

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Awareness

Awareness can be defined as having knowledge or discernment of something, being attentive and well informed. It implies acquiring knowledge through your own perceptions and experiences or by means of outside information.

Ten times in the Quran, God uses the double negative, saying He is never unaware of anything (e.g. 2:74,85; 6:132; 11:123; 23:17; 27:93), and many more times than that we are reminded that He is fully aware (2:197; 3:29,120; 6:101; 10:36; 24:64; 33:54; 41:54; 58:7; and many many more).

God wants us to be aware too. He reminds us of our pledge before we came to earth: [7:172] *Recall that your Lord summoned all the descendants of Adam, and had them bear witness for themselves: "Am I not your Lord?" They all said, "Yes. We bear witness." Thus, you cannot say on the Day of Resurrection, "We were not aware of this."* (footnote: 7:172 *Thus, every human being is born with an instinctive knowledge about God.*)

We are born with awareness that God is our Lord and we must worship Him alone. That knowledge should be enough. But we know it's not. We wa-

vered before coming here as humans, [33:72] *We have offered the responsibility (freedom of choice) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they refused to bear it, and were afraid of it. But the human being accepted it; he was transgressing, ignorant. And we continue to waver and allow our ego to guide us instead of God's words.*

Yet, God blesses us with a continuous barrage of signs and proofs and blessings to help increase our awareness. He softens up our hearts to receive His message, and He has given us the practices that allow us to become more God-conscious. The Contact Prayers every day bring us closer to God; zakat and charity make us more appreciative of God's bounties; zikr and commemoration put God foremost in our minds.

[15:98-9] *You shall sing the praises of your Lord, and be with the prostrators. And worship your Lord, in order to attain certainty.*

[73:8] *You shall commemorate the name of your Lord, to come ever closer and closer to Him.*

God doesn't want us to be unaware. He doesn't want us to flounder. His guidance is always offered, but only the righteous, only the believers, will take

heed. But He doesn't give up on us. He has sent to us a scripture, fully detailed, easy to learn, that contains so many lessons and examples from the past. [12:3] *We narrate to you the most accurate history through the revelation of this Quran. Before this, you were totally unaware.*

[36:5-6] *This revelation is from the Almighty, Most Merciful. To warn people whose parents were never warned, and therefore, they are unaware.*

The Quran is described as "enlightenment," a word that can be defined as the state of having knowledge or understanding, hence, awareness.

[45:20] *This provides enlightenments for the people, and guidance, and mercy for those who are certain.*

[10:57] *O people, enlightenment has come to you herein from your Lord, and healing for anything that troubles your hearts, and guidance, and mercy for the believers.*

So the Quran tells us that it is here to provide enlightenment and awareness. But only for those who are willing to

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listen and learn. In the second part of verse 2:231, God tells us: *Do not take GOD's revelations in vain. Remember GOD's blessings upon you, and that He sent down to you the scripture and wisdom to enlighten you. You shall observe GOD, and know that GOD is aware of all things.*

[10:101] Say, "Look at all the signs in the heavens and the earth." All the proofs and all the warnings can never help people who decided to disbelieve. If we choose not to become aware, then it doesn't matter what proofs are shown to us. [40:56] Surely, those who argue against GOD's revelations without proof are exposing the arrogance that is hidden inside their chests, and they are not even aware of it. Therefore, seek refuge in GOD; He is the Hearer, the Seer.

Of the many things that the Quran helps us to be more aware of, I think that understanding the Day of Resurrection, truly understanding Heaven and Hell, is perhaps the greatest gift. God tells us: *[38:46] We bestowed upon them a great blessing: awareness of the Hereafter.*

[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.

Awareness of the Hereafter doesn't mean giving lip service to the fact that there is a Heaven and a Hell. It's much deeper than that. It means understanding accountability—our works in this life determine our position in the Hereafter. It means knowing that Heaven and Hell are eternal—you can't spend a few days in Hell to pay for a few sins and then move on to Heaven. It means realizing that no one can intercede on your behalf—every soul is responsible for his own works.

It's a great blessing to have this awareness. Without it, we wouldn't even try. We could blunder through

this life thinking that Jesus or Muhammad will intercede to save us, so we don't need to worry. Or only the really bad people go to Hell, and if I go, it will only be for a little while. Instead, we KNOW that we are responsible for our own works and those works will determine our position, the possibilities being:

[56:8-11] Those who deserved bliss will be in bliss. Those who deserved misery will be in misery. Then there is the elite of the elite. They are those who will be closest (to God).

Awareness is critically important for our salvation. Without it, we will simply continue to behave like the ignorant ones. Let us all open up our hearts for God's message and follow His commandments; let us stay well informed and conscious of God's blessings; let us strive to remain on His right path and do the things that please Him.

[28:55] When they come across vain talk, they disregard it and say, "We are responsible for our deeds, and you are responsible for your deeds. Peace be upon you. We do not wish to behave like the ignorant ones."

[6:111] Even if we sent down the angels to them; even if the dead spoke to them; even if we summoned every miracle before them; they cannot believe unless GOD wills it. Indeed, most of them are ignorant.

[7:205] You shall remember your Lord within yourself, publicly, privately, and quietly, day and night; do not be unaware.

[7:51] Those who do not take their religion seriously, and are totally preoccupied with this worldly life, we forget them on that day, because they forgot that day, and because they spurned our revelations.

[13:28-29] They are the ones whose hearts rejoice in remembering GOD. Absolutely, by remembering GOD, the hearts rejoice. Those who believe and lead a righteous life have deserved happiness and a joyous destiny.

God is never unaware of anything

I think knowing and awareness are two different aspects of understanding. Knowing means possessing knowledge or understanding. And awareness means to consciously emphasize the recognition of something sensed or felt. I know that I am going to die someday. But am I aware of it? I know that God is constantly watching my every action. But how much am I really aware of it? If we ask someone who is your God? He or she will reply instantly the one who created me, the ultimate One. But though they know this, yet they worship the false man-made gods leaving aside the ultimate one God. This is the result of their lack of awareness. Praise God, we not only know but are also aware about the true God Alone.

Let us see what is mentioned in Quran.

[2:29] He is the One who created for you everything on earth, then turned to the sky and perfected seven universes therein, and He is fully aware of all things.

[41:10] He placed on it stabilizers (mountains), made it productive and He calculated its provisions in four days, to satisfy the needs of all its inhabitants.

Name one thing that is not available on earth essential for living. There is nothing required left out. We don't exactly know how long ago this earth came into existence and how many types of living creatures exist on it. Yet in "four days" God calculated the provisions required for the inhabitants of this earth and made it available. And these provisions will last till the end of this world. This proves God is never unaware of anything.

[2:85] Yet, here you are killing each other, and evicting some of you from their homes, banding against them sinfully and

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Lydia

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maliciously. Even when they surrendered, you demanded ransom from them. Evicting them was prohibited for you in the first place. Do you believe in part of the scripture and disbelieve in part? What should be the retribution for those among you who do this, except humiliation in this life, and a far worse retribution on the Day of Resurrection? GOD is never unaware of anything you do.

We know the age old war between Palestine and Israel. Both the nations are followers of Holy Scriptures, yet they are killing each other, evicting people and banding against each other sinfully and maliciously. It is indeed a live demo from God for us. And in the above mentioned verse, God is questioning harshly, do you believe in part of the scripture and disbelieve in part? Further warning them about the absolute retribution and humiliation they will face. God is fully cognizant, never unaware of anything.

[3:29] Say, "Whether you conceal your innermost thought, or declare it, GOD is fully aware thereof." He is fully aware of everything in the heavens and the earth. GOD is Omnipotent.

Our mind keeps on thinking through the day. Satan is constantly chasing you and your thoughts and does not miss any opportunity to entice you into bad thoughts. But it is due to immense mercy of God that He has saved us from such humiliation by not revealing our thoughts to others. But God is aware of our innermost thought whether we conceal or declare it.

[4:32] You shall not covet the qualities bestowed upon each other by GOD; the men enjoy certain qualities, and the women enjoy certain qualities. You may implore GOD to shower you with His grace. GOD is fully aware of all things.

In this material world we tend to get envious due to certain extraordinary qualities bestowed by God on some people. But we forget the umpteen number of

blessings that God bestowed on us. For example, if God has given good intellect to someone due to which he or she becomes extremely successful in this world, then I should not grumble or envy comparing my condition with that person. I need to take stock of special qualities bestowed by God upon me. To mention a few God has given me: good health, ability to do hard work, ability to travel in the overcrowded trains and buses, good appetite, good digestive system, etc., etc. The list will be never ending. And still God is asking you to implore him to shower you with His grace.

[4:108] They hide from the people, and do not care to hide from GOD, though He is with them as they harbor ideas He dislikes. GOD is fully aware of everything they do.

This verse directly strikes me. I have a situation which I am working to resolve. The only one we need to please and to fear is God since God is always with us. How other people perceive us is not important, yet sometimes I make it important. May God forgive me for my weakness and guide me.

[58:7] Do you not realize that GOD knows everything in the heavens and everything on earth? No three people can conspire secretly without Him being their fourth, nor five without Him being the sixth, nor less than that, nor more, without Him being there with them wherever they may be. Then, on the Day of Resurrection, He will inform them of everything they had done. GOD is fully aware of all things.

Normally we have a habit of getting engaged in vain talk. I think this is one of Satan's traps. Because during vain talk we tend to get carried away and say things prohibited by God, without realizing that God is witnessing it. Therefore it is essential to avoid such activities. May God guide us in this regard.

We must always remember that God is fully aware of everything we do and say and think.

Abdul G

Conference 2015

[39:66] Therefore, you shall worship GOD alone, and be appreciative.

[2:152] You shall remember Me, that I may remember you, and be thankful to Me; do not be unappreciative.

The 30th annual conference of the United Submitters International was held in Tucson, Arizona August 7-9. The Friday sermon was delivered by brother Kais, and, in his usual wonderful style, he talked about the credit card we're given by God, the most powerful in the world. The sins subtract from it, but then as we improve in our submission, God credits us with reward points to use in the Hereafter. He reminded us to spread God's message through our example of patience, tolerance and appreciation. We need to fix ourselves and take "selfies" to evaluate our progress. Our greatest gift from God is our ability to pray and seek forgiveness.

We were then blessed with the joy of meeting all the submitters who were attending their first conference. There were quite a number of them from all over the world, and they shared with us how they came to receive the message and their excitement of attending their first conference. Some of them have been in submission for a while, but had not had the opportunity to come to a conference before, and their eagerness was apparent. This is how the message continues to spread, through the enthusiasm and passion of new submitters.

It was encouraging to hear from several communities on the efforts they have made over the past year in striving to spread God's message. One of the ways many communities are touching the people around them is by feeding the poor and needy. This allows non-submitters to see that Submission (*Islam*) is a religion of compassion and tolerance.

The talks over the three days covered a variety of topics, all with the general theme of being appreciative of God's blessings and His creation. We were reminded that as submitters we need to set the best example. As Abraham prayed to "Let the example I set for the future generations be a good one," we must remember not to demonstrate the

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example of power, but the power of example.

The commemoration of God through Zikr was inspiring as always. So many submitters have been blessed with beautiful voices and they are happy to share and lead the rest of us in joyful praise of God. [73:8] *You shall commemorate the name of your Lord, to come ever closer and closer to Him.*

When Sunday noon came around, we enjoyed our last prayer together and then more than 100 people went to Masjid Tucson for a pizza/EEgee's party. It was fun to have everyone gather together and enjoy God's bounties.

For people who were able to stay a day longer, we arranged a drive up Mt. Lemmon, which is a beautiful, woodsy area just outside of Tucson. About 35 of us went to enjoy a picnic lunch, some hiking and the nice cool temperatures of the higher elevation. After our noon prayer on the mountain, we came back down and said our goodbyes.

Praise God, the conference was a great success. As always, we came away energized and refreshed, ready for another year of growing in submission and spreading the message of worship God alone. May God bless us all.

[3:133] *You should eagerly race towards forgiveness from your Lord and a Paradise whose width encompasses the heavens and the earth; it awaits the righteous.*

[23:61] *They are eager to do righteous works; they compete in doing them.*

Nargis and Lydia

A POEM OF THANKS AND APPRECIATION TO GOD ALONE

I would like to thank God for the sight;
Without eyes I wouldn't see if it's day or night.

I appreciate to be able to hear;
Thank God for the ears; only you I fear.

I'm thankful to be able to have hair;
I can cut, style, trim, color; thank God it's there.

I appreciate my mouth, to be able to talk;
Can't forget about my legs; thank God I can walk.

I appreciate to have balance, so thank God for toes;
I appreciate to be able to smell, so thank God for my nose.

I appreciate God for my mind, and I have a choice to use it;
I also thank God that I don't go crazy and lose it.

Without God I wouldn't know where I would be;
But now that I know God, I stand firm like a tree.

Keep on worshipping God alone; it won't cost you a thing;
But if you stand for nothing, you'll fall for anything.

Let these people of this world worship vanity and play;
But with the submitters I know, hey, it's time to pray.

Taareq