

Using Your Brain

Alhamdu Lillaah. La Elaha ella Allah. Praise be to GOD. I bear witness there is no other god besides GOD.

By the grace of GOD, I (and 7 other Submitters) were permitted to do Hajj and Umrah the way GOD decreed for us. We did it outside of the ‘Saudi’ sacred months where it has been deemed ‘haram’ by the Saudis. I remember on the Umrah visa the penalty was ‘death’ for promoting religion that is different from Traditional Islam. Therefore, we had to do an undercover, covert mission: “**OPERATION INVISIBLE HAJJ**”

During this Pilgrimage, a lot of things happened that have, GOD willing, forever strengthened my faith and deepened my understanding of some things. For example, our purpose, our weaknesses, lots of different things.

But, one thing that really impacted me was the realization of what it meant to truly submit to GOD’s commands without hesitation, without reluctance. To truly trust GOD.

THE REALIZATION: *(don’t say)*

For a long time now, I’ve noticed with myself and many others, that whenever we want to do something which requires trust in GOD, it always seems to be followed with ‘**Yes, trust GOD, BUT GOD says to use your brain!**’. After what happened at the stone throwing stations in Mena, I realized my understanding of this ‘use your brain’ was a bit off.

Only five times in the Quran, GOD says ‘**we have given you the hearing the eyesight and the brains**’. **Four (4)** of them are meant as proofs of our Creator, and **one (1)** refers to actually ‘*using our brains*’.

[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.

Here the context is regarding information given to you that needs to be verified. For example, someone claiming something is in the Quran, we must verify if it is true or not. It is not referring to doing something that would please GOD, or trusting GOD.

Even during the time of war, when our lives are threatened we are encouraged to be steadfast.

[3:155] Surely, those among you who turned back the day the two armies clashed have been duped by the devil. This reflects some of the (evil) works they had committed. GOD has pardoned them. GOD is Forgiver, Clement.

[3:156] O you who believe, do **not be like those who disbelieved and said of their kinsmen who traveled or mobilized for war, "Had they stayed with us, they would not have died or gotten killed."** GOD renders this a source of grief in their hearts. GOD controls life and death. GOD is Seer of everything you do.

[3:157] Whether you get killed or die in the cause of GOD, the forgiveness from GOD, and mercy are far better than anything they hoard.

[3:158] Whether you die or get killed, you will be summoned before GOD.

[3:159] It was mercy from GOD that you became compassionate towards them. Had you been harsh and mean-hearted, they would have abandoned you. Therefore, you shall pardon them and ask forgiveness for them, and consult them. **Once you make a decision, carry out your plan, and trust in GOD. GOD loves those who trust in Him.***

[3:160] **If GOD supports you, none can defeat you. And if He abandons you, who else can support you? In GOD the believers shall trust.**

I realized, I would say '**Yes, trust GOD, BUT**...for whatever reason I can't this time'. I would '**use my brain**' and say to myself 'people aren't going to listen to me, nobody cares so why bother, or I cannot afford to give charity right now or strive right now. There was always a '**BUT**', and I would abuse the '**use my brain**' command in (17:36) to rationalize and justify NOT trusting GOD. I would '**use my brain**' but from a place of anxiety and fear. Fear is the tool of the devil. Therefore, I would '**use my brain**' for self preservation, and I **rationalized this 'lack of trust' under the guise of 'using my brain'. Under the guise of 17:36).** I did not take heed of...

[3:160] **If GOD supports you, none can defeat you. And if He abandons you, who else can support you? In GOD the believers shall trust.**

MOSES & PHAROAH: Now, just imagine you were around during the time of Moses, you just witnessed a miracle, and Moses invited you to follow him. Thereby, disobeying Pharaoh. If you were afraid (which you probably would be), your brain would tell you not to go with Moses because Pharaoh was too powerful and would torture us. If you trusted GOD, your brain would tell you to go with Moses and fear nothing but GOD and it would not matter how strong Pharaoh appeared to be.

[20:77] We inspired Moses: "Lead My servants out, and strike for them a dry road across the sea. **You shall not fear that you may get caught, nor shall you worry."**

JEWS ENTER JERUSALEM: What about the time the Children of Israel were told to enter Jerusalem.

[5:21] "O my people, enter the holy land that GOD has decreed for you, and do not rebel, lest you become losers."

[5:22] They said, "O Moses, there are powerful people in it, and we will not enter it, unless they get out of it. If they get out, we are entering."

[5:23] Two men who were reverent and blessed by GOD said, "Just enter the gate. If you just enter it, you will surely prevail. You must trust in GOD, if you are believers."

Despite All the Miracles They Saw

[5:24] They said, "O Moses, we will never enter it, so long as they are in it. Therefore, go - you and your Lord - and fight. We are sitting right here."

[5:25] He said, "My Lord, I can only control myself and my brother. So, allow us to part company with the wicked people."

[5:26] He said, "Henceforth, it is forbidden them for forty years, during which they will roam the earth aimlessly. Do not grieve over such wicked people."

So, trusting GOD is obeying HIM without hesitation. An unwavering, total submission. Yet despite all the miracles they saw, they still did not trust that GOD would protect them. They didn't believe they would be safe.

Previous generations have not seen 1/10th of the miracles we have been shown. We have witnessed one of the GREAT miracles. So, we really have no excuse not to trust GOD. We are going to held to the GOLD standard on the Day of Judgment.... We cannot afford to make mistakes.

We all say we trust GOD, but do we.... all the time? What is Trust anyway:

Trust (dictionary)

- Firm reliance on the integrity, ability, or character of a person or thing.
- Custody. To place in the care of another; entrust. To believe
- The condition and resulting obligation of having confidence placed in one
- Reliance on something in the future; hope. To be confident, unwavering in another.
- Reliance on the intention and ability of a purchaser to pay in the future; credit.

These dictionary meanings makes me think of 9:111..

[9:111] GOD has BOUGHT from the believers THEIR LIVES AND THEIR MONEY IN EXCHANGE FOR PARADISE. Thus, they fight in the cause of GOD, willing to kill and get killed. Such is His truthful pledge in the Torah, the Gospel, and the Quran - and who fulfills His pledge better than GOD? You shall rejoice in making such an exchange. This is the greatest triumph.

So, using our brains IS having unwavering confidence that if we obey GOD and do what he says, HE will take care of us. During this Hajj, GOD taught me this lesson very well, MA.

- Morning waiting to go to Mena to stone the devil. There were some unforeseen delays. We were sitting in the hotel lobby just waiting to find out if we can get into the stoning stations. There is an old saying, 'an idle mind is the devils playground'. Well, I was getting bombarded with whispers.

Satan kept saying things like, **'oh, you are going to get caught by the religious police. The Mutawa. You are going to get beheaded. You are not going to make it. There are construction going on and security guards at the gates. YOU ARE DONE FOR!!!'**

Over and over again I would try to shut the whispers out of my head. Then, Rhuksana asked me to get (I think) water from the hotel room. When I got in the elevator, I yelled out loud in anger at the devil to leave me alone. I left the elevator, went into our room, put my hand on the freezer door thinking it was the lower refrigerator door and yanked open that door so fast that I cut my head open. I almost knocked myself out with the freezer door. (*delay*)

You see, I chose to listen to satan's whispers of fear. I was wavering. Although, **I BLAMED satan for MY choice** to listen to him, and I got a freezer door in the head for it.

Even after GOD showed me He is in complete control, I still let the whispers affect me. MA, after my eye-openingor should say head-opening experience, I calmed down, reflected and was okay.

So, what happened when we got to the Mena stoning station?

Well, before I start, I was informed by another Submitter there are normally armed guards there to prevent people from entering the stoning station. It has been deemed 'Haram' by the Saudis. You know....why would anybody want to protect satan from being stoned!?

Anyhow, we get to the stations and the taxi drivers did not want to go in side. Finally, they agreed. There was construction going on at the stoning station, workers were on their lunches, pick up trucks driving around, surveillance cameras on the ceilings, and here we are in our ihraams outside of the 'Saudi' sacred months. We stood out like a sore thumb. What did we do. Alhamdu Lillaah, we jumped the fence, marched to the first pillar, and threw the stones, we marched to the second pillar and threw the stones, we marched to the third pillar and threw the stones, took some pictures while we were there, and marched right out of the building.

MA, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING HAPPENED TO US. GOD MADE THE PEOPLE DEAF AND BLIND TO OUR PRESENCE. THOSE WHO DID SEE US, JUST LOOKED AT US, BUT SAID NOTHING!!

[3:160] If GOD supports you, none can defeat you.

So, what is the lesson I learned.....using your brain, is trusting GOD unconditionally and wholeheartedly.

It is knowing GOD is with the righteous. Knowing if we died in GOD's cause we will be martyred. Knowing GOD's commands are what is BEST for us. Not objecting when things do not go as WE have planned. Trusting HE will take care of us. Knowing He is the only one with Power. Knowing He is doing everything.....is using our brains. This is the essence of Submission. We submit wholeheartedly.

TOO BOO ALLAH – REPENT

ALHAMDU LILLAHAH, LA ELEHA ELLA ALLAH.

Guidance by GOD to Submission is the greatest gift any human can achieve, and we must never take this for granted. We must be appreciative.....and how do we show we are truly appreciative of GOD? Well, GOD has spelled it out for us in 34:13.

[34:13] ...O family of David, work (righteousness) to show your appreciation. Only a few of My servants are appreciative.

We show it by our actions. We show it by working righteousness. It is not only giving thanks.

[35:32] We passed the scripture from generation to generation, and we allowed whomever we chose from among our servants to receive it. Subsequently, some of them wronged their souls, others upheld it only part of the time, while others were eager to work righteousness in accordance with GOD's will; this is the greatest triumph.

Okay, I'm getting a little off topic here. So, we went on Hajj, by GOD's grace, and HE showed us over and over again that HE is in full control of everything, so we should not fear anything but HIM. More importantly, that we should TRUST HIM implicitly as it shows we believe in HIM.

In fact, the parable in Matthew 13 is a wonderful example of what happens when we trust in GOD alone, and what happens when we do not trust GOD and listen to satan's incessant whispers. In fact, this is an amazing example of people 'using their brains' and making the wrong decision.

¹ Later that same day Jesus left the house and sat beside the lake. ² A large crowd soon gathered around him, so he got into a boat. Then he sat there and taught as the people stood on the shore. ³ He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one:

“Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds.

⁴ As he scattered them across his field, **some seeds** fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. ⁵ **Other seeds** fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died. ⁷ **Other seeds** fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. ⁸ Still **other seeds** fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! ⁹ **Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.**

¹⁰ His disciples came and asked him, "**Why do you use parables** when you talk to the people?"

¹¹ He replied, "**You are permitted to understand** the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, **but others are not.** ¹² To those **who listen to MY teaching**, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, **even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them.** ¹³ That is why I use these parables,

For they look, but they don't really see.

They hear, but they don't really listen or understand.

¹⁶ "But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. ¹⁷ I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but they didn't see it. And they longed to hear what you hear, but they didn't hear it.

Those who listened to the messenger (Jesus) were the smart ones. They were the ones permitted to have more understanding and knowledge. They are the people who are 'using their brains'. They did not instantly reject the truth because of their own personal opinions.

¹⁸ "Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds:

¹⁹ The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom of GOD and don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts.

This was a disbeliever, but the next few are those who ACCEPTED Jesus' message of Submission to GOD. They were Christian submitters.

²⁰ The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. ²¹ But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have **problems or are persecuted for believing God's word.**

²² The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is **crowded out by the worries of this life** and the **lure of wealth**, so **no fruit is produced**.

²³ The seed that fell on good soil represents **those who truly hear and understand God's word** and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!" $(30+60+100 = 190 = 19 \times 10)$

Only a few truly trusted GOD and truly heard and understood GOD's word. The others did not understand. They did not trust GOD's words. Thus, they followed their opinions. They did not 'use their brains'.

NOAH'S PEOPLE: What about the people of Noah? Look at what happened when Noah when he gave the message. These people 'used their brains' too.

[11:27] The **leaders** who disbelieved among his people said, "We see that you are no more than a human being like us, **and we see that the first people to follow you are the worst among us**. We see that you do not possess any advantage over us. Indeed, **we think you are liars.**"

[26:111] They said, "**How can we believe with you, when the worst among us have followed you?**"

They rejected the information solely because of the people who first accepted Noah's message. You can just imagine the leaders having a community meeting saying, "**Okay people, as a rule of thumb, whatever those criminals believe, by default, must be wrong**. It must be from satan". How did satan dupe these particular people. He preyed on their feelings, their emotions. He knew the people did not like the people who were following Noah. He knew people have this deep seeded belief that they are innately good, AND he knew people hate to be associated with criminals or people that have been labeled 'BAD'. The '**guilty by association**' phenomena. So, they '**used their brains**' and it caused them to reject Noah's message solely on the company he kept; the 'worst people among them'.

They let their emotions dictate their decisions, **and they were wrong**.

There is another way our emotions can dictate how we 'use our brains' to justify **NOT** obeying GOD, NOT trusting GOD. Satan really capitalizes on this one.

It is our **OLD WAYS OF THINKING** prior to accepting Submission. Those deep rooted beliefs that have been engrained in us our entire lives. The social and cultural norms we inherit from the societies we live in, which can prevent a submitter of any level, from submitting to GOD, without ever even knowing it.

Social norms are the common belief of the masses that are derived over time, and is the **foundation of each person's moral code of what is 'right' and 'wrong'**. As Submitters, we must discard our old mindset and adopt what GOD decrees is 'right and wrong' and shed our cultural baggage, **and WE ALL HAVE BAGGAGE. NO COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD IS IMMUNE.** If we do not, we can fall into the trap of putting our opinions above GOD because what GOD is saying does not fit with our preconceived notions of 'right' and 'wrong'. This is our emotional compass. (*eg: Do you think a Japanese Samurai would listen if you told him suicide is NOT HONOURABLE*) MA, GOD has given us an amazing example to illustrate how we must accept GOD's commands and shed our old ways of thinking and wholeheartedly submit to what GOD says is okay or lawful.

[33:37] Recall that you said to the one who was blessed by GOD, and blessed by you, "Keep your wife and reverence GOD," **and you hid inside yourself what GOD wishez to proclaim. Thus, you feared the people, when you were supposed to fear only GOD.** When Zeid was completely through with his wife, we had you marry her, **in order to establish the precedent** that a man may marry the divorced wife of his adopted son. GOD's commands shall be done.

[33:38] **The prophet is not committing an error by doing anything that is made lawful by GOD.** Such is GOD's system since the early generations. GOD's command is a sacred duty.

Doing this was clearly **not socially accepted at that time, and GOD wanted to establish a precedent,** but Prophet Muhammad was afraid to do it. Why would he be afraid? There is a good chance many people may think it was 'very wrong' and not like what he was saying was GOD's law. But the fact remains, that GOD's laws are to be obeyed by those who worship Him alone. We cannot let our emotional compass dictate what is 'right' or 'wrong' and over-ride GOD's laws, because satan can now make the claim that we do not trust GOD. No believer is committing an error by doing anything that is made lawful by GOD.

Over and over again, GOD gives us examples in the Quran of people disobeying & disbelieving GOD. I'm sure we have all asked ourselves when we read the Quran 'how in the world can people make such a mistakes?' Well, if our moral code, our emotional compass is not in synchronicity with what GOD says, then it is easy to understand how 'using their brains' can cause us to make the wrong decisions, and it is EGO that prevents us from accepting anything different.

Remember, when Muhammad changed the Qiblah direction to Jerusalem. Those who 'heard and obeyed' were the guided ones. Those who 'used their brains' questioned the logic of changing prayer direction. It didn't make sense to them. Their emotional compass would have gone crazy and they probably would have said 'NO, NO, NO. THIS IS WRONG!' This cannot be right! Thus, they turned back on their heels.....AND THEY WERE WRONG!!

Why? Well, there is great quote I saw on a Submitters Skype profile that sums it up beautifully.
“WHEN FACED WITH THE DECISION BETWEEN CHANGING AND PROVING THERE IS NO NEED TO CHANGE....MOST PEOPLE GET BUSY ON THE PROOF!”

The only way to overcome our weaknesses, weaknesses that satan really, really capitalizes on, is to truly trust in GOD. To ‘hear and obey’ without hesitation, and everything will work out.
This, we must firmly fix in our minds, for it is GOD’s promise; **HIS Guarantee!.....**

Psalm 91

- ¹ Those who live in the shelter of the Most High
will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
- ² This I declare about the LORD:
He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;
he is my God, and I trust him.
- ³ For he will rescue you from every trap
and protect you from deadly disease.
- ⁴ He will cover you with his feathers.
He will shelter you with his wings.
His faithful promises are your armor and protection.
- ⁵ Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night,
nor the arrow that flies in the day.
- ⁶ Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness,
nor the disaster that strikes at midday.
- ⁷ Though a thousand fall at your side,
though ten thousand are dying around you,
these evils will not touch you.
- ⁸ Just open your eyes,
and see how the wicked are punished.
- ⁹ If you make the LORD your refuge,
if you make the Most High your shelter,
- ¹⁰ no evil will conquer you;
no plague will come near your home.
- ¹¹ For he will order his angels
to protect you wherever you go.
- ¹² They will hold you up with their hands
so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.
- ¹³ You will trample upon lions and cobras;
you will crush fierce lions and serpents under your feet!
- ¹⁴ The LORD says, “I will rescue those who love me.
I will protect those who trust in my name.
- ¹⁵ When they call on me, I will answer;
I will be with them in trouble.

I will rescue and honor them.
¹⁶ I will reward them with a long life
and give them my salvation.”

THIS IS GOD’S GUARANTEE!

Matthew 6:19-34 - Is another excellent example that we should not worry about anything and trust GOD.

¹⁹ “Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ **Store your treasures in heaven**, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

²² “Your eye is a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is good, your whole body is filled with light. ²³ But when your eye is bad, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

²⁴ **“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.**

²⁵ “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for GOD feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? ²⁷ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

²⁸ “And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, ²⁹ yet Solomon, in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are.

³¹ “So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘**What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?**’ ³² **These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers**, but GOD already knows all your needs. ³³ **Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need.**

³⁴ **“So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.**

CONCLUSION:

This whole Qutbah can be summed up quite easily: Using your brain **IS** trusting GOD totally. Using your brain **IS** hearing and obeying, without hesitation. Using your brain **IS** submitting totally before it is too late to reform.

[39:36] Is GOD not sufficient for His servant?

Remember this..... The sublimity of wisdom *is to do those things living*, that are desired when dying.

So, I will end this Qutbah with some prayers I believe are very important for all of us.

Dear GOD Almighty:

- Please keep us all on the right path, for the road to heaven is narrow, while the road to hell is wide.
 - increase our awareness of the Hereafter,
 - increase our knowledge, but with the correct understanding.
 - Please protect us from whispers of the devils.
 - And if they devils do whisper to us, please help us to differentiate between our thoughts and whispers from the devils.
 - divert sin away from us and keep us at the forefront of righteousness.
 - Strengthen our hearts when adversity afflicts us
 - Please cool my temper whenever it wants to flare up.
 - Protect us from objecting, and strengthen us in Submitting.
 - Please help us find ways to keep you on our minds most of the time.
 - Strengthen our foothold against the disbelievers & Hypocrites.
 - Please inspire each of us with ideas in which we can strive in your cause in whatever life conditions we may be in.
 - Please allows us to love you more than anything else in the universe.
 - Please let us kill our egos, so it easy for us to recognize our weaknesses, and to correct them.
 - please strengthen our foothold against evil approaches us.
 - Please do not let us waver in our faith.
 - Please increase our reverence of you.
 - Please forgive us
 - Please redeem us.
-