

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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The Self's Holy War

True believers live a daily strife to keep up with the divine standards of leading a righteous life. For them, every day is an opportunity to practice perseverance, hold fast to the teachings of Quran, earn credit and grow their souls. Even though God would never burden a soul beyond its means (23:62, 22:78, 4:28), He emphasizes that the journey on the straight path isn't smooth or effortless. We struggle to discipline ourselves to unconditionally obey God. It is often challenging to implement His teachings and portray His ordained ethics.

[90:4-18] We created the human being to work hard (to redeem himself). Does he think that no one will ever call him to account? He boasts, "I spent so much money!" Does he think that no one sees him? Did we not give him two eyes? A tongue and two lips? Did we not show him the two paths? He should choose the difficult path. Which one is the difficult path? The freeing of slaves. Feeding, during the time of hardship. Orphans who are related. Or the poor who is in need. And being one of those who believe, and exhorting one another to be steadfast, and exhorting one another to be kind. These have deserved happiness.

[3:142] Do you expect to enter Paradise without God distinguishing those among

you who strive, and without distinguishing those who are steadfast?

We are promised God's support when we steadfastly persevere to stay in this daily race. God also assures us that He will bring us ease and contentment when we choose this striving path of being devout servants of Him alone:

[47:7] O you who believe, if you support God, He will support you, and strengthen your foothold.

[61:11-13] Believe in God and His messenger and strive in the cause of God with your money and your lives. This is the best deal for you, if you only knew. In return, He forgives your sins, and admits you into gardens with flowing streams, with beautiful mansions in the gardens of Eden. This is the greatest triumph. Additionally, you get something you truly love: support from God and guaranteed victory. Give good news to the believers.

[2:153] O you who believe, seek help through steadfastness and the Contact Prayers (Salat). God is with those who steadfastly persevere.

[92:4-10] Your works are of various kinds. As for him who gives to charity and maintains righteousness. And upholds the scripture. We will direct him towards happiness. But he who is stin-

gy, though he is rich. And disbelieves in the scripture. We will direct him towards misery.

Based on His knowledge, God assigns for each one of us in life certain duties and tasks. Easy or tough, simple or complicated, it is the effort to steadfastly apply God's commands while fulfilling these obligations and performing our duties that matters in the sight of God. The dedication and the effort we put forth to follow His teachings while handling these assignments validate our devotion and reverence to God. God is in full control of the outcome of our efforts. He urges us to do our best and teaches us through many examples that our efforts are appreciated irrespective of their outcome:

[4:74] Those who readily fight in the cause of God are those who forsake this world in favor of the Hereafter. Whoever fights in the cause of God, then gets killed, or attains victory, we will surely grant him a great recompense.

[6:135] Say, "O my people, do your best, and so will I. You will surely find out who the ultimate victors are." Certainly, the wicked will never succeed.

[17:19] As for those who choose the Hereafter as their priority, and work right-

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eousness, while believing, their efforts will be appreciated.

[5:35] O you who believe, you shall reverence God and seek the ways and means to Him, and strive in His cause, that you may succeed.

[103:1-3] By the afternoon. The human being is utterly lost. Except those who believe and lead a righteous life, and exhort one another to uphold the truth, and exhort one another to be steadfast.

Striving to be sincere to practice a high quality worship of God alone and advocate the Truth at all times and by all available means, without fear, hesitation or compromise is striving with our lives in His cause. The effort is recorded and appreciated by God:

[19:65] The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and everything between them; you shall worship Him and steadfastly persevere in worshiping Him. Do you know of anyone who equals Him?

[29:45] You shall recite what is revealed to you of the scripture, and observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), for the Contact Prayers prohibit evil and vice. But the remembrance of God (through Salat) is the most important objective. God knows everything you do.

[74:7] Steadfastly commemorate your Lord.

[31:17] "O my son, you shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat). You shall advocate righteousness and forbid evil, and remain steadfast in the face of adversity. These are the most honorable traits."

[47:35] Therefore, you shall not waver and surrender in pursuit of peace, for you are guaranteed victory, and God is with you. He will never waste your efforts.

[21:94] As for those who work righteousness, while believing, their work will not go to waste; we are recording it.

[2:158] If one volunteers more righteous works, then God is Appreciative, Omniscient.

All of the above represents our holy war against our human weakness to merely purify and liberate our souls. This defines striving in the cause of God. Those who steadfastly persevere and sincerely

fight their best to win this battle are the ones who earn the ideal package with the best deal.

The Real Wealth

[28:80] As for those who were blessed with knowledge, they said, "Woe to you, God's recompense is far better for those who believe and lead a righteous life." None attains this except the steadfast.

[16:96] What you possess runs out, but what God possesses lasts forever. We will surely reward those who steadfastly persevere; we will recompense them for their righteous works.

[23:111] "I have rewarded them today, in return for their steadfastness, by making them the winners."

[61:11] Believe in God and His messenger and strive in the cause of God with your money and your lives. This is the best deal for you, if you only knew.

[7:126] ... "Our Lord, grant us steadfastness, and let us die as submitters."

Frank

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Religion of Islam (Submission): Truth vs. Conjecture

One of the prevalent myths in the western world is that Muhammad was the founder of Submission (Islam). Even the majority of people who call themselves Muslims think that, "prophet Muhammad instituted the practices of Islam". They are ignorant of the Quran. It is a fact that Islam is called the "religion of Abraham" (Millat Ibrahim) throughout the Quran (2:130, 135; 3:95; 4:125 etc.) Furthermore, God informs us in the Quran that all religious practices of Submission were established with Abraham, long before the Quran's revelation (2:128, 21:73, 22:78). These practices included the Contact prayers (Salat), the obligatory charity (Zakat), the fasting of Ramadan, and the Hajj pilgrimage.

For example, God made a covenant with the Children of Israel that He would be with them so long as they observe the Contact prayers and the obligatory charity (5:12). Luqman advised his son to observe the Contact prayers (31:17). Moses and Aaron (and the Children of Israel) were asked to turn

their homes in Egypt into synagogues, and to maintain the Contact prayers until God delivered them from the tyranny of Pharaoh (10:87). Thus all the messengers who came after Abraham observed the practices given to him by God. This included the prophet Muhammad who was also enjoined to follow Abraham (16:123).

Another proof of divine preservation of the practices of Submission given to Abraham is the universal acceptance of such practices. There is no dispute concerning the number of units (Rak'ahs) in all five daily Contact prayers assigned by God. The Quran's mathematical code confirms the number of units in the five prayers 2, 4, 4, 3 and 4, respectively. The number 24434 is a multiple of 19.

The Quran deals only with practices that were distorted. For example, the ablution must be in four steps (5:6). The tone of voice during contact prayers should be a moderate tone (17:110).

We learn from the Quran that Submission (Islam) is not simply the name of a religion. It is a description. It is the total submission and devotion to God alone (16:52). It is the only religion approved by God (3:19). One does not become a Submitter automatically if his or her birth certificate says "Muslim". A person's name, his parents' religious background, his race or language is no guarantee for him to be a submitter acceptable to God either. Being a submitter is a matter between the person and God the Almighty who knows our innermost thoughts and intentions. It is a matter of how a person accepts God as the only deity, submits to His will, and lives a righteous life.

Unfortunately, the majority of Muslims today have distorted the teachings of Muhammad, just like the Jews and Christians distorted the teachings of Moses and Jesus, respectively. Instead of following the guidance of the Quran, they insist on following the innovations and corrupted practices attributed to Muhammad. On the day of Judgment the messenger will say that his people have deserted the Quran (25:30). Jesus will disown his wrongful followers who idolized him. (New Testament: Matthew 7:21) Our aim should be to purge these innovations by upholding the Quran alone, and not falling into idolizing anybody or anything beside God. This is the only way to present the true religion of Submission to the world.

Abdullah

(From: Submitters Perspective, Jan 1997)

What is Idolatry?

Before Submission, if anyone told me that I was committing idol worship, I would have been very offended because my understanding of idol worship was restricted to worshipping pictures, effigies, deities and elements of nature to name a few. As a Christian I did not consider worshipping Jesus as idol worship. Like most Christians I was brought up to believe in the concept of 'holy trinity, one God.' Even though I did not understand it, I was happy to go along. Having grown up seeing various temples and mosques, my understanding of idolatry was limited to what I saw of the worship of figurines and mausoleums as idols.

When I came into Submission, the meaning of 'idolatry' changed. I was shocked to know that I was worshipping Jesus as an idol besides God. As a Christian, I was told that Jesus is one third part of God. I did not understand it then and I don't understand it now. However, Submission has opened my eyes to the truth. The foremost commandment, that is the essence of God's scriptures, the Bible and Quran, is to worship GOD ALONE.

*[Bible Exodus 20:1-6] ¹"And God spoke all these words: ²I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ³**You shall have no other gods before me.** ⁴**You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.** ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments"*

*[Quran 4:36] "You shall worship **GOD alone**—do not associate anything with Him..."*

*[Quran 39:66] Therefore, **you shall worship GOD alone**, and be appreciative"*

The Biblical verses very clearly state that you cannot have any other god before God. So it stands to reason that God cannot be reduced to one third, as that is a gross violation of His commandment. Even creating an image in any form, be it human or otherwise is strictly prohibited. So if we can't give God an image or form, then logically Jesus cannot be God. Of course, I did not realize this before submission, nor did I think too much about it. I was raised not to ask questions and embarrass the elders (as they were unable to give logical answers to these questions). In the early days of Submission when I questioned my family about the concept of Trinity, they would say 'blessed are those who have not seen but still believe'. Back then I did not understand that the words were being quoted out of context. Praise God for His guidance, as my lack of understanding forced me to search further and dig deeper into my religion only to understand that I was misguided. Submission has taught me that it is ok to question one's belief in order to establish faith. Once I realized that by worshipping Jesus I was committing a gross sin as per God's scriptures, that is when my life changed; for the better.

Idol worship can easily be confused as the worship of physical idols in temples as these are idols we see clearly. This is why traditional Muslims do not consider praying at the mausoleums of a 'dead saint' as idol worship. They convince themselves that they pray to the saints as they are closer to God, just as the Christians pray to Mary or the saints as they are closer to God and in a better position to intercede. Neither realizes that asking anyone for help other than God is an acknowledgment of the idol's power to help.

Some Catholics pray to saints with the logic that they do not pray TO saints or Mary, but rather they ask saints (or Mary) to pray FOR them. They believe asking idols to pray for them is no different than asking someone here on earth to pray for us. They do not realize that the idols are totally unaware of their prayers and cannot respond to them until the Day of Resurrection. Further, whether a

saint or Mary is being prayed TO or being asked to pray or intercede FOR someone, neither practice has any scriptural basis.

Nowhere does the Bible instruct us to pray to anyone other than God. This concept is unbiblical.

[Bible Hebrews 4:16] Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

This clearly tells us that we, believers here on earth, can "approach the throne of grace" with confidence. There is absolutely no need to pray to anyone other than God. There is no basis for asking those who "are in heaven" to pray for us. Only God can hear our prayers. Only God can answer our prayers. No one in heaven has any greater access to God's throne than we do as individuals through our submission and prayer.

Submission helped me understand idolatry and its distortions. It has helped me gain confidence in God and His system that there is no other god but GOD and only He can protect and guide us to the right understanding should we want to be guided.

*[Quran 16:93] "Had GOD willed, He could have made you one congregation. But He sends astray whoever chooses to go astray, and **He guides whoever wishes to be guided...**"*

God answers prayers based on His will and His knowledge of what is good for us

[Bible 1 John 5:14-15] "And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him".

[Quran 28:56] You cannot guide the ones you love. GOD is the only One who guides in accordance with His will, and in accordance with His knowledge of those who deserve the guidance.

Guidance is a blessing from God for those chosen for Submission, something we should never take for granted.

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Is This Material To My Salvation?

We often get caught up in discussions or thoughts of an issue or idea and after a while, the time devoted seems to become undeservedly excessive. I have found that asking a simple question helps put things in perspective.

Is This Material To My Salvation?

That is, does this matter have real importance or serious consequences if it goes one way or the other? Is it vital?

After asking such questions in our local community, we often conclude that we are not making the best use of our time. This has helped us put an end to unproductive arguments and to redirect our focus to matters that are material to our salvation. It also benefits us in staying united since we end up exhibiting due respect for other opinions and in being amicable and kind towards one another.

Of course, none of this means that we should compromise on any of the core principles of righteousness as defined for us by God.

David and Solomon

[21:78] *And David and Solomon, when they once ruled with regard to someone's crop that was destroyed by another's sheep. We witnessed their judgment.*

[21:79] *We granted Solomon the correct understanding, though we endowed both of*

them with wisdom and knowledge. We committed the mountains to serve David in glorifying (God), as well as the birds. This is what we did.

In the above verses we see that God is telling us that no human being has a monopoly on being correct in his/her understanding of all matters. Let's think about that. These were two prophets whom God blessed with highly unusual powers. When is one granted full rein? When that individual can be trusted to make sound decisions and put resources to good use. But that does not make such a person infallible. In fact, they did not have the same understanding on the matter mentioned in 21:78. God says Solomon was granted the correct understanding, not David. This should be a great lesson for us all as we get caught up in discussions with one another.

Nothing God mentions in the Quran is by accident. Why not benefit from the amazing wisdom contained in this book and improve ourselves daily?

Instead of arguing endlessly, consider pausing and saying a prayer such as: My Lord, if she/he is correct, please guide me to that understanding and if I am correct, please grant the same to her/him. In any case, let not the devil drive a wedge between us.

We must keep our focus on our salvation when trying to make any judgment and do so while keeping all of God's commands in mind, not just the ones that suit our purpose at that moment.

[17:53] *Tell My servants to treat each other in the best possible manner, for the devil will always try to drive a wedge among them. Surely, the devil is man's most ardent enemy.*

Other questions we may wish to consider in such situations include:

- Am I getting caught up in winning the argument and scoring one for my ego?
- Have I given the other view its due consideration?
- Is continuing this argument likely to resolve it?
- Are we accomplishing anything meaningful?
- Is God likely to judge our actions to be good?
- Is the continuation of this argument likely to unite us or divide us?

And why not ponder the following:

- Maybe I am wrong.
- What is my motivation in continuing this discussion?
- Maybe I am falling into a trap set by Satan.
- Is God likely to be pleased with the way I have behaved?

To close, here is a daily prayer for us all to consider: My Lord, guide me so that my actions today produce a record of good deeds NOT regrets.

Peace be upon you!