament book of Matthew, Jesus is teaching his disciples how to pray correctly. "When you are praying, do not behave like the hypocrites who love to stand and pray in synagogues or on street corners in order to be noticed." [6:5]

Compare that to the Quran: "The hypocrites think that they are deceiving God, but He is the One who leads them on. When they get up for the Contact Prayer (Salat), they get up lazily. This is because they only show off in front of the people, and rarely do they think of God." [4:142]. "And woe to those who observe the contact prayers (Salat), who are totally heedless of their prayers. They only show off." [107:4-6]

When a Christian recites the Lord's Prayer, he is truly obeying Jesus the messenger. In the church service which I grew up attending, the Lord's Prayer was preceded with the phrase: "...as Jesus taught us to pray." This is acknowledging Jesus as teacher, as scholar, as messenger of God.

The Lord's Prayer, as I memorized it from the King James version [Matthew 6:9-13] is as follows:

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

In the newer, more accurate New American Bible, the words have been simplified and are easier to understand. And interestingly, the last line is not there at all. But in either version, this is clearly a prayer to God alone. And it is easy to compare it to *Al-Fatehah*, the Key.

The first part of both prayers is naming God, acknowledging his power, and praising Him. We say, "Praise be to God." We call Him "Lord of the universe," and "Master of the Day of Judgment." Christians recognize that God's name is "hallowed," and His will is done both on earth and in heaven.

Then both prayers ask for God's help. We say, "You alone we worship. You alone we ask for help." And then, "Guide us in the right path." Christians ask for provisions: "Give us this day our daily bread," and they ask for forgiveness: "forgive us the wrong we have done," and they ask for guidance: "deliver us from the evil one."

Clearly then, the Lord's Prayer is a true prayer to God alone, taught to the disciples by Jesus, messenger of God. I wonder if the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples was, in fact, *Al-Fatehah*. Through time and translation perhaps the words were altered, but its meaning remains intact for Christians, for all submitters, of today.

Lydia Kelly

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Best System of Economic Welfare

God tells us in the Quran how a nation can prosper by following God's commandments (10:98). One of the most important commandments is for people to give *Zakat* (the Obligatory Charity) to the poor and the needy. The practice of *Zakat* came through the prophet Abraham like the other religious duties of Islam (Submission to God alone). The minimum rate of *Zakat* is 2.5% of one's net income, and it must be given away as soon as such income is received (6:141). The *Zakat* charity is the right of the poor (30:38) and is a means of cleansing our earnings and remitting our sins (2:271). It shows our appreciation to God for His blessings. Beside giving *Zakat*, which is obligatory, we are also encouraged to be charitable any which way we can without being extravagant (25:67).

God specifies for us the order of charity. We should consider our parents first for receiving charity if they are needy. If they are not, we are asked to give to the relatives, the orphans, the poor, and the traveling alien, in this order (2:215). It is a beautiful and very efficient social welfare system which encourages us to take care of our immediate family and the needy people whom we know. Thus we are assured that our charity goes where is needed the most.

Charity is Good For Both Sides

Some people consider charity a loss, and think that they should not be responsible for the misfortune of others. However, giving charity is the best thing we can do for ourselves. God tells us that we will be rewarded manifold for the charities we give (57:18). Thus, we not only help the poor and the needy by giving them their

rightful share, we reap the benefits of charity by getting more blessings in return. Both the giver and the receiver of the charity are winners.

God knows best what is good for each individual as well as for any community. The *Zakat* charity is a means of having a prosperous nation that provides its individuals with the best economic welfare. It is the best investment against crime, economic hardship and social disparity.

Hoarding Results in Misery

There are people who spend a lot of money to secure themselves and their material possessions while they do not give away from God's provisions to them. They usually end up living a miserable life because of their hoarding. It is a divine law that there is no escape from their misery unless they give away from the things they love and seek refuge to God for genuine protection.

Principles of Giving

Here are some verses from the Quran to detail charity:

O you who believe, you shall give to charity from the provisions we have given to you, before a day comes where there is no trade, no nepotism, and no intercession [2:254]

O you who believe, you shall give to charity from the good things you earn, and from what we have produced for you from the earth. Do not pick out the bad therein to give away, when you yourselves do not accept it unless your eyes are closed. [2:267]

If you declare your charities, they are still good. But if you keep them anonymous, and give them to the poor, it is better for you, and remits more of your sins ... [2:271]

When they give they are neither extravagant nor stingy; they give in moderation. [25:67]

They ask you about giving: say, "The charity you give shall go to the parents, the relatives, the orphans, the poor, and the traveling alien." Any good you do, God is fully aware thereof. [2:215]

They also ask you what to give to charity: say, "The excess." [2:219]

... Give to charity during the good times, as well as the bad times. [3:134]

Those who spend their money in the cause of God, then do not follow their charity with insult or harm, will receive their recompense from their Lord; they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. [2:262]

Kind words and compassion are better than a charity that is followed by insult... [2:263]

What prevented the acceptance of their spending is that they disbelieved in God and His messenger, and when they observed the Contact Prayers (Salat), they observed them lazily, and when they gave to charity, they did so grudgingly. [9:54]

Those who give to charity night and day, secretly and publicly, receive their recompense from their Lord; they will have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. [2:274]

... Give (to charity) for your own good. Anyone who is protected from his own stinginess, these are the successful ones. [64:16]

... Any charity you give is for your own good. Any charity you give shall be for the sake of God. Any charity you give will be repaid to you, without the least injustice. [2:272]

Your Lord has decreed: "The more you thank Me, the more I give you..." [14:7]

Abdullah Arik

Hajj 1994: Disaster Strikes Again

Idol Worshipers Continue to Ignore God's Commandment on Sacred Months

Impressions will be different for every single pilgrim, but no one who made Hajj pilgrimage this year can say that it was a small crowd. From some reports this was one of the largest Hajj seasons ever. Estimates range from 2 to 3 million people.

According to traditional Muslim belief, because the day spent on Arafat fell on a Friday, the day of the *Jumu'ah* congregational prayer, anyone who made Hajj got the same credit as if they had performed this important religious duty seven times. So once the moon was sighted, and the day on Arafat set, multitudes of residents of Saudi Arabia and surrounding countries began making plans to join the already large ranks of pilgrims.

By the last few days before the official beginning of the Hajj, it was all but impossible to make *tawaf* (the circumambulation of Kaaba in Mecca) on the ground floor by the Kaaba. The pushing and shoving of the pilgrims rounding the Kaaba reached an intolerable and dangerous point. Spiritual concentration was replaced by survival instinct!

This phenomenon of pushing and shoving was only magnified in Mina when the pilgrims flocked to the pillars, known as the *Jamarat*, for a symbolic stoning of Satan.

To really understand the situation you need to picture the physical layout. The three pillars lie roughly in a straight line, about 150 yards one from another. The Saudis have built an overpass above them, and extended the pillars up through the top of this structure, so that there are two levels from which you can reach the pillars. On the ground floor you are in the shade, and up on the overpass there is no protection from the sun. Because of the intense heat, most people choose to go under the overpass where there is shade. Many who have no other place to stay use the area as a temporary camp.

When the "Sunna approved" time to throw the stones approaches (after the noon prayer and before the afternoon prayer), the crush under the overpass swells as people come from tents all around Mina to throw their stones symbolically at Satan.

This year, the appeal of the shade under the overpass was exceptionally strong because this Hajj was during one of the

hottest periods of the year. Many who were fighting off sunstroke sought refuge there.

Because the Sunna recommends that the stones be thrown at the 3 pillars between the noon prayer (*zuhr*) and the afternoon prayer (*asr*), and it dictates that the stones must strike the pillars or fall within a certain distance, you have literally millions of people needing to get close to the pillars in a short period of time. And since each person must throw seven stones at all three pillars, you can imagine the crush!

Every year hundreds or thousands of people die during Hajj. And every year there are conflicting reports about those deaths. This year was no different.

This year, besides the deaths due to illness, heat prostration and old age, there were hundreds or thousands of people killed in a stampede at Mina during the traditional practice of the symbolic stoning of Satan. Reports of the cause of the tragedy, and the numbers involved vary greatly, from 250 to 2000.

Whatever the actual number of pilgrims killed, and whatever the immediate causes, we know that the real cause for this tragedy was disregarding God's words. Men limit the critically important ritual of Hajj to 3 or 4 days in one month! God makes it very clear that Hajj can be observed over a span of time:

Hajj shall be observed in the specified months... (2:197)

The counts of the months, as far as God is concerned is twelve.... Four of them are sacred (9:130)

From these verses it is very apparent that Hajj can be observed anytime in the four Sacred Months. Even the most conservative interpretation of these words would allow the practice of Hajj on specific days in any of the four months instead of crowding it into a few days once a year. Therefore, the solution to what seem to be yearly Hajj disasters is to go back to following God's law.

We must remember the example of the people of Sheba:

We placed between them and the communities that we blessed other oases, and we secured the journey between them: "Travel therein days and nights in complete security."

But they (turned unappreciative and) challenged: "Our Lord, we do not care if You increase the distance of our journeys (without any stations)." They thus wronged their own souls. Consequently, we made them history, and scattered them into small communities throughout the land. This should provide lessons for those who are steadfast, appreciative. (34:18-19)

Whenever God makes things easy for us, and we make them hard for ourselves, we pay the price.

Lisa Spray

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Saudi Flag: Stamped with Idol Worshipers' "Shahadah"

The correct Shahadah (The Declaration of Faith) as stated in Verse 3:18 of the Quran is "Laa ilaaha illa Allah" (There is no except God). This is practised by the angels and those who possess knowledge. On the other hand, those who fall into idol worship cannot be happy to mention God (Allah) alone. They are satisfied only if others (such as Muhammad or Ali) are mentioned beside His name (39:45).

The Saudi flag contains the statement "There is no god except God, and Muhammad is His messenger." The Saudi government thus shows the fact that God alone is not enough for them.

Recently, McDonald's in Britain and Coca Cola in Spain came under fire from the Saudis after printing the flag of Saudi Arabia on hamburger bags and cola cans for the World Cup Soccer promotion.

The following commentary in a local newspaper displays the foolishness of the Saudis from the Western perspective, which is then reflected and painted on all Muslims of the world.

NOTE The flap over the Saudi Arabian flag on McDonald's bags is a bit much. I'm not one to mess with somebody's religion, but lighten up! If those words are so holy, what are they doing on a flag? And if the flag itself is holy, why is it imprinted on warplanes? Draw a line someplace. Or maybe just start a jihad on everybody who eats a Big Mac...

When the hypocrites come to you, they say "We bear witness that you are the messenger of God." God knows that you are His messenger, and God bears witness that the hypocrites are liars.

Under the guise of their apparent faith, they repel the people from the path of God. Miserable indeed is what they do [63:1-2]

9th Annual Conference

God willing, the 9th Annual International Conference of United Submitters will be held in Bellingham, Washington, July 15-17. Attendance is by invitation and prior registration only. If you would like to attend the conference but did not receive the registration form, please contact us immediately.

Seminar: Mathematical Structure of the Quran

A seminar will be given by brother Milan Sulc from Switzerland about the mathematical structure of the Quran. This seminar is free for the participants of the conference, and it will be held at the conference site. God willing, the seminar will begin on Wednesday the 13th of July, and will finish on Thursday, July 14th.

Join Forces

We believe that Islam today is like a precious jewel that is buried under piles upon piles of man-made innovations. Our aim is to purge these innovations by upholding the Quran alone, and present the jewel of Islam to the world.

We need your help so that we can reach out to more people. If you know anybody who might be interested in receiving the *Submitters Perspective*, please send us their name and address. We will include them in our mailing list and begin sending complimentary issues of the newsletter. God bless you.

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