

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

Monthly Bulletin of International
Community of Submitters

www.masjiduntucson.org



Published by Masjid Tucson
Safar 1436

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Who Are Believers?

How is it that someone does not understand the existence of God? It is indeed God's plan that someone's understanding, hearing and vision are sealed. Hence he is not chosen to be a believer. We must thank God for His immense mercy that He has blessed us with understanding. So who are the believers?

[2:3] who believe in the unseen, observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and from our provisions to them, they give to charity. [2:4] And they believe in what was revealed to you, and in what was revealed before you, and with regard to the Hereafter, they are absolutely certain. [2:5] These are guided by their Lord; these are the winners.

God explains to us the traits of the believers. As a believer one has to believe in the revelations of God. Hence a believer believes in the unseen. We have not seen Paradise, yet as a believer one has to believe Paradise exists without any doubt because God has mentioned it in His book. Giving to charity and observing contact prayers are also important traits of the believers. This life is very competitive so if we don't strive hard we will fail to achieve. But God guarantees us in 2:5 that the believers will not only be guided but will also become the winners. And God has made this race very simple and easy to win. Because there is no stress or pressure

on you. No need to memorize answers or refer to a variety of books or different question sets. God has given us only one book to follow, "The Quran". And He wants us to refer to it and follow it. And the reward is eternal Paradise which is incomparably wonderful beyond anything in this material world.

[3:17] They are steadfast, truthful, submitting, charitable, and meditators at dawn.

I took stock of my day to day behavior. Out of 24 hours, say if I am awake for 14 hours, then how much do I fulfill the traits of the believers mentioned in 3:17? Perhaps I am most reverent for a couple of hours. Then what about the remaining period? Am I not alive during those remaining hours of the day? Don't I breathe, don't I eat, walk, talk, see, etc. And how can I forget that all this happens due to mercy of God?

*[33:41] O you who believe, you shall remember GOD frequently.**

**33:41-42 Your god is whatever occupies your thoughts most of the time. Hence the commandment to commemorate God and glorify Him day and night. See Appendix 27.*

As a believer do I follow this verse steadfastly? Most of the time I am pre-occupied with worldly affairs. God has

not asked us to totally cut-off worldly affairs. But it is my duty to find ways in which I can frequently remember God while performing my worldly duties.

[3:134] who give to charity during the good times, as well as the bad times. They are suppressors of anger, and pardoners of the people. GOD loves the charitable.

Giving to charity during the good times is very easy. But in the bad times it can be very difficult. A true believer gives to charity during bad times to please God. He is doing so just because God has asked him to do so.

Suppressing your anger is one of the best qualities of a believer. We sometimes get angry for silly reasons. And then this anger can lead us to sin, e.g., by way of using abusive language or even physical assault. Just imagine how much humiliation the Prophet Mohammed and the prophets before him like Noah, Lot, Abraham, etc. had to face. People not only mocked them but also abused and assaulted them. Yet they suppressed their anger and fulfilled their duties entrusted to them by God.

[3:173] When the people say to them, "People have mobilized against you; you should fear them," this only strengthens

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their faith and they say, "GOD suffices us; He is the best Protector."

Once while studying Quran when I came across this verse, I wept. Because I felt God has not put me to such an extreme level of test. Just imagine the level of faith and reverence required of the companions of the Prophet, who stood by his side during all the battles against the pagan Arabs. It requires enormous amount of belief and reverence for God to sustain such an extreme level of testing. I feel that my tests (in comparison) are not at all a big deal.

[3:191] They remember GOD while standing, sitting, and on their sides, and they reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth: "Our Lord, You did not create all this in vain. Be You glorified. Save us from the retribution of Hell.

If I really call myself a believer, then God must always dominate my mind. His creations should not distract me, but rather always compel me to praise Him and glorify Him.

[8:74] Those who believed and emigrated, and strove in the cause of GOD, as well as those who hosted them and gave them refuge, and supported them, these are the true believers. They have deserved forgiveness and a generous recompense.

God commanded Prophet Mohammed and his companions to migrate from Mecca to Medina, and all of them left Mecca. Today if someone tells me to emigrate on short notice, it will be a challenge. I need sufficient time to manage my affairs and some assurance of settlement at the new venue. But imagine how they must have immigrated to a new unknown place in the cause of God. The only strength they had was belief in God. Thus, God calls them the true believers.

[25:64] In the privacy of the night, they meditate on their Lord, and fall prostrate.

When I meditate at night, it is really a very pleasant experience. It's quiet and the world around us is calm. Commemorating God in such conditions takes you to a different world. I badly need to

make this a regular practice in my life. May God help me to attain that level of reverence.

[25:70] Exempted are those who repent, believe, and lead a righteous life. GOD transforms their sins into credits. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

Here God reveals His love for all of us beyond any limit. He knows that we will fall prey to satan's trap. Hence He is shielding us by the gift of repentance. And He will not only forgive us but will also transform our sins into credits. Truly God's mercy has no limit.

[33:35] The submitting men, the submitting women, the believing men, the believing women, the obedient men, the obedient women, the truthful men, the truthful women, the steadfast men, the steadfast women, the reverent men, the reverent women, the charitable men, the charitable women, the fasting men, the fasting women, the chaste men, the chaste women, and the men who commemorate GOD frequently, and the commemorating women; GOD has prepared for them forgiveness and a great recompense.

God is assuring us the great recompense for observing the traits of the believers without distinguishing us on the basis of our gender.

[39:18] They are the ones who examine all words, then follow the best. These are the ones whom GOD has guided; these are the ones who possess intelligence.

[39:9] Is it not better to be one of those who meditate in the night, prostrating and staying up, being aware of the Hereafter, and seeking the mercy of their Lord? Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Only those who possess intelligence will take heed.

[39:22] If GOD renders one's heart content with Submission, he will be following a light from his Lord. Therefore, woe to those whose hearts are hardened against GOD's message; they have gone far astray.

Let's pray to God to protect us from straying from His path and lend us the patience and strength to be steadfast on the right path.

Abdul Ghani

Tools of the Devil

The DEVIL (SATAN, SHAYTAN, IB-LIS) is man's greatest enemy on earth. The Quran mentions this 11 times (2:168, 208; 6:142; 7:22; 12:5; 17:53; 20:117; 28:15; 35:6; 36:60; 43:62). Humans must do all that is possible to avoid the devil and his companions (evil Jinns—creations made from fire). The devil uses many tools to track and divert humans from the true worship of one God. Belief in one God alone is not enough because the devil believes in God also (8:48), and the devil also fears God (59:16). The devil uses tools to try and win supporters on his side. All of the devil's supporters will end up in hell along with the devil and his companions. Below is a list of some of the tools that the devil uses to encourage humans to stray from God's path.

Idol worship (2:14; 4:60,116-17; 5:60; 6:71, 137; 9:107; 10:105; 12:106; 22:30; 28:87; 39:65 and many more)

Witchcraft (2:102)

Usury (2:275)

Fear of anything or anyone except God (3:175)

Giving to charity to show off (4:38)

Tyranny (4:76; 40:35)

Rumors / lies (4:83)

To forbid things that are not forbidden in the Quran (4:119)

Intoxicants (5:90-91)

Gambling / games of chance (5:90-91)

Mocking God's Quran (6:68)

Following religious laws other than those in the Quran (6:112)

Eating food upon which God's name has not been mentioned (6:121)

Plotting / scheming / conspiring (12:52, 58:10)

Seeking other than God's help (form of idol worship) (12:42)

Driving hatred between people (12:100; 17:53)

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Breaking promises (14:22)

Extravagance (17:27)

Arguing about God without knowledge (22:3)

Following your parents blindly about religion (31:21)

May God forgive us all and help us to stay away from the tools of the devil. Recognizing Satan's traps may help us avoid them. All praises to God alone.

Frank

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LIKE WATER AND MOUNTAIN

LIKE WATER

In the world there are few things more submissive and weaker than water. Yet for attacking that which is hard and strong nothing surpasses it. Put up barricades, erect levees, and make everything waterproof; with enough passage of time, the flexible quality of water will triumph. There is no better example of this fact about water than the creation of the magnificent Grand Canyon. This architectural masterpiece was carved out by water.

Water does not resist. Water flows.

Water always goes where it wants to go, and nothing in the end can stand against it.

Water is patient. Dripping water wears away a stone, just like it did to the Grand Canyon. (We should be like water.)

So, like water, let us trust GOD and be persistently gentle and willingly submit when faced with challenges, then watch the resistance to all of our challenges dissolve and go away. Like water, if we can't go through the obstacles we face, let us go around them. Yes, as Submitters we should and we can be like water. Remember, that as human beings, we are 65% water. Part of GOD'S Perfect Design.

LIKE THE MOUNTAIN

We read in the Holy Quran [27:88] *When you look at the mountains, you think that they are standing still. But they are moving, like the clouds. Such is the manufacture of GOD, who perfected everything. He is fully Cognizant of everything you do.*

There is a lot going on around the mountain and on the mountain itself. The rain drenches the mountain, the sun scorches it, the mountain is snowed upon, we humans use the mountain for sporting activities such as mountain climbing, skiing and camping.

Yet through it all, it doesn't complain and instead, is detached from the commotion around it and remains focused on pleasing GOD. (We should be like the mountain.)

In the midst of all the real life challenges we are faced with, all the different Quranic understandings we have to deal with, the different egos, let us be like the mountain by not being immensely involved with distractions which the Quran calls illusions, but to be detached from them and maintain our focus on pleasing GOD ALONE.

Tom

[Ed. note: you can view Tom's conference presentation at <http://masjidtucson.org/conference/2014/>]

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[11:7] *He is the One who created the heavens and the earth in six days—and His (earthly) domain was completely covered with water—in order to test you ...*

[21:30] *Do the unbelievers not realize that the heaven and the earth used to be one solid mass that we exploded into existence? And from water we made all living things. Would they believe?*

[27:61] *Who is the One who made the earth habitable, caused rivers to run through it, placed on it mountains, and created a barrier between*

the two waters? Is it another god with GOD? ...

[16:15] *And He placed stabilizers (mountains) on earth, lest it tumbles with you, as well as rivers and roads, that you may be guided.*

[17:37] *You shall not walk proudly on earth—you cannot bore through the earth, nor can you be as tall as the mountains.*

[38:18] *We committed the mountains in his service, glorifying with him night and day.*

[50:7] *And we created the earth, and scattered on it mountains, and grew in it all kinds of beautiful plants.*

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LETTER FROM A PRISONER

Salaam Alaikum.

As your humble brother, greetings and may you receive all Allah's blessings. I'm writing to inform you of my recent move to Folsom State Prison in Repressa, California. I once again thank you for the Quran, the Final Testament. It has really brought joy and understanding of the Quran to me. Other Qurans, which I've read, had me lost occasionally because their translations were proper English and not so-called American-English, which I comprehend a little better, inshallah. I feel there are many more who feel the same as I feel, so thank you for bringing clarity in my understanding and more joy into reading and comprehending this Glorious Quran, the Final Testament.

Yours truly,

Brother Mark

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[96:1-5] *Read, in the name of your Lord, who created. He created man from an embryo. Read, and your Lord, Most Exalted. Teaches by means of the pen. He teaches man what he never knew.*

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ISSN 1089-053X

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CONTENTMENT

In today's material world it is very difficult to be satisfied. A new mobile phone is not so new a month later. All around there is enticement, a better watch, a better phone, better looks, covetous personality, and the list goes on and on and on. Is it possible to be averse to this kind of pressure? How can one be content? Being content in a materialistic world, where competition amongst siblings, family and peers is so fierce that nothing is satisfying, and contentment seems almost impossible. However, despite the situation God advises us to be content with what we have [74:6] *Be content with your lot.* Surely! There is truth to this statement.

Contentment is a state of satisfaction and happiness. A contented man is pleased with what he has. He does not make himself miserable by envying those who have what he does not.

But how does one go about being satisfied? I felt the pressure of keeping up with everyone was getting too much and it was impossible to be content, till I spoke to a friend who shared light on how she deals with the situation. Simply changing ones perspective helps to cope with the situation. Be happy with what you have, rather than what you don't have. Look around and you will see how blessed you are. Looking at those less fortunate rather than at those more privileged helps put things

in the right perspective, because looking at those more privileged can make one feel weak, vulnerable and envious. It brings about unrighteous thoughts about the object of envy and can conjure fictitious situations; situations that can drive one crazy about what will people think about me if I don't have this or don't have that. Instead, look at the brighter side of things—be appreciative of what you have instead of mourning about what you don't have and may never have.

The moment we look at those who are less privileged than us, we immediately realize how fortunate we are. How blessed we are to have all the comforts of life that a lot of people envy. We don't go to bed hungry or live at a shelter. We are not lonely and lost. We are better off than most people. Moreover, we are guided and have a chance at eternal happiness.

[2:5] *These are guided by their Lord; these are the winners.*

[7:10] *We have established you on earth, and we have provided for you the means of support therein. Rarely are you appreciative.*

Contentment breeds happiness. It is, therefore, worth cultivating and is achievable if we take our cues from God, this is God's guarantee.

[48:4] *He is the One who places contentment into the hearts of believers to augment more faith, in addition to their faith. To GOD belongs all forces of*

the heavens and the earth. GOD is Omniscient, Most Wise.

God does not command us to do anything that is impossible, nor is he unreasonable in his demands.

God's Tests Are Never Unreasonable [4:66] Had we decreed for them: "You must offer your lives," or "Give up your homes," they would not have done it, except for a few of them. (Even if such a command was issued,) had they done what they were commanded to do, it would have been better for them, and would prove the strength of their faith.

We know that wants are insatiable. While there is nothing wrong in wanting the great materials of this world, it is wrong to get miserable and make those around you miserable in trying to achieve it. After all:

[3:109] *To GOD belongs everything in the heavens and everything on earth, and all matters are controlled by GOD.*

If we are able to remember this simple fact, then what we have or don't have will really not matter and contentment will indeed breed joy and peace.

RD

[Ed note: At this time of year, when much of the world is consumed with "buy, buy, buy," it's a good time for us to take stock of what we have and be thankful to God for those blessings. It's good for us always to remember that happiness isn't a new iPhone; "Happiness is Submission to God."]