

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Blessing in Disguise

Thinking and thanking God, and appreciating of His blessings under adversity

In January 2006 I heard the dreaded words that no one wants to hear: "You have cancer." Something I thought could never happen to me actually happened. My immediate reaction was disbelief. "How could this happen to me?" A 22 year old who just graduated from college. But deep down I knew why this adversity had befallen me. This was a test from God: a very difficult test that would require a lot of patience and faith in God. We know from the Quran that any of our claims about submitting to God must be tested:

[3:142] Do you expect to enter Paradise without GOD distinguishing those among you who strive, and without distinguishing those who are steadfast?

[2:155] We will surely test you through some fear, hunger, and loss of money, lives, and crops. Give good news to the steadfast.

[3:186] You will certainly be tested, through your money and your lives, and you will hear from those who received the scripture, and from the idol worshipers, a lot of insult. If you steadfastly persevere and lead a righteous life, this will prove the strength of your faith.

To be honest with you, the oncoming hardships of the disease scared me at first. But when fear and sadness overtake your thoughts, the only thing to do is turn to God. All disturbing thoughts come from Satan, so I had to seek refuge in God from Satan. Also, recognizing that everything would happen according

to God's plan gave me comfort. Trusting in God helped relieve my fear and grief.

[2:112] Indeed, those who submit themselves absolutely to GOD alone, while leading a righteous life, will receive their recompense from their Lord; they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve.

I have faced many obstacles during this test, including surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy. The side effects have opened my eyes to everyday activities that so many of us take for granted. Simply having the strength to sit up or walk around, or being able to chew, swallow, and enjoy food are just a few of those activities. They made me appreciate all of the little things that God enables us to do.

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Death, Cremation and Resurrection

I was watching television a few months ago and the news story gave accounts that Islam did not sanction cremation. I was quite concerned about this as I had my wife cremated about three years earlier. Also I intend to be cremated upon my death.

To set my mind at ease, I took out my Quran, the Final Testament. As I read the Quran, my mind was set at ease. I read in the Introduction on Animals, these creatures are redeemed back to God's eternal kingdom.

In 5:48, ...to God is your final destiny- all of you-then He will inform you of everything you had disputed. Then in 6:36 ...God resurrects the dead; they ultimately return to Him. In 2:45 ...God is the One who provides and withholds, and to Him you will be returned. Then in 10:56 ...He controls life and death, and to Him you will be returned.

As I continued to looking for answers, I ran across the Crucial Advice in 17:36.

[17:36] You shall not accept any information, unless you verify it for yourself. I have given you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brain, and you are responsible for using them.

Now that I know that I am responsible for using my brain. I was even more concerned about the people who get cremated, the people that get vaporized by a large explosion, and also the people who die when no one is around. I got the answer in the following verses.

[17:49-51] They said, "After we turn into bones and fragments, we get resurrected anew?!" Say, "Even if you turn into rocks or iron. Even if you turn into any kind of creation that you deem impossible." They will then say, "Who will bring us back?" Say, "The One who created you in the first place." They will then shake their heads and say, "When will that be?" Say, "It may be closer than you think."

I now have a good feeling about cremation. I now know that the seven astronauts that got vaporized in the space shuttle accident were returned back to God.

[19:93-95] Every single one in the heavens and the earth is a servant of the Most Gracious. He has encompassed them, and has counted them one by one. All of them will come before Him on the Day of Resurrection as individuals.

On the Day of Resurrection, everyone will be accounted for without the slightest injustice.

[21:47] We will establish the scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection. No soul will suffer the least injustice. Even the equivalent of a mustard seed will be accounted for. We are the most efficient reckoners.

[21:104] On that day, we will fold the heaven, like the folding of a book. Just as we initiated the first creation, we will repeat it. This is our promise; we will certainly carry it out.

As stated in 26:81, "*the One who puts me to death, then brings me back to life.*" And in 28:88 "*we will all be returned to Him.*"

[28:88] You shall not worship beside GOD any other god. There is no other god beside Him. Everything perishes except His pres-

ence. To Him belongs all sovereignty, and to Him you will be returned.

We all know that there is nothing hidden from God.

[34:3] Those who disbelieve have said, "The Hour will never come to pass!" Say, "Absolutely - by my Lord - it will most certainly come to you. He is the Knower of the future. Not even the equivalent of an atom's weight is hidden from Him, be it in the heavens or the earth. Not even smaller than that, or larger (is hidden). All are in a profound record."

In conclusion, God says in the Quran:

[57:4] He is the One who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then assumed all authority. He knows everything that enters into the earth, and everything that comes out of it, and everything that comes down from the sky, and everything that climbs into it. He is with you wherever you may be. GOD is Seer of everything you do.

Glory be to God.

Lou - USA

QURAN

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Masjid Tucson Activities

Soup Kitchen

We participate in an ongoing project to help feed the hungry in our town in cooperation with Casas Adobes Congregational Church and Congregation Whovarín, Temple Emanu-el Jewish groups. This project was started in 1993. By God's grace, we feed about 400 homeless and poor families every month.

We use the kitchen facilities of Casa Maria, a Catholic run operation in south of Tucson. We also use the facility of Masjid Tucson (ICS Center) to prepare 600 sandwiches the day before since Casa Maria kitchen is too small for our group. More or less three volunteers from each group make the sandwiches. Children also participate in making the sandwiches. They are great helpers.

Volunteers from the three communities run the soup kitchen. These volunteers get together once a month. They buy all the necessary food for the soup kitchen. They prepare, cook and distribute the food the next day at the Casa Maria's kitchen facility.

Interfaith Study Group

An interfaith scripture study group has been on going at the ICS Center (Masjid Tucson) for years. The group meets generally at 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday of every month. During the study, each group reads and discusses their scripture for about half an hour. These studies are helpful. For example, Congregation Or Chadash group frequently publishes selected verses from the Quran in their newsletters.

Let_the_World_Know Project Free Qurans to Libraries anywhere in the world upon approval

We are looking for volunteers who will help us to place the Qurans in Public, University, Prison, or Hospital libraries. There is a high demand for the Quran translations in the libraries to learn more about Islam. Let us make an effort to spread the message of True Islam (Submission) to the people looking for information on Islam. Let us provide them the correct message so that they realize the beauty, peacefulness and universality of the religion despite the "corrupted" image reflected by some people and countries.

It has been our experience that unsolicited mailing of the Qurans to libraries does not accomplish much. Therefore, we have an on-going project called *Let_the_World_Know* to place the Qurans into the libraries with the help of volunteers.

God willing the work required of the volunteers is to solicit the libraries and to offer them a complimentary copy of the English translation of the Quran by Dr. Rashad Khalifa, to see if they would be interested. You can talk to the librarians about placing the Qurans in their library, either in person or by phone or email. If they accept the offer, all you need to do is to let us know the name the librarian you have spoken to and the address. God willing we will mail the Qurans directly to them from Masjid Tucson with a cover letter. Just write to us when you know of a library where we can place a copy of the Quran.

Please get involved. You can start checking out your local libraries to see if they have copies of English translation of the Quran by Dr.

Khalifa. This could be your chance to earn extra credit in the cause of God. You can write to us, or check out our web page at http://www.masjidtucson.org/let_the_world_know/index.html. There are some helpful hints about how to reach out to the libraries. There is also a list of libraries that have already been contacted so that the efforts are not duplicated.

Speaking on Islam

We have been invited to speak about Islam at a forum of 65 or more people in Tubac, a small town south of Tucson. We were told that they will have a standing room only group when someone from our mosque addresses them. Those attending are divided 50/50 between working people and retirees.

Below is what they want from us:

The Forum's interest in your religion goes well beyond a simple understanding of its precepts. There is becoming, perhaps in the general population, a growing concern that the concept of Islam is not compatible with democracy.

It appears to some that, at the time of 911, few believers in the religion of Islam, whether or not Americans, spoke out against the terrorists. Some believe that this is because Islam believes that non believers are corrupt in the eyes of Allah. We see terrorist leaders saying that only by accepting Allah can we be saved and that if we don't accept Allah, then it is alright to murder the non believers, once they have been given the choice. This we hear, is the belief of even moderate Muslims. Submission to God, therefore, is only valid if it comes from the Muslim perspective.

We also wonder why women appear to be inferior to men in the eyes of Islam, subjected to the will of men and, apparently, second class citizens.

We invite you to come to clarify these issues for us.

So God willing that is exactly what we are planning to do.

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Blessing in Disguise

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It's amazing that you don't notice so many things while you're healthy until you get sick. Since my illness, I notice when I can breathe normally, walk around, and have an appetite. I thank God for the rare times when I am able to shop at the mall or ride a bike. Thank God I am here to remind all of you that you should appreciate every aspect and every single moment of your life.

[67:23] Say, "He is the One who initiated you, and granted you the hearing, the eyes, and the brains. Rarely are you appreciative."

[14:34] And He gives you all kinds of things that you implore Him for. If you count GOD's blessings, you can never encompass them. Indeed, the human being is transgressing, unappreciative.

As a human being, I sometimes find myself having negative thoughts, wondering, and questioning. I ask myself why I have to go through this difficult test, and I find the answer in Sura 6, verse 42.

[6:42] We have sent (messengers) to communities before you,

and we put them to the test through adversity and hardship, that they may implore.

I implore God to guide me through this test and help me to remain steadfast. I ask God to heal me and remove my adversity. In the Quran, God gives the example of Job.

[21:83-84] And Job implored his Lord: "Adversity has befallen me, and, of all the merciful ones, You are the Most Merciful." We responded to him, relieved his adversity, and restored his family for him, even twice as much. That was a mercy from us, and a reminder for the worshippers.

I don't know how long I will be going through this test, but God willing I will continue to pray and strive to pass it. Thank God, I have wonderful friends and family that continue to support me and help me, and soon I will triumph.

[2:214] Do you expect to enter Paradise without being tested like those before you? They were tested with hardship and adversity, and were shaken up, until the messenger and those who believed with him said, "Where is GOD's victory?" GOD's victory is near.

Nora

Reader's Comments

THANK YOU for your article in Aug 2006 "What is Islam?" I was a Christian Missionary, and to make a long story short, I converted in Dec 2005. I am now back in the states. It has not been easy, and some things I have read, made me question my choice. But after reading the article, it reaffirmed my faith, and why I chose to be a Muslim in a conservative family. Thank you again so very much. You have brought back my hope.

K. W.

Asalamu 'Alaykum,

Thank you very much for your help. For so long I had been trying to seek the reality of Islam and tried to make sense out of things that confused me. Also, I had been thinking from long ago that the Hadith was unacceptable, but I had many doubts on this issue that were caused by the heavy influence carried by the traditional Muslims. When I analyzed your website I was very well convinced that it was the Truth. Masha'Allah, every statement that I have read so far is so defensible that I was unable to argue against them. It is indeed the Truth, and the Truth has made me feel very happy al-hamdullillah (Praise God)!

May all of you succeed in this mission to spread the Truth insha'Allah (God willing), and may Allah reward you!

Muslim sister
S. S. A.