

Masjid Tucson United Submitters International

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God willing, this year's United Submitters Conference will be held in Tucson, Arizona. The dates of the conference are August 18-20, 1995.

The conference is by invitation only. If you have not attended one of our conferences before and would like an invitation, please contact us.

We made the hotel and conference site arrangements, and are beginning to accept registrations for the conference. The registration fees are \$57 for each adult and children over 12 years of age, \$29 for children of ages 5-12. Children under 5 are free.

The registration fee includes two lunches and two dinners on Friday and Saturday, and child care costs for all three days.

The registration fee does not include the lodging. Hotel rooms are \$57 a night inclusive of tax, full breakfast, and shuttle service to and from the airport. Children 18 and under stay free with their parents. If you are single, you may share a room with other submitters. If you need us to make the arrangement for a roommate, please let us know. We will get you the hotel information as soon as we receive your registration fee.

Therefore mark your calendar, and start making your plans to attend the conference. Remember that this is a great opportunity to be with the submitters from all around the world.

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Recent Activities in Tucson

On February 11th we participated in a Forum in which representatives from Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Theosophist, and Baha'i faiths discussed their beliefs. The forum attracted about 100 people. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to tell people about the true religion of Islam as described in the Quran, and to deliver the message of submission to God alone. There was a great deal of interest; many people from the audience expressed their appreciation for having the opportunity to learn the facts about Submission.

On May 3rd, we were asked to represent the Muslim community for the vigil organized in Tucson in memory of the Oklahoma City blast victims. Each representative of different religions gave speeches, some of which made the local television news, including ours.

Earlier this year, we spoke to about 30 people with a Christian background who wanted to know more about the religion of Islam. We are also continuing in our efforts to spread the message of worshipping God alone as members of the Inter Religious Council of Southern Arizona.

Soup Kitchen

We participate in an ongoing project to help feed the hungry in cooperation with Casas Adobes congregational church and Temple Emmanuel synagogue. During one weekend every other month, representatives from the three communities get together to buy, prepare and distribute food at a soup kitchen operated by the Salvation Army. The kitchen usually feeds about 200 people at each meal.

Note: If there is any activity in your community that you would like us to include in this newsletter, please send us a brief description of it.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

Monthly Bulletin of United Submitters International Published by Masjid Tucson May 1995 Zul-Hijjah 1415 Vol.11 No. 5



WHY DISCARD ALL THE HADITH? SOME ARGUMENTS

Often we are criticized for trying to follow the Quran as our only source of religious guidance. This criticism usually comes from the *hadith* and *sunnah* advocates who insist that the sayings and the deeds that are attributed to prophet Muhammad must also be followed.

Recently, I have had a lengthy argument with a *Sunni-Sufi*, a vehement advocate of *hadith* and *sunnah*, who has devoted his life to discredit the mathematical structure of the Quran by any means, including lies and misrepresentation of facts. This person repeatedly posts criticism on an Internet computer bulletin board against those who do not believe as he does. His postings are cherished by all blind followers of *hadith* and *sunnah*, and by the opponents of the mathematical structure of the Quran. On the other hand, there are also people on Internet who ask questions and discuss the issues because they are interested in learning. One such person posted the following three questions for me to answer:

1. How can you claim that several thousand *sahih* (trustworthy) *hadiths* are necessarily false while you cite only a few *sahih hadiths* which have debatable contents? Is this not a generalization from scanty data?
2. Why do you assume that either all *sahih hadiths* should be rejected or all of them should be accepted? Why not judge each *hadith* based on

its individual merit according to all the available data about its *isnad* (chain of narrators), and so on?

3. Suppose we cease to use *hadith* as a source of information about the Prophet, his life, and his career. Then we notice that the Quran itself says very little about the Prophet's life. It also says nothing about how the Quran was compiled. The historicity of the Quran is based on *hadiths*. It is from *hadiths* that we know how the Quran was compiled. It is also from *hadith* that we know about the life of the Prophet.

Following are my answers and counter arguments to the above questions and arguments:

If any book contains lies (of which we have more than just a "few" examples), then, the book loses its credibility. If you see dozens of repeated fabrications introduced as *sahih hadith*, then, how can you still rely on other narrations of the same book?

Judging each *hadith* on its individual merit may seem attractive for those who are not satisfied with God's book, but it is a waste of time and a self-deceptive method. If the names of narrators cannot provide authenticity about the source of *hadith*, then, our only guide for deciding on the content of *hadiths* will be our personal wish or our current inclinations. How can we decide which *hadith* has

merit? How can we decide which *hadiths* are accurate? We may say "by comparing them with the Quran!" But, what does this really mean? If it is "me" who will compare a *hadith* to the Quran, if it is again "me" who will judge whether it contradicts the Quran or not, then, I will end up with "hadith" which supports "my" personal understanding of the Quran. In this case *hadith* cannot function as an explanation of the Quran. They will be a confirmation or justification of my understanding of the Quran; with their literarily tasteless, grammatically lame language.... Furthermore, what about *hadiths* that bring extra duties and prohibitions?

Again, there are many *hadiths* about the prophet's life that you cannot accept with a sober mind. They are narrated repeatedly in many so-called authentic books. We cannot create a history out of a mish-mash of narration by a subjective method of picking and choosing. We can create many conflicting portraits of Muhammad out of those *hadiths*. As for pure historical events that have no moral and religious implications, they are not part of the religion, and we don't need them for our salvation. I never said "we should not read *hadith*." In fact, we can study *hadith* books to get an approximate idea about the people and events of those times. We can even construct a "conjecture" about the history, without attributing them to

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Why Discard... *continued*

God or His prophet. Please don't forget that "history" is not immune to the selective process, censorship and distortion of the ruling class. You can see many different versions of histories regarding the era of early Islam. Just read the various Sunni and Shiite versions of history.

We cannot disregard God's frequent assertion that the Quran is detailed, complete, clear, and easy to understand for believers (6:38, 114-116; 10:15; 11:1; 12:111; 30:28; 41:3; 54:17; 75:19). What do you think about the verse 17:46? "When you preach your Lord, in the Quran ALONE, they run away in aversion."

Hadith books are full of contradictory teachings. They eventually lead us to a sanctified and justified sectarian division in the name of the Prophet. Their very nature is another proof that hadith collections cannot be divine, since God characterizes His word and religion as not having contradiction:

"Why do they not study the Quran carefully? If it were from other than God, they would have found in it numerous contradictions." (4:82).

This verse clearly refutes the traditional argument that hadith books contain other revelations besides the Quran, since the followers of hadith and sunnah wrongly attribute verses about the Quran to hadith, such as: "Your friend (Muhammad) is not astray, nor is he deceived. Nor is he speaking out of a personal desire. It is a divine inspiration." (53:2-4).

Furthermore, verses 39:27-28 describe the Quran, and the following verse distinguishes the divine teaching from other teachings. "God cites the example of a man who deals with disputing partners, compared to a man who deals with only one man. Are they the same? Praise be to God; most of them do not know." (39:29). Obviously, hadith narrations and collections are "disputing partners," while the Quran is a consistent source.

Finally, give me one, only one "hadith" that you think is necessary for my salvation besides the Quran. If you are not ready to discuss the necessity and accuracy of a single hadith, then please give up your invitation to hadith and sunnah.

Edip Yuksel

Blasphemy Against God and the Prophet:

Some Examples of Hadith

The prophet never urinated in standing position (A.Ibn Hanbal 6, 192).

The prophet urinated in standing position (Bukhari 4/60,62).

A group from the Urcyneh and Uqayle tribes came to the prophet and the prophet advised them to drink urine of camels. Later on, when they killed the prophet's shepherd, the prophet seized them, gouged out their eyes, cut their hands and legs, and left them thirsty in the desert (Bukhari 97/36).

To prove His identity, God opened His legs and showed the prophet His thigh (Bukhari 97/24, 10/129).

The parchment on which the verse about stoning to death for adultery written was eaten by a goat (Ibn Majah 36/1944; Hanbal 3/61; 5/131,132,183; 6/269)

The prophet possessed the sexual power of 30 men (Bukhari).

Do not eat and drink with your left hand because Satan eats and drinks with the left hand (Hanbal 2/8,33).

If a monkey, a black dog or a woman passes in front of a praying person, his prayer is nullified (Bukhari 8/102; Hanbal 4/86).

You shall kill all black dogs because they are devils (Hanbal 4/85; 5/54).

The earth carried on a giant bull; when it shakes his head an earthquake occurs (Ibn Kathir 2/29; 50/1).

The Quran is Enough

Shall I seek other than God as a source of law, when He has revealed to you this book fully detailed?... [6:114]

These are God's revelations that we recite to you truthfully. In which Hadith other than God and His revelations do they believe? [45:6]

...This is not a fabricated Hadith; this (Quran) confirms all previous scriptures, provides the details of everything, and is a beacon and mercy for those who believe. [12:111]

Say, "I am no more than a human like you, being inspired that your god is one god. Those who hope to meet their Lord shall work righteousness, and never worship any other god beside his Lord." [18:110]

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O My servants who exceeded the limits,
Never Despair of God's Mercy... [39:53]

Chapter 40 of the Quran is entitled "Forgiver" (*Ghafer*). Seeking God's forgiveness is one of the most important aspects of submission to God Alone, because all believers make mistakes. However, repentance is acceptable by God from those who fall in sin out of ignorance, then repent immediately thereafter (4:18).

If they fall in sin or wrong their souls, they remember God and ask forgiveness for their sins — and who forgives the sins except God — and they do not persist in sins, knowingly. [3:135]

There are three steps here: one is to identify the wrongdoing; second, ask for God's forgiveness. The third step is to try not to repeat the same sin again. Repentance is coupled with reformation of word and/or deed and/or thought. The following verse reiterates this:

When those who believe in our revelations come to you, you shall say, "Salamun Alaykum." Your Lord has decreed that mercy is His attribute. Thus, anyone among you who commits a transgression out of ignorance, and repents thereafter and reforms, then He is Forgiving, Most Merciful. [6:54]

Since each chapter of the Quran begins with "In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful," (except Chapter 9), it is important to contemplate the meaning of mercy. According to the dictionary it means: 1) Kind and compassionate treatment...clemency. 2) A disposition to be kind and forgiving. That God is merciful implies that He tends toward compassion and forgiveness. Because God is the MOST Merciful, it may be hard for us to conceive of the immensity of His capacity to forgive our transgressions:

If you count God's blessings, you cannot possibly encompass them. God is Forgiver, Most Merciful. [16:18]

In verse 7:153 we are told that God forgave those who worshipped the golden calf idol once they repented and believed. Verse 4:98 tells us that His mercy

reaches those weak or oppressed souls who died in the state of wronging their souls. Similarly, verse 25:70 tells us that God even converts His servants' sins into credits when one repents, believes and leads a righteous life.

Another way for us to gain God's forgiveness is reverencing God Alone (3:28, 8:29). Reverence is an attitude inwardly and outwardly of profound awe, respect, love and veneration. Reverence should be an automatic reaction to God's Omnipotence. It should be on a "cellular" level, deeply ingrained in our beings. When one reverences God Alone, it is a continuous state, so that even when one is alone reverence does not waver. (See 5:94, 19:61, 21:49, 25:64, 35:18, 36:11, 50:33, 67:12.)

O you who believe, you shall reverence God and believe in His messenger. He will then grant you double the reward from His mercy, endow you with light to guide you, and forgive you. God is Forgiver, Most Merciful. [57:28]

So if we reverence God while believing in His messengers, we receive double the reward. This is how merciful our Lord is. In verses 3:28-32 and 33:70-71 of the Quran we are told that part of reverencing God is accomplished by following His messengers. Also in verse 5:12, God enjoins the Children of Israel to believe in His messengers and to lead righteous lives, so that their sins will be remitted and thus they will be admitted to Paradise.

Yet another way for us to attain God's mercy is to be merciful ourselves when dealing with other people:

If you work righteousness — either declared or concealed — or pardon a transgression. God is Pardoner, Omnipotent. [4:149]

Those who "eagerly race towards forgiveness" are the righteous people who "are suppressors of anger, and pardoners of the people." When they fall in sin they seek God's pardon and reform their actions (3:133-136). God enjoins us to attain forgiveness through charity, kindness and tolerance (24:22). Even when dealing

with people who worship idols, God commands us to "resort to pardon, advocate tolerance, and disregard the ignorant." (7:199) God makes it clear that He forgives and is merciful to us if we "pardon, forget and forgive" when we are wronged by our spouses and children (64:14). This verse is very similar to the Lord's Prayer of Christians, which is directed to God. It says, "...And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

We are told in verse 5:13 that "God loves those who are benevolent," and when faced with jealousy we should "pardon and leave them alone" (2:109). When we are angered, we should forgive (42:37). "Those who pardon and maintain righteousness are rewarded by God." (42:40) "Resorting to patience and forgiveness reflects a true strength of character." (42:43)

Being a Muslim (Submitter) is a patient, nonaggressive, compassionate existence. To enable us to have the peace of mind to go on this straight path, God has decreed mercy as His attribute. When we begin to worry about our own neck (our soul's salvation), we have only to repent and reform.

Therefore, be patient, for God's promise is true, and ask forgiveness for your sin, and glorify and praise your Lord night and day. [40:55]

...Our Lord, do not condemn us if we forget or make mistakes. Our Lord, and protect us from blaspheming against You, like those before us have done. Our Lord, protect us from sinning until it becomes too late for us to repent. Pardon us and forgive us. You are our Lord and Master. Grant us victory over the disbelieving people [2:286]

Say, My Lord, shower us with forgiveness and mercy. Of all the merciful ones, You are the Most Merciful. [23:118]

Senobar Tafazoli and Janet Kuhl-Kalantari