

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Alhamdulillah (Praise be to God)

Praise be to God; whose compassion is all-embracing and whose mercy is universal; Who rewards His servants for their remembrance (dhikr) of Him.

So what is "praise"? What does it mean? According to Webster's dictionary to praise means

"To express a favorable judgment of someone or something."

"To glorify, especially by the attribution of perfections."

"To say or write good things about (someone or something)."

"To express approval of (someone or something)."

"To express thanks to or love and respect for (God)."

Synonyms of Praise: Exalt, Extol, Glorify, Magnify

So we understand the meaning of this word but do we really understand the amount of power this simple word holds? I think we underestimate when we casually say ALHAMDULIL-LAH. Do we really fathom the depth of us praising God? It is generally a matter of habit, a casual flow of words for us.

The day we realize the real depth of this simple word, that's the day we have unlocked the solution to over-

coming most of our problems in life. Praising God is a form of Zikr and we know how God loves and showers His mercy on anyone who praises Him!

So what does it mean when we say Praise God?

In a spiritual context, it is an act of our will that flows out of an awe and reverence for our Creator. Praise gives glory to God and opens us up to a deeper union with Him. It turns our attention off of our problems and onto appreciating the greatness of God.

As we focus our minds on God and proclaim His goodness, the results can fill us with peace and contentment and transform our outlook on life just by praising Him.

Reasons to praise

We praise God because He is worthy of praise. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the King of kings. He is our Creator, Provider, Healer, Redeemer, Judge, Defender and much more.

Another fundamental reason to praise God is simple 'obedience.' God has commanded us to praise Him as does everything in the heavens and everything on earth, be it angels, birds, mountains

and rocks, in the way God has taught them.

[Quran 17:44] Glorifying Him (God) are the seven universes, the earth, and everyone in them. There is nothing that does not glorify Him, but you do not understand their glorification. He is Clement, Forgiver.

Praising God allows us to defeat the strategies of the enemy. It is a powerful spiritual weapon. Thanksgiving is the enemy of discontent and dissatisfaction. We would worry less if we praised more. Praising God is the quickest way to change the atmosphere.

The following is a story that is mentioned in the Bible. We know that the Bible has been tampered with; however there is good learning from this story. Historically (if this story is true), this has to be one of the most unconventional ways to try to defend a country under siege. Whoever heard of an army being led by a group of singers and musicians? But sing and play they did. Here is the account from the Bible's book of 2 Chronicles, chapter 20.

Word was rushed to Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, announcing the swift

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approach of a vast army from Ammon, Moab, and Seir, three kingdoms that had formed an alliance against Judah. Jehoshaphat, knowing that his own army was no match for the invaders, turned to God for help.

He proclaimed a time of prayer and fasting, and people from throughout the land poured into the capital to take part. Then, in the midst of all the people, Jehoshaphat prayed. "O Lord, God of our fathers, are You not God in Heaven? You rule over kingdoms and nations, and power and might are in Your hand. None can withstand You." As the king continued, people's spirits were strengthened. "We know that in the time of calamity, whatever peril it may be, if we stand in Your presence and cry out to You in our distress, You will hear and save us. We have no power against this great army that comes against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon You."

Then a young priest named Jahaziel prophesied with a loud voice, "Thus says the Lord to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's!'" The story narrates that God had heard their prayers and would save them. "You will not need to fight in this battle," God's message through Jahaziel continued. "Position yourselves, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you." King Jehoshaphat bowed to the ground in worship. The crowd followed the king's lead, while the priests raised their voices to praise the Lord.

The next morning as the troops made preparations for battle, King Jehoshaphat encouraged them. "Believe in the Lord your God, and so shall you be established. Have faith in His prophets, and so shall you have good success." The king consulted with the people, and it was decided that singers should lead the troops into battle. That daring step of faith showed that they believed God would protect them. "Praise the Lord for the beauty of His holiness," Jehoshaphat instructed the

singers as they took their position. "Give thanks to the Lord, for His mercy endures forever." They were thanking God in advance for the victory He had promised the day before.

No sooner had they begun to sing and praise, then God "set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated." The Bible doesn't specify what those "ambushes" were, but it does explain that the men of those three invading kingdoms began to fight among themselves. First the men of Ammon and Moab rose up against those of Seir, and when they had destroyed them, the two armies destroyed each other. When the army of Judah came to a promontory overlooking the battlefield, they saw only dead bodies on the ground. No one had escaped. Jehoshaphat and his men gathered so many valuables from the bodies that it took them three days to collect them all. On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, which means "the Valley of Praise," and there they glorified God. Then they returned home with joy, for the Lord had triumphed over their enemies. The fear of God came on all the neighboring kingdoms when they heard how He had interceded for Judah, and "the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around."

What an amazing story of the power of faith, prayer and praise—and that same power is available to us today. Whenever we face a problem that is too big for us, if we pray with our whole hearts and believe the promises God has given us, we can then face whatever it is that threatens to undo us, praising God and thanking Him by faith He will support us.

Praise is the voice of faith. If you really believe God has heard your prayers, you will start praising Him for the answer, even before you see it. When you're tempted to get down and discouraged, remember the power of praise and look to God.

Iqbal

Here is a song of praise in Psalm 145: Praising God's Greatness

I exalt You, my God the King, and praise Your name forever and ever.

I will praise You every day; I will honor Your name forever and ever. Yahweh is great and is highly praised; His greatness is unsearchable.

One generation will declare Your works to the next and will proclaim Your mighty acts. I will speak of Your splendor and glorious majesty and Your wonderful works.

They will proclaim the power of Your awe-inspiring acts, and I will declare Your greatness.

They will give a testimony of Your great goodness and will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.

The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in faithful love.

The Lord is good to everyone; His compassion rests on all He has made.

All You have made will thank You, Lord; the godly will praise You.

They will speak of the glory of Your kingdom and will declare Your mighty acts and of the glorious splendor of Your kingdom.

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; Your rule is for all generations.

The Lord is faithful in all His words and gracious in all His actions.

The Lord helps all who fall; He raises up all who are oppressed.

All eyes look to You, and You give them their food at the proper time.

You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

The Lord is righteous in all His ways and gracious in all His acts.

The Lord is near all who call out to Him, all who call out to Him with integrity.

He fulfills the desires of those who fear Him; He hears their cry for help and saves them.

The Lord guards all those who love Him, but He destroys all the wicked.

My mouth will declare Yahweh's praise; let every living thing praise His holy name forever and ever.

Modern Idol Worship & How to Avoid It

4:116 GOD does not forgive idol worship (if maintained until death), and He forgives lesser offenses for whomever He wills. Anyone who idolizes any idol beside GOD has strayed far astray.

As believers, we know better: idol worship is the biggest sin, and GOD should be our “god.” As modern people, we can be tempted to interpret the commandment to avoid idol worship as, “Avoid bowing to statues,” and dismiss this sin as an error of the past which we are above. But that definition of idol worship oversimplifies, and idol worship has many subtle forms. The obvious kind of idol worship (statues) is just one kind. Avoiding all forms of idol worship is powerfully relevant to being a genuine monotheist in modern life.

We each were drawn to Submission because we recognize that worshipping the Great Creator is the only worship that is worth our time. We know rationally and intellectually that we are helpless, and that there is no other entity with the power to help us, heal us, or hear us. We were created to worship, and we have no higher purpose than to be God’s servants. So let’s ensure worshipping God is how we spend our time, and inshallah, not be sent astray. Otherwise, we are wasting our breath and our time. As God reminds us: [25: 77] *Say, “You attain value at my Lord only through your worship. But if you disbelieve, you incur the inevitable consequences.”*

Modern era forms of idol worship include: when something is more important to you than God, depending on yourself or others instead of God, or when our hearts and minds are overtaken by love or thoughts for something other than God. And even succumbing to worry is a form of idol worship.

When something else becomes more important and takes priority, that’s idol worship. For example when one stops doing prayer, attending services, or praying with reverence, we are in trouble. If we don’t conduct our lives and fulfill our religious duties while being mindfully reverent, then we are not treating or valuing God as we should. Individually, we should strive to be honest with ourselves and ask God

for guidance on how to change our lives to be better servants if we have found something else overriding our worship. We should ensure we are not cutting corners on our soul, may God forgive us and guide us to a better future. We may need to re-evaluate our lifestyles, reduce the distractions, and change how we operate.

It is also idol worship when you ask for or depend on someone other than God for help. But to clarify, Submitters are not discouraged to use taxis, medicine, or money. What we are encouraged to do is, in our hearts or aloud, whenever we are in need of something, we should be asking God for help *first and foremost*. Before asking a doctor for an antibiotic prescription when you’re sick, ask God. Ask God to deliver you home before calling a taxi for a ride. And first request from God more provisions before you meet with your human boss to discuss a raise. The Submitter knows the ultimate source of all goodness is God, so we ask God. These other earthly things are just proxies, the avenue through which we get the help from God. God reminds us, He is the source, and to implore Him.

[16:73] Yet, they worship beside GOD what possesses no provisions for them in the heavens, nor on earth, nor can provide them with anything.

Another challenge for us modern monotheists is worry. When you worry about something happening, or you are fearful of some other entity (even a person with a weapon), you are assigning power to something other than God. However, we know from the Quran: *Lā Quwwata Ellā Bellāh*. All power belongs to God. We also know God is in full control, and certainly, that God is good. So taken together, this sends the message to us that however events in life or the world unfold, it is all in God’s plan. Listen to Abraham’s speech in the Quran:

[6:80-81] His [Abraham’s] people argued with him. He said, “Do you argue with me about GOD, after He has guided me? I have no fear of the idols you set up. Nothing can happen to me, unless my Lord wills it. My Lord’s knowledge encompasses all things. Would you not take heed? Why should I fear your idols? It is you who should be afraid, since you worship instead of GOD idols that are utterly powerless to help you. Which side is more deserving of security, if you know?”

So to be a Submitter, we should strive to embody the phrase, “Don’t worry, be happy.” God reminds us continuously that

we shall not fear nor grieve. Instead, we ought to be glad and hang onto God for confidence. Pray for patience and certainty. Glorify and thank Him when things end up going well. By God’s immense grace, they often do!

Even though sometimes we may not understand right away why something is happening in the world at large, be it war, famine, or natural disaster, as a Submitter, we know that God sees and controls the Big Picture. Satan’s incompetence as a god causes a number of problems. But ultimately God controls all things and crafts events in our lives to shape us and to “*distinguish those among you who strive, and steadfastly persevere. We must expose your true qualities.*” (47:31)

Perhaps the hardest part of keeping a life centered on God alone and free of idol worship is keeping God as the center where one’s thoughts are focused. What a Submitter should strive to think about most is God, because thoughts are what motivate activities and how we use our finite, limited energy and time. It can be hard to keep the mind focused on God when we perceive that we have so many worldly responsibilities.

One hint to help keep your thoughts on God is keeping up all the “little commandments” in the Quran, from saying “Bismillah” before the start of every meal, to saying “Salaam alaykum” to your fellow submitters, to not cursing, and so forth. Another method to keep your thoughts on God is to choose music that is God-centric. As a bonus, when the music stops playing, our mind automatically keeps it replaying which becomes an easy way to continue the God-centered thoughts! Definitely, of course, taking time to read the Quran also helps focus our mind on God while we are reading, much better than a celebrity or sports news article ever could.

Idol worship is also loving something else more than you love God. Obviously, you love God in a different kind of way from other entities, like friends, a partner, or a worldly blessing like music. The love for God should be deeper than our love for our parents, and filled with more appreciation than our love for a wise teacher or benefactor. Our love for God may be related to a love of nature, as we can see the breath-taking or brilliant designs and colors in ecosystem and organism engineering, and appreciate the genius and beauty in the design of the Creator. How-

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ever, our love for God should be more profound than all of this, as we should realize God is so much bigger than earthly beings, closer as He knows our innermost thoughts, and so much more worthy of praise for being the Source of all goodness!

As Submitters, we should strive to spend a lot of time reflecting on God, and dwelling, growing, expressing and deepening our LOVE. Earthly, temporary things—such as jobs, hobbies, pet causes, humans, money, success, etc.—should not be getting in the way of your time for thoughts devoted to God. Otherwise, you jeopardize developing your soul. To clarify, God does not forbid the “good things” for the believers, and you can certainly enjoy earthly things. But don’t let them distract you from worship. Instead, make dedicated time for worship, and ask God to help you make all these other things avenues to gratitude, service, and worship, inshAllah. Meditate on God while you work, run, shop, etc.

[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.

Considering all the peace of mind and true security that comes from avoiding idol worship by spending the majority of our time on God, why wouldn’t we be happier keeping our minds and hearts on God? As He informs us, there is so much happiness in being a worshiper: *[20:130] Therefore, be patient in the face of their utterances, and praise and glorify your Lord before sunrise and before sunset. And during the night glorify Him, as well as at both ends of the day, that you may be happy.*

- Let go of worry because we know that God is in control
- Keep the Quran open to be inspired by God’s examples and promises
- Follow both the “big” and “little” commandments in the Quran to keep God on our mind
- Continually ask and thank God for provisions, such as guidance, since God is the source from which all goodness flows
- Deeply dwell in our love for God to make the love grow

Delilah

* * * * *

Submission Destined to Prevail

God Almighty promises us victory in the Quran. Two verses which prominently display this are [9:33] & [61:9], where the same phrase is repeated letter for letter, with mathematical proof. In comparing the two verses with Sura 110-Triumph, a few phenomena are noticed, by God’s infinite Grace.

[9:33] He is the One who sent His messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, and will make it dominate all religions, in spite of the idol worshipers.*

[61:9] He has sent His messenger with the guidance and the true religion, and will make it dominate all religions, in spite of the idol worshipers.*

Footnote **9:33 This statement, letter for letter, occurs here and in 61:9. If we write

down the gematrical value of “Rashad” (505), followed by the value of “Khalifa” (725), followed by the sura and verse numbers where this statement occurs (9:33 & 61:9), we get 505 725 9 33 61 9, a multiple of 19. This confirms that the messenger here is Rashad Khalifa. Additionally, the number of verses from 9:33 to 61:9 (3902)+9+33+61+9+ the value of “Rashad Khalifa” (1230) gives 5244, also a multiple of 19. The gematrical value of 9:33 & 61:9, calculated by adding the values of every letter, is 7858. By adding this number, plus the number of letters in the two verses (120), plus the number of verses from 9:33 to 61:9 (3902), plus the value of “Rashad Khalifa” (1230), we get 7858+120+3902+1230 = 13110 = 19x690. See Appendices 1, 2, and 26.

If we take the Arabic phrase for, “the guidance and the true religion,” which occurs in both [9:33] & [61:9] above, we find their gematrical value to be a multiple of 19, specifically 228 or 19x12.

If we combine the sura and verse numbers of [9:33] & [61:9] with the sura and verse numbers of sura 110- Triumph, we get the SAME multiple of 19 as above, 19x12. 9 + 33 + 61 + 9 + 110 + 1 + 2 + 3 = 228 (19 x 12).

This confirms God’s promise of the guidance and the religion of truth dominating all religions, i.e., the promised Triumph in sura 110, praise God.

Furthermore, the Arabic word *Huda*, meaning Guidance has a gematrical value of 19 (10 + 4 + 5). And if you concatenate the individual letter gematrical values you get 1045 = 19 x 55.

Abeer