Bearing Witness—a Quranic Perspective

Millions of Muslims all over the world recognize Five Pillars of Islam (submission). However, all the Pillars, as practiced by the Muslims of today, are in direct violation of the Quran. Let us examine the First Pillar. Verse 2:88 states: “God bears witness that there is no god except He, and so do the angels and those who possess knowledge. He is the absolute God. There is no god except He, the Almighty, Most Wise.” The words of “shahada” or the First Pillar of Islam are directly contrasted with the verse in the Quran above. However, Muslims all over the world have a “shahada” of their own: “I bear witness to the fact that God is the only god but God.” A true Muslim, therefore, says, “I bear witness that there is no god except God, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of God.”

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The meaning of the word “believe” or “bearing witness” is “I testify to the truth of a proposition.” In this case, it is the truth of the Quran mentioned in the verse above. When God ALONE is mentioned, the Quran is saying, “I testify to the truth of God.”

The verse 2:88 states: “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.’

All of us bore witness that God alone is our Lord. The statement, “There is no god but God and Muhammad is a messenger of God” is also wrong for the following reasons. First, the statement violates the commandment of not making a distinction amongst God’s messengers which is repeated in the Quran numerous times. Verse 2:285 states: “The messenger has believed in what was sent down to him from his Lord, and so did the believers. They believe in God, His angels, His scripture, and His messengers: ‘We make no distinction among any of His messengers.’ They say, ‘We hear, and we obey. Forgive us, our Lord. To You is the ultimate destiny.”

Verse 3:144 also states: “Muhammad was no more than a messenger like the messengers before him.” Lastly, Muhammad was a messenger of God, just like Jesus, Moses and other messengers and prophets in the past. Muhammad at the present time is not a messenger of God. Therefore, grammatically, the “shahada” of idol worshipers is also wrong.

The first commandment in all of God’s scriptures is the same: “There is no god but God.” A true Muslim (submitter) will not associate anyone next to God, unlike the example of false Christians and false Muslims (Muhammadans) who cannot believe in God without associating Jesus or Muhammad and some other idols next to God in some form or fashion.

Is God not sufficient for His servant? They frighten you with the idols they set up beside Him. When God ALONE is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter shrink with fear. Many people also turn to intoxicants, and to distract you from bearing witness to God; and from observing the Contact Prayers (Salaat). Will you then refrain? (5:60-91).

In addition to the need to feel good and overcome anxieties, peer acceptance and approval are critical factors underlying drug consumption and addiction. Most people have been socialized to be overly-dependent on someone or something in the material world to make them happy. Many people also turn to intoxicants to make them happy. There is a myth that drugs allow an individual to imagine being what he or she wants to be free of inhibitions, worries, and tension. Drugs are also sought as a means toward inner-freedom; many people are lead to believe that chemical substances and drugs are a cure-all for their negative feelings.

Despite widespread use and acceptance of so-called legal drugs like alcohol, there are no compromises regarding their prohibition by God. God knows us more than we know ourselves. God certainly knows what can make us really happy, and he knows what is dangerous to us.

They ask you about intoxicants and gambling: “in them there is a gross sin, and some benefit for the people. But their sinfulness far outweighs their benefit.”... (2:219)

Recent studies show that every year cigarette smoking causes 390,000 deaths, alcohol causes 90,000 deaths, and cocaine causes 8,000 deaths, and heroin causes 6,000 deaths. Alcoholism accounts for about fifteen percent of all deaths annually in the United States and costs more than forty-eight billion dollars in health costs and low productivity. That amount averages to two hundred dollars per year for every man, woman, and child in the United States.

Chronic drug addiction leads to a drug personality—the type of person whose actions and thoughts are determined by his constant need to take drugs. Drug personalities may anger easily, can become violent, are frequently depressed, alienated from family members, have few friends except fellow addicts, are unable to maintain jobs, often feel persecuted, and may be unable to acknowledge their addiction; drugs become their god.

“He idolizes what is more apt to harm him than benefit him. What a miserable lord, what a miserable companion.” (22:13)

Worship God Alone To Overcome Drug Abuse

Because of their addictive quality, drugs and intoxicants stay with a person for a long time. In order to stop taking drugs, a person must have a better substitute in life—a belief, a bond, a greater motivation to seek happiness and balance in fulfilling one’s life. God is the source of all happiness. When a person begins to realize this, he or she can wean away from substance abuse. In the Quran, God enjoins worshipers not to pray when intoxicated. O you who believe, do not observe the Prayers (Salat) while intoxicated, so that you know what you are saying. (2:221)

Evidently, during the time verse 4:43 was revealed, there were people who took intoxicants, probably alcohol. Yet, they were motivated to pray to God and seek His guidance. Being human, we are all susceptible to Satan’s tricks to distract us from remembering God. The sincere believers who took intoxicants gradually overcome their addiction by prayer and remembering God. How could a sincere believer pray five times a day and continue to take intoxicants? Verse 4:43 also indicates that alcohol obscures the mind.
Why do people use drugs?

Happiness and peace of mind is only attainable by worshiping God alone, and God relieves one from confusion, fear, grief and a sense of hopelessness.

Anyone who works righteous, male or female, while believing, we will surely grant them a happy life in this world, and we will surely pay them their full recompense (on the Day of Judgment) on that account.

The more one depends on drugs, the more unhappy one becomes. The drug user must learn to trust God and stop taking intoxicants. This is the most effective substance or drug abuse program.

I nteresting facts help develop our souls

Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe," without being put to the test? We did indeed send those before them, for God must distinguish those who are truthful, He must expose the liars.

If we choose to continuously submit absolutely to God alone, God in His infinite grace and mercy guides us to save human minds are far more developed now levels or ranges of "winning" (17:21) whose width encompasses the heavens and the earth.

God commands us to compete in righteousness (2:148; 5:48) and eagerly race towards forgiveness and Paradise (3:133). The width of Paradise encompasses the heavens and the earth and awaits the righteous. We may compare this unimaginably beautiful and infinite reward with any Olympic medal won. Apart from the years of tough efforts for physical development, this gold and fame would create tougher threats or risks of pride and ego unconsciously becoming our god—at least temporarily. Its credit back home i.e. in the Hereafter, which is our permanent abode, would be only on how much we remembered and appreciated God and strove in His way—before, during and after victory.

For there is no one who can compete in righteousness with God (3:99). We have to struggle before God (15:50) and He himself knows who is truthful, who is foundation, who is fruitless, who is fearsome, who is weak, who is firm, who is hindered, who is unconquerable and who is hopeless. God gives us signs to upgrade our races towards righteousness, for God must distinguish those who are truthful, He must expose the liars.

If one decides to enter the race and steadfastly stays in it with sincerity and certainty of God, one would absolutely faithfulness to Him, then God takes over and starts training him or her. Everyone is a winner although there would be unimaginably different levels or ranges of "winning" (17:21) whose width encompasses the heavens and the earth.

God starts rewarding us here too on passing the admission tests (24:35), and we start getting signs, both mathematical and otherwise, that we are under His protection and training.

However, for God to give us the best possible rewards and sovereign states which our two wants are trying to reach, He must give us the clearcut line between success and failure which will avoid any kind of idolatry. Our belief in the Hereafter must become vivid (14:36) that the word is blocked by God Almighty from understanding its words (6:25; 17:46).

3. We must be optimistic that we can learn the Quran, and increase our knowledge by God’s grace. The Quran is difficult to understand for the idol worshippers. On the other hand, it is easy for believers (54:17,22,32,40). Ironically, the idol worshippers confess that the Quran is a very difficult book to understand.

4. We must use our God-given senses to understand the Quran and concentrate and reflect on the verses the better understanding we will get. If we believe in monothestic and contradictory sectarian teachings, we corrupt our intelligence. In so doing, we cannot benefit from the Quran (10:100; 30:28).

5. We must accept the Quran as a whole. God condemns ‘Muslims’ who arrogate some verses of the Quran (15:90-93). Verses of the Quran are interwoven by the rest (10:109). They explain each other (38:29; 11:1). We have numerous examples of this phenomenon.

6. We should have patience. We should not judge God’s decisions on our conditions. God’s law of teaching is the same as of creation; it is in this world that God did not reveal the meaning of a particular verse to us, we should practice the rule of patience towards the verses of the Quran.

7. When we encounter a problem we should discuss with experts who devote their time and intellect for understanding of the Quran (5:7; 9:122). This is why we are studying their answers and verifying them for ourselves. We should not accept any information blindly (17:36).

8. We should also keep in mind that the meaning of some verses is destined to be unveiled in the future. Future generations may understand some verses better than us. Some Quranic prophecies about the just government of Zulqarnain-The One with Two Generations (18:83-99) and several paragraphs of the children of Israel (17:77) are two examples.

9. Our limited knowledge or lack of information about a subject can also be a barrier preventing full understanding of some verses. For instance, we understand 1658, 21:30, 27:28-28, 36:30, 306, 4111, 5147, 7430, 7534 and 962 better than previous generations.

brief answers (17:36; 39:18)

Edip Yüksel

Ben, a reader from Switzerland, asked the following two questions.

Q. Can you give me information about the methodology for studying the Quran?

A. The methodology is taught by the Quran itself. If you accept the Quran as your teacher (55:1-2) and read Quran frequently (17:78; 73:20), by God’s blessings you will get the keys.

Q. In the “Quran The Final Testament,” Dr. Rashad Khalifa translated the word “Zan-Noon” in 21:87 as “Jonah, the one with an NF in his name.” However, some other translations translate it as “him of the great fish” or “the man of the fish.” Why did Rashad translate it that way? Why refer Jonah with the letter “N” Solomon had, but it too, Noah has it as the capital letter. Why is not Moses mentioned as Zaa-Seen, or Luqmaan Zaa-Qaa’? What is the peculiarity of letter “Nun” with Jonah?

Anonymous

A. You remember that the people who rejected Loi are consistently called “Qawm” (People); except in “Chapter 9; they are called “Dawu” (Brothers). This is because of the important role the letter “Q” in Chapter 9. The unique naming of Jonah in 21:78 has the same importance.

Jonah is mentioned six times in the Quran. Four of these occurrences refer him as “Jonah” (4:165; 6:86; 10:109; 37:139). In 21:78 he is described as “Jonah, the one who possess NUN.” The last reference to Jonah is in 68:48 as “Sababul Hour” which means: “the friend of the fish,” or simply “The man of the fish.”

Out of these six references only one of them does not contain the letter “NUN” (6:87). This is “Sababul Hour” and it is found in Chapter 68. This chapter is called “Quran The Final Testament” or “Chapter letters NUN” (9:1) of the Quran. God Almighty confirms this mathematical relation in 21:87 by writing: “It is for you to understand the existence of the letter “NUN” in the name of Jonah. By this way, we want to tell you that he deliberately did NOT use Jonah’s proper name in Chapter “Nun”, since Jonah possess the letter NUN.

What a marvelous way of communicating this message! This single incidence tells us so many things that I cannot summarize them here. God, our Great teacher, tells us that He is not obligated to use particular letter in the name of a man or “N” in order to create the intrinsic mathematical design based on fixed order and further great lesson from the Omniscient Lord.

Please send your question to:

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