

Masjid Tucson United Submitters International

P.O. Box 43476, Tucson, AZ 85733-3476
Telephone/Fax: (602)323-7636



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Ramadan: The Month of Fasting

"Those of you who witness this month shall fast therein." [2:185]

O you who believe, fasting is decreed for you, as it was decreed for those before you, that you may attain salvation. [2:183]

Specific days (are designated for fasting); if one is ill or traveling, an equal number of other days may be substituted. Those who can fast, but with great difficulty, may substitute feeding one poor person for each day of breaking the fast. If one volunteers (more righteous works), it is better. But fasting is the best for you, if you only knew. [2:184]

Ramadan is the month during which the Quran was revealed, providing guidance for the people, clear teachings, and the statute book. Those of you who witness this month shall fast therein. Those who are ill or traveling may substitute the same number of other days. God wishes for you convenience, not hardship, that you may fulfill your obligations, and to glorify God for guiding you, and to express your appreciation. [2:185]

... You may eat and drink until the white thread of light becomes distinguishable from the dark thread of night at dawn. Then, you shall fast until sunset... [2:187]

Like all religious practices in Islam (Submission), fasting was decreed through Abraham. God tells us in the Quran that he was the one who named us Muslims (Submitters) originally (22:78). The messengers who followed Abraham practiced fasting, as well as the contact prayers (Salat), obligatory charity (Zakat), and the pilgrimage (Haji). [2:83, 5:12, 10:87, 20:14, 19:31, 19:55, 31:17, etc.]

There is even mention of these religious practices in the Bible. Therefore, it is very clear that the prophets and messengers, from Abraham, Moses and Aaron, Solomon to Jesus observed the practices, as well as Jesus' followers (Genesis 17:3, Exodus 40:31-32, Joshua 5:14, 1 Kings 8:54, Matthew 26:36-39 and many others). Fasting, a practice still followed during the time of Jesus' disciples, is mentioned in Acts 13:1-3. Unfortunately, these religious practices are lost by the generations who came after them (19:59). By His grace, God gave us the Quran, His final scripture, which confirms and supersedes all previous scriptures. Through the Quran, He made the religion of Submission easy for us to practice (22:78).

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In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Numerically Structured Book (83:9,20)

Test the Proof to See the Miracle of the Quran

The word proof is derived from the Latin word *probare* which means to test. God supports His messengers with proof (7:101) so people can test and then verify for themselves the real identity of the messenger and the truthfulness of the message. Once people take the initiative to examine a messenger's proof they will discover that the seemingly simple proof is in reality a profound miracle from God. As God declares in the Quran, miracles are manifested to those who have achieved certainty. Certainty, in turn, is achieved by thorough examination of the proof that God's messenger is supported with.

Those who possess no knowledge say, "If only God could speak to us, or some miracle could come to us!" Others before them have uttered similar utterances; their minds are similar. We do manifest the miracles for those who have attained certainty. [2:118]

God provides us with a good example in the Quran. Moses was supported with profound proofs when he was sent to Pharaoh (23:45). Among them was his staff which turned into a serpent when he threw it down to the ground. Pharaoh was not convinced, so he summoned all the experienced magicians to challenge Moses. The magicians were able to produce a great magic which appeared to match that of Moses. However, Moses' proof was put to the test when he threw down his staff and it swallowed whatever the other magicians had fabricated. Up

until that point, the proof of Moses appeared to be merely a form of magic that did not seem special. However, when put to the test, the proof of Moses was found to be inimitable, super-human and indeed a miracle for its time. Among the few who recognized this miracle were the experienced magicians who were actively involved with testing the proof (20:70). The majority of people at that time chose to disbelieve in Moses and his message despite his profound proof (10:83).

We narrate to you the history of those communities: their messengers went to them with clear proofs, but they were not to believe in what they had rejected before. [7:101]

Throughout the Quran, God narrates to us history from the past to serve as a lesson for the future. Like the previous generations who consistently received proof, our generation has been made aware of a proof embedded within the Quran itself. The Quran, which was revealed over 1400 years ago, is arranged such that words, letters, verses, chapters, and phrases are all interwoven to create a comprehensive mathematical structure based on the prime number 19. This intricate divisibility not only forms the mathematical literary composition and structure of the Quran, but also elucidates the essential meaning of the scripture. The relatively few who have taken the time to thoroughly examine this proof have determined it to be beyond human capability and a true miracle substantiating di-

vine authorship. For the most part, however, this proof has been ignored, labeled as insignificant numerology, and ridiculed just like the proofs of the previous generations.

Indeed, they have rejected this without studying and examining it, and before understanding it. Thus did those before them disbelieve. [10:39]

The Quran teaches us that people who will not believe in the messengers' proofs are those who ridicule, ignore, and reject before examining, testing and studying. They disbelieve without disproving. Those who reflect do so without presenting a counter claim, contrary evidence or a lucid argument, while those who believe in the proof can substantiate, verify and support their belief. God describes those who take the initiative to test a proof as people who think (16:11), people who understand (16:12), people who take heed (16:13), and people who are appreciative (25:62). On the other hand, those who reject a messenger's proof are those who insist on their ways (98:1), follow their own opinions (7:176), listen heedlessly (21:2-5), ridicule (37:14), and turn away in aversion (6:4). Instead, they ask to see a miracle. However, by not examining the proof, they are giving up the opportunity to see the very miracle they demand. The story of Saleh illustrates this point.

continued on the next page

Test the Proof *continued*

The people said to Saleh:

"You are no more than a human like us. Produce a miracle, if you are truthful." (Saleh) said, "Here is a camel that will drink only on a day that is assigned to her; a day that is different from your specific days of drinking. Do not touch her with any harm, lest you incur retribution on an awesome day." They slaughtered her, and thus incurred sorrow. [26:154-158]

Saleh did produce a miracle for his community. This miracle existed within the proof of the camel. The people of Saleh deprived themselves of the opportunity to witness the miracle by killing the camel instead of observing it.

Ironically, the community that rejects its own messenger's proof demands not only to see a miracle but a miracle like those of the previous generations.

When a proof comes to them from their Lord, that is new, they listen to it heedlessly...They even said, "Hallucinations," "He made it up," and, "He is a poet. Let him show us a miracle like those of the previous messengers." [21:2-5]

The miracle of a previous messenger was initially the proof that was put to the test by the people of that generation. When that messenger died, the proof went with him but the history of the miracle remained. Therefore, a new generation can accept a previous miracle based on the testimonial history of those who verified the proof at that time. When a community rejects their own new proof while demanding a miracle from the past they are passing up the opportunity to become witnesses to their own miracle. This tendency shows a blind acceptance of the past rather than a careful investigation of the present. Since the intention is to ignore the proof, the Quran mentions they will not believe in any miracle they demand to see. When the proof is rejected, so is the witnessing of the miracle.

They swore by God solemnly, that if a miracle came to them, they would surely believe. Say, "Miracles come only from God." For all you know, if a miracle did come to them, they would continue to disbelieve...Even if we sent down the angels to them; even if the dead spoke to them; even if we summoned every miracle before them; they cannot believe unless God wills it. [6:109-111]

The story of Moses compares the characteristics of one who rejects a proof with one who takes heed.

In Moses (there is a lesson). We sent him to Pharaoh with manifest proofs. But he turned away, in arrogance, and said, "Magician, or crazy." [51:38-39]

Compare the above response with the following:

A believing man among Pharaoh's people, who was concealing his belief, said, "How can you kill a man just for saying, 'My Lord is God,' and he has shown you clear proofs from your Lord? If he is a liar, that is his problem, and if he is truthful, you benefit from his promises..." [40:28]

We must ask ourselves, which approach and reaction to a messenger's proof is more worthy in the sight of God. After all, God recites these examples not only to teach us but to judge accordingly. Rashad Khalifa was a messenger who was killed just for saying, 'My Lord is God.' In order to support his claim, he showed 'clear proof from his Lord' through the Quran's mathematical structure and left it up to each individual to examine and draw their own conclusion. He restored the original message of Islam, complete submission to God alone, after centuries of fabrications and distortions. Although he has long since passed away, the Quran's mathematical proof still remains. If Rashad Khalifa was a liar, 'that is his problem,' and he is being judged accordingly. However, 'if he is truthful, you benefit.'

We draw comfort from the past and contentment with the beliefs that have been reinforced by our parents, culture and upbringing. When presented with something that deviates slightly from our established belief system we immediately respond with suspicion, criticism, and denial without giving ourselves the opportunity to listen and think. God knows our innermost thoughts, and for this reason He informs us that a proof constitutes a great test (44:33). We must probe, question, and examine. If we find the proof to be valid, we need to re-examine our core belief system in light of the proven message we are presented with. An open-minded and objective examination is indeed a test of faith and devotion.

In fact, those who received the scripture did not dispute until the proof was given to them. [98:4]

In the age of science and computers, the Quran's mathematical structure is the

proof for our generation, providing evidence that the Quran is the direct and unaltered word of God. It gives us reason to follow the Quran alone rather than unsubstantiated hadith which divide Muslim communities around the world (39:23, 45:6). It teaches us to regard all of God's messengers equally instead of claiming to be God's chosen community (2:285, 3:84). It gives us reassurance to devote our prayers absolutely to God alone without mentioning the names of messengers (72:18). It reassures us that a messenger supported with overwhelming proof will come after Muhammad to restore the same message Muhammad, Jesus, Moses, and Abraham preached (3:81). It disproves the myth of intercession (6:51), reaffirms the equality of men and women (3:195), and teaches us to sever our dependence on God's deceased servants, prophets, and saints. In proving God's word, the Quran's mathematical structure does indeed put our beliefs to the test. At the same time, the examination of the same proof can provide the reassurance needed to overcome this challenge. Those who examine the Quran's proof with sincerity can verify for themselves that it is "one of the greatest miracles" (74:35). They will appreciate the true significance and value of the Quran:

If we revealed this Quran to a mountain, you would see it trembling, crumbling out of reverence for God. We recite these examples for the people, that they may reflect. [59:21]

The intention here is not to persuade the reader with a convincing argument for the Quran's mathematical proof. The purpose is to convey our inherent responsibility to test the Quran's mathematical proof and either verify or disclaim its validity for ourselves. God has given each of us the blessing of hearing, eyesight and intelligence. With this blessing we have the responsibility to investigate all claims and to come to an informed and intelligent conclusion (17:36). This informed conclusion will not only provide reassurance for us in this life, but it will be essential when we are questioned by God. When we are questioned about the Quran's mathematical structure we must be able to provide an intelligent response about accepting or rejecting it. If we have chosen to ignore the Quran's proof without a clear argument and without a strong basis, then we will deserve to endure the burning regret for turning away when we

Test the Proof *continued*

had the opportunity to examine that proof.

Those who respond to their Lord deserve the good rewards. As for those who failed to respond to Him, if they possessed everything on earth—even twice as much—they would readily give it up as ransom... [13:18]

Those who have rejected the Quran's proof when it came to them, have also rejected an Honorable book. [41:41]

Amir Kia

RIGHTEOUS GO TO HEAVEN

We learn from the Quran the righteous people who die in the cause of God are alive and well with their Lord (2:154). When their lives on this earth come to the predetermined end, the angel of death simply invites them to leave their earthly bodies and move on to Heaven where Adam and Eve once lived.

Give good news to those who believe and lead a righteous life that they will have gardens with flowing streams. When provided with a provision of fruits therein, they will say, "This is what was provided for us previously." Thus, they are given allegorical descriptions. They will have pure spouses therein, and they abide therein forever. [2:25]

Those who obey God and the messenger belong with those blessed by God—the prophets, the saints, the martyrs, and the righteous. These are the best company. [4:49]

They do not taste death therein—beyond the first death—and He has spared them the retribution of Hell. [44:56]

(At the time of his death) he was told, "Enter Paradise." He said, "Oh, I wish my people knew." That my Lord has forgiven me, and made me honorable." [36:26-27]

We have lost some dedicated submitters in the past few weeks. Ghazy Ali (39) and his wife Najah (30) died in a car accident in Florida in the early morning on January 9th.

Ghazy Ali came across the message of worshiping God alone and following the Quran alone on an electronic (computer) bulletin board in February 1993.

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