

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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WHO IS GOD?

Who is God? This is a profound question. Can we know who He is? Yes, we can, because He tells us in the Quran. Believing in God necessitates believing in His qualities. Without knowing God, there is no belief (23:84-90). Repeatedly, He gives us an insight into who He is. Just look at some of the attributes:

He is Alive, He never dies; He is Most High, Most Exalted; He is Most Merciful, Forgiver; He is the Creator; He is Most Kind, but strict in enforcing retribution; He is Fully Aware; He is Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent.

This is just a small sample of His attributes, but just from these we can get a clearer picture of who God is. We can't fully grasp it, simply because it's way beyond our small brains to comprehend (6:103). He is the Creator, the Initiator, the Designer (59:24)—this means He thought up this whole illusion that we're living in. It didn't exist until He designed it, then initiated it, then created it. Then He set it all in motion. But it doesn't stop there. He didn't just sit back and watch it all unfold. He is in full control of every single atom and is doing everything (10:56, 22:76, 42:12, 8:17 and others).

[3:109] To GOD belongs everything in the heavens and everything on earth, and all matters are controlled by GOD.

[10:61] You do not get into any situation, nor do you recite any Quran, nor do you do anything, without us being witnesses thereof as you do it. Not even an atom's weight is out of your Lord's control, be it in the heavens or the earth. Nor is there anything smaller than an atom, or larger, that is not recorded in a profound record.

Omni means all. So, when God says He's Omniscient, it means He knows everything. When He says He's Omnipotent, it means He has all power. And when He says He's Omnipresent, it means He is never absent, never! He is with you every minute of the day and night, and at the same time He is with me every minute. We can't fathom how that can be possible, but God tells us it's so, so we believe it.

Then He continues to tell us more and more about Himself. We know He is Kind, Clement, Merciful, Forgiving (just a few examples: 1:3, 2:163, 4:110, 5:98, 22:65, 52:28, 2:235, 3:155). Without those traits, we wouldn't stand a chance here on earth. We sin too of-

ten. But He even tells us He overlooks many of our sins (42:30, 34).

He tells us He's the One who is Alive and never dies (25:58), so why should we turn to a human being with a finite life span, when we can turn to God, who is Eternal, Everlasting. He tells us He's Most High, Most Honorable, Most Dignified, Most Exalted. When we think of a human with dignity and honor, we know these are good qualities to be admired. Here we have God, who is the "Most" of all those traits, truly far above any human being.

Throughout the Quran, God continues to tell us exactly who He is. And this is absolutely for our benefit. We are the ones who are lost and astray, looking for the guidance so we can attain salvation. God doesn't need our praise and worship: He is already "Omni-everything" (that He chooses to be)! He's not telling us all these glorious traits about Himself for His veneration. It's so we can trust Him. Until we know who God is, we cannot fully trust in Him. And until we fully trust in Him, we are not true believers yet (8:2).

[11:123] To GOD belongs the future of
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the heavens and the earth, and all matters are controlled by Him. You shall worship Him and trust in Him. Your Lord is never unaware of anything you do.

[25:58] You shall put your trust in the One who is Alive—the One who never dies—and praise Him and glorify Him. He is fully Cognizant of His creatures' sins.

Would you blindly obey someone you didn't know and trust? God tells us obedience is an obligation (24:53), and that we are to obey God and obey the messengers (not because of who the messengers are, but because they bring information from God that we can trust and follow).

[3:132] You shall obey GOD and the messenger, that you may attain mercy.

[4:69] Those who obey GOD and the messenger belong with those blessed by GOD—the prophets, the saints, the martyrs, and the righteous. These are the best company.

[24:52] Those who obey GOD and His messenger, and reverence GOD and observe Him, these are the triumphant ones.

[47:33] O you who believe, you shall obey GOD, and obey the messenger. Otherwise, all your works will be in vain.

So, God has clearly told us who He is and why He is worthy of our trust. The more we know of His attributes, the easier it is to know that He is the only One we can truly trust; the One we need to turn to in times of adversity; the One we need to appreciate in times of joy.

[10:22] He is the One who moves you across the land and sea. You get onto the ships, and they sail smoothly in nice breeze. Then, while rejoicing therein, violent wind blows, and the waves surround them from every side. This is when they implore GOD, sincerely devoting their prayers to Him alone: "If You only save us this time, we will be eternally appreciative."

[14:34] And He gives you all kinds of things that you implore Him for. If you count GOD's blessings, you can never encompass them. Indeed, the human being is transgressing, unappreciative.

[40:60] Your Lord says, "Implore Me, and I will respond to you. Surely, those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter Gehenna, forcibly."

[51:58] GOD is the Provider, the Possessor of all power, the Supreme.

[39:52] Do they not realize that GOD is the One who increases the provision for whomever He chooses, and withholds? These are lessons for people who believe.

[30:50] You shall appreciate GOD's continuous mercy, and how He revives the land that has been dead. He will just as certainly resurrect the dead. He is Omnipotent.

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

Contemplate God's attributes when you meditate on God. He says whichever name you call Him, to Him belong the best names (17:110), and He encourages us to consider His names. *[50:40] During the night you shall meditate on His name, and after prostrating.* This knowledge of who He is, this understanding of the many facets of God, can help us to truly trust that He is our Lord and Master and He is the only One to be obeyed and trusted.

[64:13] GOD: there is no other god besides Him. In GOD the believers shall trust.

[27:79] Therefore, put your trust in GOD; you are following the manifest truth.

[9:51] Say, "Nothing happens to us, except what GOD has decreed for us. He is our Lord and Master. In GOD the believers shall trust."

[8:2] The true believers are those whose hearts tremble when GOD is mentioned, and when His revelations are recited to them, their faith is strengthened, and they trust in their Lord.

Partial alphabetical list of God's attributes. Add others as you find them in Quran.

Appreciative, Alive, Aware
 Bounteous, Most Blessed
 Creator, Most Cognizant, Clement
 Designer, Most Dignified
 Eternal, Most Exalted
 Forgiver, Most Faithful
 Glorious, Most Gracious, Grantor
 Hearer, Most Honorable, Most High
 Initiator, Innermost
 Judge, Most Just
 King, Knower
 Light, Lord, Living
 Mighty, Most Merciful
 Near
 Omniscient, Outermost
 Pardoner, Peace, Protector
 Redeemer, Most Rich
 Supreme, Seer, Most Sacred
 Truth, Most Trustworthy
 Watcher, Most Wise

Quran: Today and Always

There is a global view that "Muslims" are at opposition with the rest of the world. It is common among many countries to see "Islam" as bad in one way or the other. Some say it is a religion that spawns intolerance and fanaticism while others blame it for preaching hostility and prejudice. Still others brand it for sanctioning terrorism, brutality, tyranny and intimidation especially against the opponents of its faith.

One of the loudest criticisms against the faith is that it promotes violence. However, the Quran prohibits aggression and promotes peace. The word "Islam" is derived from the same root word (SLM)

Lydia

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as “salaam” meaning “peace” (which is our greeting). Anyone who sincerely studies the Quran will find that true Islam is not about violence or worldly conquests at all. Instead it is a religion that focuses on submission to the will of God who is the Creator and Provider of everything in the Universe and more, who never had and never will have any equal or partner. This is the quintessence of our faith.

What the fanatics and corrupted so-called Islamic leaders preach today is not the true religion of Islam. Those who say God’s religion of Submission (*Islam* in Arabic) is outdated are ignorant of the truth and wisdom in the Quran.

The fact is that people including “Muslims” need to study the Quran and comprehend what it actually has to say.

A great responsibility rests on us Submitters who must, God willing, project a favourable view of true *Islam* (Submission). As we deplore the actions of fanatics in giving Islam a bad name, we must not give the religion a bad name ourselves. We must be careful so that what we do and say reflects the truth, impartiality and universality in Quran. We have to adhere to its tenets, and we must not forget the true message of God. We must trust in God and seek His help to cross all hurdles. God has blessed us with the Quran that has been elucidated for all humans for as long as life exists.

One of the crucial issues the Quran stresses is the acquisition of knowledge. [96:1-5] *Read, in the name of your Lord, who created. He created man from an embryo. Read, and your Lord, Most Exalted. Teaches by means of the pen. He teaches man what he never knew.* [20:114] ... and say, “My Lord, increase my knowledge.”

Our religion has a foundation of justice [55:7-8] *He constructed the sky and established the law. You shall not transgress the law;* and equivalence [2:179]

Equivalence is a life saving law for you, O you who possess intelligence, that you may be righteous. When God has made laws we must hold fast to them in all areas of activities.

This verse is often quoted out of context: [3:84] *Anyone who accepts other than Submission as his religion, it will not be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter, he will be with the losers.* Some people think this means everyone who doesn’t call themselves “Muslim” is going to hell. But the previous verse (3:84) says:

*Make No Distinction
Among God’s Messengers*

[3:84] *Say, “We believe in GOD, and in what was sent down to us, and in what was sent down to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Patriarchs, and in what was given to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction among any of them. To Him alone we are submitters.”*

The minimum requirements for salvation are laid down in 2:62 and 5:69: (1) believe in God, (2) believe in the Last Day and (3) lead a righteous life. [3:3-4] *He sent down to you this scripture, truthfully, confirming all previous scriptures, and He sent down the Torah and the Gospel before that, to guide the people, and He sent down the statute book. Those who disbelieve in GOD’s revelations incur severe retribution. GOD is Almighty, Avenger.*

Misapprehensions about Islam usually occur when Quranic verses are read in isolation, out of context, ignoring historical facts at the time of revelation, and the purposeful conditions as to why these verses were revealed.

As believers, we are enjoined to not make any distinction among God’s Prophets and Messengers. [4:150-151] *Those who disbelieve in GOD and His messengers, and seek to make distinction among GOD and His messengers, and say, “We believe in some and reject some,” and wish to follow a path in between; these are the real disbelievers. We have pre-*

pared for the disbelievers a shameful retribution.

So, we believe in Moses and Jesus in the same way we believe in Muhammad. Hence, there should be no reason for Jews and Christians to have any issue with us. [5:69] *Surely, those who believe, those who are Jewish, the converts, and the Christians; any of them who (1) believe in GOD and (2) believe in the Last Day, and (3) lead a righteous life, have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve.*

Obviously when you believe in God you have to believe in all that God says. [42:13] *He decreed for you the same religion decreed for Noah, and what we inspired to you, and what we decreed for Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: “You shall uphold this one religion, and do not divide it.”* The religion of all the Prophets was basically one and the same. This is also seen in the Bible, e.g., *Isaiah 44:6* “I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.”

The Quran is very clear that we have not been created without purpose. [21:16] *We did not create the heavens and the earth, and everything between them just for amusement.* We have a task to perform. We have obligations to fulfill. We will be held accountable for even our innermost thought, let alone deed. We may worship God alone, believe in God alone, uphold the Quran but we still have to modify our priorities. We cannot maintain a negligent and happy-go-lucky attitude towards life. We have to amend and restructure ourselves according to the essentials and values portrayed in the Quran. Otherwise, our appreciation of the Quran is seriously blemished.

The Quran desires a total transformation of our personal and collective behavior, a complete transformation of our manner of thought, action, habit, feeling and standard of decision making. When you try to comprehend the meaning of the Quran, your soul gets elevated and a great tranquility descends in a manner that no other words could possibly do.

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The moral boost is beyond compare in its grasp on our psyche. In short, we get a spiritual rebirth. We have to practice the Quran, live and breathe the Quran.

Every human soul has tendencies. The Most Gracious has given us a head start by placing in us the seed of: *Monotheism: Natural Instinct [30:30] Therefore, you shall devote yourself to the religion of strict monotheism. Such is the natural instinct placed into the people by GOD. Such creation of GOD will never change. This is the perfect religion, but most people do not know.*

The Quran is the final Message of God to humanity (and jinns) to showcase the most efficient path to a successful life both now and in the all-important Hereafter. It reveals the perfect method to evade Satanic temptation and ensnarement. God has given us freedom of choice and has also given us *the hearing, the eyesight, and the brains* (32:9).

How can our religion that so strongly emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge, equality, safeguarding justice and self-control be considered out of touch with today's reality and changing times?

Once we acknowledge the requirement of belief in the Quran as the full and final word of God, we start a quest towards the comprehension and implementation of God's message to us. We must follow the

Quran and make God's teachings our life-long concern, our unending activity and commitment.

[47:24] Why do they not study the Quran carefully? Do they have locks on their minds?

Alim

* * * * *

Submitters

They strive to be the best they can be with their thought, word and deed

On earth gently they walk
With humility is their talk

With kindness each other they treat
With peace be upon you they greet

Charity, cheerfully, they give
For pleasing God alone they live

From God, forgiveness they seek
Righteousness they work and speak

Sabah

* * * * *

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