

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful*

# Submitters Perspective

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## Worshiping GOD Alone: Universal Faith

Our existence on this earth represents our last chance to recognize with our free will that God is our Lord and Master, and that He has no partner in His Kingdom (6:163). There is none that equals Him (112:4). We are here to be tested under different circumstances to redeem ourselves with our righteous works (3:186). Even though God put in each of us the instinct to worship Him alone (30:30), He sent further instructions on what He expects us to do, as a mercy from Him. Thus, God sent messengers and prophets that communicated to us His revelations.

### **Submission:** **Same message for all**

All messengers and prophets of God brought the same message: There is no god but God, and He is the only one worthy of worship. Therefore, whoever believes in this message, believes in the Hereafter and leads a righteous life, God gives them their recompense (2:62, 5:69). They are all submitters to the will of God. There is no social, racial or religious exclusivity in being a submitter. All submitters, men or women, are equal in the sight of God. What distinguishes them is

their degree of righteousness which is judged only by God (49:13).

Therefore, one of the traits of the submitters is that they compete towards righteousness while respecting others (2:148).

### **God's scriptures**

The Quran is the Final Testament from God. It has been perfectly preserved in its original language, Arabic. It contains the most resourceful methods and exemplary stories for our salvation to Heaven; it is therefore a tool or recipe containing guidance.

*Cont'd on page 2*

## Universal Faith

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However, we learn from the Quran that previous scriptures, David's Psalms, the Torah and Jesus' Gospel are also beacons and guidance (5:46, 21:48). There will be people who will make it to heaven through these scriptures of God by worshipping Him alone, in spite of the innovations and misrepresentations that may have happened through time. In the same way, there are people who come to worship God alone through a "bad" translation of the Quran or the distortions in the religion of Islam (2:62, 5:69).

If a person's heart is open to submission, God guides that person even if he or she is in the midst of an idol worshipping community, no matter what the circumstances are, as exemplified by Prophet Abraham and Pharaoh's wife.

### Only God can guide

We cannot guide anyone regardless of how hard we try, if the person is destined to be misguided. The bottom line is that God is the only one who guides people in accordance with the knowledge He has about them (28:56). Of course, that does not mean we should not do anything. On the contrary, we should do the best we can to spread the message, but should not despair or get upset if our efforts seem to be disregarded or ignored

by the people. God still gives us credit for taking the initiative by His infinite mercy (8:17).

### Invitation to Submission

God gives us clear instructions to treat each other in the best possible manner, for Satan will try to drive a wedge between the submitters (17:53). When dealing with other people, God wants us to debate with them amicably and invite them to His path with wisdom and kind enlightenment (16:125).

There should not be any compulsion in religious conviction (2:256). People should have total freedom to embrace the only religion approved by God (3:19). That is the religion of peace and submission. It is the ultimate state of faith unifying all those who worship only the One God, the God of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

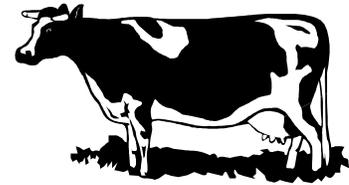
This is summed up with the basic message to us from God through His messengers and scriptures: Worship God alone, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength (Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Mark 12:29-30, Quran 3:18).

*Abdullah*

*[29:46] Do not argue with the people of the scripture (Jews, Christians, and Muslims) except in the nicest possible manner - unless they transgress - and say, "We believe in what was revealed to us and in what was revealed to you, and our god and your god is one and the same; to Him we are submitters."*

## “WE SUBDUED THEM FOR THEM”

*And we subdued them for them; some they ride, and some they eat. [36:72]*



It's so easy for us today to find food. We go to the market and pick up a gallon of milk, a steak, and a pound of broccoli. Early man lived in caves. When he wanted food, he had to go and find it—pick it, dig it up or kill it. If he wanted meat, there was certainly plenty of it around. The problem was finding it, chasing after it and finally bringing it down. Men had to use spears and clubs to kill game, but this was dangerous, and success was by no means guaranteed. What was needed was a way to keep a supply of these animals close by, preferably penned in a confined space where it would be easy to get to them; and it would be nice if your life wasn't on the line every time you went to the "store."

What a remarkable thing to consider that first step toward domestication. Throughout history there have been close to 5000 species of mammals on the earth, yet fewer than a dozen have achieved widespread success as a domesticated animal. Scientists recognize that certain species are "pre-adapted" to domestication. What that means is that God has designed them this way.

*Have they not seen that we created for them with our own hands, livestock that they own? And we subdued them for them; some they ride, and some they eat. (36:71-2)*

*Cont'd on page 3*

## We Subdued Them For Them

*Cont'd from page 2*

We'll never know who was the first person to put a goat in a pen. Such a simple act, yet it totally changed human history. Was it a conscious act or a wonderful accident? Did one or two goats become trapped by chance or did some forward-thinking cave man have the inspiration to build a crude enclosure? It wouldn't take long to realize how much easier it was to keep a few goats close to the cave. The goats would make more goats, so that when meat was needed, there was a fresh supply within easy reach. If a man needed to travel, he could bring his food along, and he didn't even have to carry it; it walked on its own.

Goats are almost certainly the first livestock animal to be domesticated, perhaps as long as 15,000 years ago. Sheep were domesticated soon after. Sheep are even more docile than goats, and soon man was breeding selectively for the most desirable traits—gentleness, smaller size and woolly coats.

Domestication changed lifestyles completely. The migration of herds of wild animals no longer mattered; man didn't have to depend on or follow these movements. So people began congregating together and trading. They could settle in one area, improve it and expand it, so cities were created. All of this because someone decided to put a goat in a pen!

Chickens began to be domesticated from wild fowl about 10,000 years ago. It would be easy to take eggs or the hatchlings from a nest. Birds tend to imprint on whatever they see first, so they would be more than willing to hang around. Today we have many birds that are kept as pets, but they're not truly domesticated; they will fly away. But chickens walk around a barnyard, expecting to be fed by us. In return, they give up their eggs without too much fuss.

At about this same time, man began domesticating the pig. Wild boars are quick and dangerous animals, and they don't like to be herded like sheep or goats. But they probably began rooting around in garbage heaps created as people formed communities, becoming less and less afraid. They would have been a valuable animal for early man because they will eat almost anything; they grow fast; and they have large litters. They're an easy animal to keep in a small enclosure which fit in well as man began to settle and stay in one place.

God tells us in the Quran not to eat the meat of the pig because it is unclean, but if we are starving and not being malicious, we're allowed to eat whatever is available. In our modern world, there are so many choices; early man had to survive on what he could get.



Over the next few thousand years, man also domesticated camels, horses, and cattle. They found so many uses for these tamable animals. Certainly food was their first concern, but they discovered how much these beasts could carry, how they could be put in harness to plow fields and how riding a horse could drastically change all aspects of their lives (see SP July 2003).

Domesticated animals have provided us with so many benefits, not least of which is the milk they give. It's easy to imagine how milking came about. A mother dies in childbirth and there's a hungry, crying baby to feed, and a goat or cow outside feeding its young. Milk is mentioned throughout the Old Testament and in Sanskrit writings at least 6000 years old. How it became such a huge industry—with whole milk, skim milk, cream, ice cream, sour cream, butter, cheese, and so many other choices—is amazing.

Early humans, like all animals, had no further need of milk once they were weaned. It required a chemical change in our bodies to be able to tolerate milk as adults, and in fact, many people today are lactose intolerant and become ill when they consume dairy products. Yet what a gift from God. Milk is often referred to as nature's most nearly perfect food. It's essential for growth and development of all young mammals.

*And in the livestock there is a lesson for you: we provide you with a drink from their bellies. From the midst of digested food and blood you get pure milk, delicious for the drinkers. (16:66)*

The whole process of domestication is God's gift to man. Much, if not all, of our progress over the centuries happened because there were animals easily accessible for us to eat, to ride, to milk, to wear and to burden. We need to be mindful of this gift. This is a partnership that God gave us. As we domesticated animals, they changed and became dependent. We had to provide for them. They have paid us back many times over. And it's a blessing we must be appreciative of.

*As you rest on top of them, you shall appreciate such a blessing from your Lord, and say, "Glory be to the One who subdued this for us. We could not have controlled them by ourselves. (43:13)*

*God is the One who created the livestock for you; some you ride, and some you eat. They also provide you with additional benefits that satisfy many of your needs. (40:79-80)*

*Lydia*

*Also in your creation, and the creation of all the animals, there are proofs for people who are certain. (45:4)*

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## Hadith and Sunnah have no religious significance

Hadith and Sunnah are sayings and deeds that are attributed to Prophet Muhammad. Some hadiths have indeed historical significance. For example, Saeed al-Khudri reported that the prophet said:

"Do not write from me anything except the Quran. And whoever has written anything from me other than the Quran should erase it." (Ibn Hanbal & Muslim)

According to history, 82 or 83 days before the prophet died, the following last verse of the Quran was revealed to him:

"...Today, I have completed your religion, perfected My blessings upon you, and have decreed Submission as the religion for you...." (5:3)

On this day, the prophet had with him nothing except complete (6:115), perfect (18:2) and fully detailed (6:114, 7:52, 12:110) Quran.

It is well documented fact that the earlier caliphs known as Khulafa Rashidun did not accord any religious importance to Hadith and Sunnah: "...because of the emphasis laid by Shiaism on the sayings and the sunnah of the prophet it is difficult for it to understand why the writing down of the text of hadith was completely banned and why, if a written hadith

were found, it would be burned. We know that this banned continued through the caliphate of the Khulafa Rashidun into the Umayyad period and did not cease until the period of Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, who ruled from A.H. 99/A.D.717 to A.H.101/A.D.719." (Shiite Islam translated by Sayyid Hussain Nasr)

One of the early well known writers of hadiths is Abu Abdullah Muhammad b Ismail b Ibrahim b.al-Mughira al-Jafari, a non Arab from Bukhara, central Asia, who is also known as Bukhari. Historical records show that Bukhari learned Arabic from his mother. When he was sixteen, he went to Arabia, today's Saudi Arabia.

He traveled extensively on foot or on a camel, the fastest transport in those days, in search of hadiths. Finally, he collected 6000,000 hadiths of which he remembered 200,000 by heart, and 400,000 he wrote down. Later on he learned that out of 40,000 people who were instrumental in the collection of hadith 38,000 were unreliable and forgers. He discarded 592,705 and kept only 7,295.

Some hadiths of Bukhari are very long while others are very short. Let us say that each hadith needed a minimum of one hour for its collection, which would mean that Bukhari needed at least 68 years to collect 600,000 hadiths. It is amazing to know that Bukhari not only

collected 600,000 hadiths but also went to Baghdad from Mecca or Medina eight times, lived at a time on the leaves of plants and also died at the age of 62.

## Verdict of Muslim scholars on hadiths:

"Mutawatir is an appellation given to those hadiths only that have always been, from the time of the prophet, ever afterwards recognized and accepted by every associate of the prophet, and every learned individual, as authentic and genuine, and to which no one has raised any objection. All learned Muhammadan divines of every period have declared that the Quran only is the hadith Mutawatir; but some doctors have declared certain other hadith also to be Mutawatir, the number, however, of such hadiths not exceeding Five". (Dictionary of Islam page 642)

In the Quran the words hadith and sunnah are mentioned in various forms 36 and 16 times respectively. Yet none of these words anywhere in the Quran refers to the hadith and sunnah of the prophet.

In conclusion, hadith and sunnah have no religious significance; following them is an invitation to disaster in this world and in the hereafter.

M.Y. [New Zealand]