

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
Shawal 1424

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Act of Submitting To God Alone

God tells us in the Quran in verse 51:56, *“I did not create the jinns and the humans except to worship Me alone.”* Simply put, that is our only real job in this life—to worship God Alone. Worshipping God involves more than just making a statement that we believe in One God. Instead, it encompasses all our worship practices, and influences every aspect of our life.

Submitters strive to make it to heaven by observing all of God’s commands. We “Seek to Please God” (beautifully pointed out in an article by that title in the July 1990 Submitters Perspective), and our actions in this life should be aimed solely to gain God’s approval. We should dedicate our striving to God

(6:162, 4:146, 16:52), and be mindful of the importance of avoiding anything that may even slightly displease God.

Of course we all make mistakes (and may God in His infinite mercy continue to forgive us in this respect), but we must make an effort to do better, and keep away from things that may not please God. Our actions and striving should be done conditional to their pleasing God. From 2:265 and 30:39 it appears that even a “good” action like giving to charity only benefits those who give it seeking “God’s pleasure.”

The importance of seeking God’s approval is reiterated in 5:2,16 and 48:29. In fact, possibly we can conclude from 9:72 that attaining

God’s approval and blessings is the real benefit of Paradise.

God narrates to us an incident about David in 38:21-26. In these verses we see the crucial importance of not allowing our personal opinions to sway our actions. Perhaps God is telling us something here. That even when something seems obvious, we must be God conscious and take care, rather, strive to gain God’s approval. David took extra care to eliminate the possibility of displeasing God.

Often, I find myself doing or saying things that may not please God.

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Act of Submitting

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In fact many a time, these things appear perfectly justified when I am actually doing them, but on reflection I find that they are in violation of God's commandments. The simple things that God tells us, — like no backbiting, no suspicion, no ridiculing others (49:11-13), resorting to the nicest possible response (41:33-35) and debating in the nicest manner—are often the ones I find myself having a hard time upholding. Most of the time, this is because I have forgotten to keep pleasing God as my guideline for action. For instance, sometimes in discussing religious matters with people, I feel that the other person is inflexible and I am wasting my time trying to explain things to him/her. What is forgotten is the possibility:

a) My position on the issue may be wrong and, just as I may feel that the other person is being irrational, he/she too may feel the same way about me. Therefore one must seek refuge in God, and try and grasp what the other person is saying.

b) Even if I am right, if I have truly dedicated all forms of striving to God, then no time spent in God's cause is 'wasted'. It is part of one's striving and fulfilling of duties.

Another thing I forget is—that I have no right to lose my temper, no matter how unreasonable I perceive the other person to be. Losing my temper immediately disqualifies me as a submitter (since it is a clear case of Objecting, rather than Submitting to God). In context of the above points, let us focus on the words of 41:33-35.

Submitters

Who can utter better words than one who invites to GOD, works righteousness, and says, "I am one of the submitters"? (41:33)

Not equal is the good response and the bad response. You shall resort to the nicest possible responses. Thus, the one who used to be your enemy, may become your best friend. None can attain this except those who steadfastly persevere. None can attain this except those who are extremely fortunate. (41:34-35)

God commands us to resort to the nicest possible response. A response so nice that even a person who used to be an enemy is won over in friendship. God also tells us that this is not easy. But we have to try.

At times I find that when I talk about some Quranic matter and disagree with the other person, I become disagreeable as well. The latter is unacceptable to God. Especially when debating with submitters. God goes to the extent of saying that even when we debate with non-submitters we must do so in the nicest possible manner (16:125, 29:46). So with submitters we should try to be even 'nicer'. We should keep in mind that Satan is always trying to divide us and drive a wedge between us. God tells us that in the following verse.

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. (17:53)

Sometimes what may start off as a small difference could widen into a rift that is too big for us to bridge. This is just what Satan wants. Once we are divided, we are much easier prey for him. That is why, possibly, God exhorts us in the Quran to be

united (3:200, 61:4, 3:102-105, 49:10-11, etc.).

Unity is a command, and as per 59:10 we should not harbor any hatred towards any submitter. We are brethren and members of one big family. This is God's design and wisdom. Possibly since individually we may not be strong enough (4:28), God strengthens us with each other. When we are together it is much easier for us to maintain our submission.

God tells us that the believing men and women are allies of one another (9:71) and that they should consult one another (42:38). He exhorts us to be with the believers (18:28) and to help one another to stay away from sin (103:3, 90:17, 5:79).

You shall force yourself to be with those who worship their Lord day and night, seeking Him alone. Do not turn your eyes away from them, seeking the vanities of this world.... (18:28)

Even the Friday Congregational Prayer can be an opportunity for us to learn from one another. Thus it is very important for us to try and be good and nice to each other, possibly more for our own benefit than for anyone else's.

Our goal in all of this is to submit to God Alone, and to do the things that please Him.

Faiz C.

Indeed, those who submit themselves absolutely to GOD alone, while leading a righteous life, will receive their recompense from their Lord; they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. (2:112)

God knows everything

[2:74] GOD is never unaware of anything you

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ISSN 1089-053X

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Masjid Tucson Local Activities

Soup Kitchen

We participate in an ongoing project to help feed the hungry in our town in cooperation with Casas Adobes Congregational Church and Congregation Or Chadash Jewish group. This project has started in 1993. By God's grace, we feed 350 to 400 homeless and poor families every month.

We use the kitchen facilities of Casa Maria, a Catholic run operation in south of Tucson. We also use the facility of Masjid Tucson to prepare 600 sandwiches a day before since Casa Maria kitchen is too small for our group. More or less three volunteers from each group make the sandwiches. Children also participate in making the sandwiches. They are great helpers.

Volunteers from the three communities run the soup kitchen. These volunteers get together once a month. They buy all the necessary food for the soup kitchen. They prepare, cook and distribute the food the next day at the Casa Maria's kitchen facility. May God be pleased with the efforts of all the volunteers.

Interfaith Study Group

An interfaith scripture study group has been on going at the ICS Center (Masjid Tucson) for years. The group meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday of every month. So far these scripture studies have been very fruitful and lively. During the study, each group reads and discusses their scripture for about half an hour.

The Congregation Or Chadash group directs the Torah reading. Casas Adobes Congregational Church members direct the Gospel reading and the participants from Masjid Tucson direct the Quran reading. By God's grace, the Rabbi of Congregation Or Chadash group has accepted the Quran as being divine, and there are others in his congregation who believe the same. The group frequently publishes selected verses from the Quran in their newsletters.

Sister Senobar arranged and coordinates both the soup kitchen activity and interfaith scripture study.

Surely, the charitable men and women, have loaned GOD a loan of goodness. They will receive their reward multiplied manifold; they have deserved a generous recompense. (Quran 57:18)

But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Matthew 6:3-4)

If you declare your charities, they are still good. But if you keep them anonymous, and give them to the poor, it is better for you, and remits more of your sins. GOD is fully Cognizant of everything you do. (Quran 2:271)

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