



In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Invited to Fall Prostrate

[68:42-3] The day will come when they will be exposed, and they will be required to fall prostrate, but they will be unable to. With their eyes subdued, humiliation will cover them. They were invited to fall prostrate when they were whole and able.

God invites us to fall prostrate. It's an invitation, like an invitation to a party or a gala event. We are invited. What do most people do with that invitation? They turn it down. They flatly refuse. They don't even RSVP; they just don't respond. In fact, most people aren't even aware of the invitation. And if they were, they would most likely respond as Satan did: *[7:11] We created you, then we shaped you, then we said to the angels, "Fall prostrate before Adam." They fell prostrate, except Iblees (Satan); he was not with the prostrators. [7:12] He said, "What prevented you from prostrating when I ordered you?" He said, "I am better than he; You created me from fire, and created him from mud." [7:13] He said, "Therefore, you must go down, for you are not to be arrogant here. Get out; you are debased."*

Our ego gets us into so much trouble. It caused our eviction from Paradise—we were too arrogant to fall prostrate and then so cocky that we accepted

free will, instead of submitting like the animals and the plants and the mountains (33:72). God says we can't be arrogant in His presence, so we have to find the ways to firmly and completely kill our ego (2:54) so we can come wholeheartedly back to God. And in His incredible mercy, God gives us the ways and means to do that. And one very valuable tool is prostration.

Sura 32 is entitled "Prostration." It's a short chapter but full of the importance of prostrating to God. Verses 2 and 3 tell us that the Quran is "without a doubt" a revelation from God, and that it brings the truth and warnings for our guidance. The next few verses remind us of the greatness of God—that He controls everything and we should not turn to anyone else for any of our needs. Verses 12-14 are under the subtitle "Too late." They remind us that everyone will bow before God, but for the disbelievers it will be too late to repent. *[32:14] Taste the consequences of your forgetting this day; now we forget you. You have incurred eternal retribution in return for your own works.*

But here's our salvation; here's what we need to do. *[32:15-6] The only people who truly believe in our revelations*

are those who fall prostrate upon hearing them. They glorify and praise their Lord, without any arrogance. Their sides readily forsake their beds, in order to worship their Lord, out of reverence and hope, and from our provisions to them, they give.

We have the ability to fall prostrate; it's within our means; it's not too difficult for us to do. And if we can do it, then verse 17 shows us the reward: *[32:17] You have no idea how much joy and happiness are waiting for you as a reward for your (righteous) works.*

We have no idea how amazingly wonderful Heaven is, even with all the beautiful descriptions throughout the Quran. Still, God says we have no idea, which means it must be just so awesome it's beyond anything our little brains can comprehend. Wow!

Sura 32 continues by telling us that God will give us pinches as reminders to turn to Him, "that they may take a hint and reform." But if we fail to take heed, then we are evil indeed. He mentions the past generations who failed to heed the warnings, and He reminds us that we have to make these changes now. *[32:29] Say, "The day such a victory comes, believing will not benefit*

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

those who did not believe before that, nor will they be given another chance.” Our time to fall prostrate is today, right now.

Why does God want us to prostrate before Him? Does He need our worship? We know He does not (3:97, 35:15, 39:7). We prostrate for our own good. The physical benefits of prostration are many. The act of prostrating involves most of our muscles, giving them some exercise. It’s especially beneficial for the neck and back muscles. The head is placed lower than the heart allowing blood to rush toward the brain. This has a good effect on memory, vision, hearing, and concentration. Many yoga positions involve prostration, and it’s believed the act of prostration restores harmony to body and mind.

But much more important are the spiritual benefits of prostration. The most important aspect is that we are acknowledging that there is something far superior to us. We’re willing to subjugate our body, soul and will to the Almighty God. Even when we aren’t physically prostrating (or can’t), we are prostrating when we recognize that we have no power outside of God’s will. Every time we submit to God willingly, even when the situation seems negative (praise God if the light turned red and I have to stop here; praise God that the car in front is going 20 in a 40 MPH zone; praise God even if I spilled water; there’s a good reason for all of this), we submit and kill our ego and work on growing our soul. We acknowledge that everything in fact prostrates before God’s will, and we want to do this willingly. *[13:15] To GOD prostrates everyone in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and so do their shadows in the mornings and the evenings.*

We also recognize the precious gift of scripture. *[17:107-9] Proclaim, “Believe in it, or do not believe in it.” Those who possess knowledge from the previous scriptures, when it is recited to them, they fall down to their chins, prostrating. They say, “Glory be to our Lord. This fulfills our Lord’s prophe-*

cy.” They fall down on their chins, prostrating and weeping. For it augments their reverence.

This is why we prostrate.

We prostrate here so we will be able to fall prostrate when we come before God and He commands it. We accept His gracious invitation now.

[22:77] O you who believe, you shall bow, prostrate, worship your Lord, and work righteousness, that you may succeed.

[53:62] You shall fall prostrate before GOD, and worship.

And the last verse of chapter 32, Prostration, tells us what to do about those in this world who blindly choose to ignore God’s gracious invitation: *[32:30] Therefore, disregard them and wait, they too are waiting.*

Lydia

* * * * *

God’s Design of our Eyes

We know that our eyes are made for seeing, and it’s a wonderful miracle how they receive and interpret the light for our vision. God also provided protection for our eyes so they can do the job they were made to do.

Our eyebrows are not just a random facial feature. Their main job is to protect our eyes. The shape of the brows channels sweat, rain and moisture away from the eyeball so our vision stays clear. When we sweat or walk in the rain, the arch shape of the brows diverts moisture around to the side of our face, keeping our eyes relatively dry. Without eyebrows, getting around in these conditions would be more difficult. The salt from sweat can be very irritating to the eye, making them sting. So the brows perform an important function.

Eyebrows are also one of the most distinctive features that make up our face. Eyebrows may be styled or plain, and

many people spend a lot of energy shaping and coloring them. Eyebrows provide a lot of non-verbal communication. We can raise them in surprise or lower them in a scowl, and without a word, people know what we’re thinking. Praise God for His design.

Covering our eyeball is the eyelid. This flap of skin serves to protect the eye from matter, such as dust, dirt and other debris, as well as bright light that might damage the eye. When we blink, the eyelid also helps spread tears over the surface of the eyeball, keeping it moist and comfortable.

At the end of the eyelid are the eyelashes, several fine little hairs. They are regarded as a look of beauty, particularly for women, and much money may be spent to keep them long and distinctive. But their primary function is to protect the eyes from small particles of dust, sand and other debris. Those tiny particles could otherwise enter the eye and harm the eyeball.

The lashes, along with the eyelid, eyebrows and facial structure, also help to shield the eyes from the bright light of the sun. God has now given us sunglasses, but His design of our face helps guard against the sun’s strong rays, filtering the sunlight that shines in our eyes.

What an amazing and complex system. May we use our eyes to see God’s awesome signs.

[24:44] GOD controls the night and day. This should be a lesson for those who possess eyes.

[67:3-4] He created seven universes in layers. You do not see any imperfection in the creation by the Most Gracious. Keep looking; do you see any flaw? Look again and again; your eyes will come back stumped and conquered.

[90:8] Did we not give him two eyes?

[16:78] GOD brought you out of your mothers’ bellies knowing nothing, and He gave you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brains, that you may be appreciative.

Taareq

Marriage, What's So Great About It?

In today's world many people seem to view marriage as a negative thing, a limiting of freedom, of excitement. On the other hand, some Christians have long had the understanding from the writings of Paul that it is better not to marry, in order to more completely devote oneself to God.

However, in Quran, verses 24:32-33, God strongly encourages marriage, even to the extent (in the past) of freeing slaves who wished to marry.

Encourage Marriage to Discourage Immorality

[24:32-33] You shall encourage those of you who are single to get married. They may marry the righteous among your male and female servants, if they are poor. GOD will enrich them from His grace. GOD is Bounteous, Knower. Those who cannot afford to get married shall maintain morality until GOD provides for them from His grace. Those among your servants who wish to be freed in order to marry, you shall grant them their wish, once you realize that they are honest. And give them from GOD's money that He has bestowed upon you....

As you see above, Dr. Rashad Khalifa added a subtitle indicating that marriage discourages immorality, and this is in more ways than just sexual immorality. Marriage is an amazing spiritual exercise. It seems to be one of the main tools that God gives us to work on our souls. For a marriage to be good, both partners must work both on the marriage and on themselves—work on killing their egos (2:54), on reigning in their selfishness (4:128), on treating each other in the best possible manner (17:53). And 2:187 lets us know that spouses must learn to share deeply, with more than just a physical intimacy for it tells us that: “They are the keepers of your secrets, and you are the keepers of their secrets....”

Yes, you can work on those traits in

your relationships with other people. However, in a marriage you cannot just walk away, as you can in most situations. Verse 4:21 tells us that marriage is a solemn pledge and 76:7 reminds us that the virtuous keep their pledges.

That marriage is not a light matter is demonstrated by the seriousness with which God deals with adultery. He classes it with idolatry and murder, and doubles the retribution for it:

[25:68-69] They never implore beside GOD any other god, nor do they kill any soul—for GOD has made life sacred—except in the course of justice. Nor do they commit adultery. Those who commit these offenses will have to pay. Retribution is doubled for them on the Day of Resurrection, and they abide therein humiliated.

The importance that God gives to marriage is also demonstrated by the fact that He tells us not to break existing marriages even when they do not conform to the normal prohibitions. This even includes existing marriages that are normally forbidden (4:22-24). And though divorce is allowed, He gives every opportunity for the marriage to heal when divorce is threatened—first with the command to try and reconcile (4:128), then with arbitration and counseling by the families (4:35), then with a four-month cooling off period (2:226-7), and finally with the interim of three menstruations for the wife before she can remarry (2:228) and thus put an end to the possibility of total reconciliation.

Marriage is a gift to us—a physical, emotional, and spiritual provision from the One who is our only real Provider. And it is a proof, a proof of His mercy, wisdom and graciousness:

[30:21] Among His proofs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves, in order to have tranquility and contentment with each other, and He placed in your hearts love and care towards your spouses. In this, there are sufficient proofs for people who think.

And finally, let's look at the deeper implications of verses 4:25 and 24:33,

which institute freedom for slaves when they marry. Rather than being a limit to freedom, marriage is a freeing institution, both for the slave and for all who are enslaved by their own sin. As it aids us in growing our souls to come closer and closer to God it frees us from the bondage of our original sin of doubting God's absolute power and authority. That is the greatest freedom there is!

LG

A Special Place for God

I hold a special place for God within myself.

My mind holds thoughts of the goodness of God.

My hands raise in prayer daily.

My mouth speaks the blessings that have been bestowed upon me and my family.

My eyes see the wonders that my Lord has shared through His love and goodness.

My feet carry me to various places to stand and share my Lord's provisions.

My body awakens every day to do my Lord's will.

I attempt at least one good deed a day, even if it's just sharing a smile.

My heart holds God secure and dear so that He is always near.

The love I feel and am able to share comes from God, the Almighty, the Most High.

All blessings, no matter how small or great, come from our Creator.

Eula

[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.

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Love

Love is not just an abstract noun. It's a gift to us from the Almighty, an emotional reward embedded in our hearts by Him. He sent us down with this gift—how Gracious, how Merciful.

Definitions of love include a warm affection, affectionate devotion, attachment, liking and fondness towards somebody or something to convey an affectionate message. Among God's creations are humans, animals, and nature in different modes, with gradations of friendship flowing through them, harmonizing, uniting, binding together and creating rapport within and between all species of creation.

God created us with different looks, colors, languages, races, and spread us all over the world. And yet, we can develop a warm binding friendship miles and miles away. I don't agree with the phrase: "out of sight, out of mind." We can still have a long and beautiful love deep in our hearts, though miles apart. Love is sharing, caring, developing confidence in each other, working out problems. It used to take time to communicate over distances—letters, cards, expensive telephone calls. Today, by God's grace, computers do all the work—so fast, in the blink of an eye.

Our love for God should be foremost and first. That love should be eternal, everlasting and unconditional. Our love for God shapes and guides our love for others, such as the love a mother gives her child

or that placed in our hearts for our spouse (30:21). We can also have love for other than humans. If you keep a pet, you love that animal and they give you love back; they stand by you, serve you, or alert you in times of danger (the ultimate protection comes from God). You train them (5:4) and they willingly work for you. There is a distinct love bond of friendship between animal and master.

Nature is another creation of God in all its glory—one of His beautiful creations. If you appreciate its beauty, nurture it, feed and water it, it will respond to your love and care by giving healthy fruit, flowers, and great beauty. It's living nature. When I had my first lessons in Ikebana, many years ago, my teacher told me that there is an intimate communication—a distinct pull of love—between man and nature.

Our love for God should drive our desire to stand before Him, accepted back into His kingdom in the Hereafter. We must try to seek His approval and love, not expecting anything in return unless God Himself feels we are ready to receive and share this love. Believe in Him, obey His commands, uphold righteousness, and follow His path without wavering.

[19:96] Surely, those who believe and lead a righteous life, the Most Gracious will shower them with love.

His love is specified for those who achieve certain qualities—He loves the righteous, the benevolent, the just, the

equitable, those who are clean, the suppressors of anger, the appreciative, the repenters, the charitable, those who steadfastly persevere, and those who have faith and trust in Him.

We have to earn God's love. He does not love the aggressors, the wasters, disbelievers, arrogant show offs, the corruptors, the boastful, proud, the unjust, the transgressors, the evil doers, the unappreciative.

He has put into the Quran His preferences—what He loves and what He does not love. He tells us how to acquire His love, so we should be very careful by obeying His laws. *[22:38] GOD defends those who believe. GOD does not love any betrayer, unappreciative.*

God is Most Merciful and forgives us when we make mistakes—even the prophets made mistakes. When we repent and reform, God is Forgiver. 2:222 tells us: *GOD loves the repenters, and He loves those who are clean.*

So, as we enjoy love in this world, remember that God's love is the most important for us to seek. *[2:165] ... Those who believe love GOD the most...*

[3:31] Proclaim: "If you love GOD, you should follow me." GOD will then love you, and forgive your sins. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

[3:32] Proclaim: "You shall obey GOD and the messenger." If they turn away, GOD does not love the disbelievers.

Hena