Jesus the messenger. In the church service which I grew up attending, the Lord's Prayer was preceded with the phrase: "...as Jesus taught us to pray." This is acknowledging Jesus as teacher, as scholar, as messenger of God. Fatehah. Through time and translation perhaps the words were altered, but its meaning remains intact for Christians, for all of us.

In the New Testament book of Matthew, Jesus is teaching his disciples how to pray correctly. "When you pray, do not behave like the hypocrites who love to stand and pray in synagogues or on street corners in order to be noticed." [6:5]

Compare that to the Quran: "The hypocrites think that they are pleasing God, but He is the One who leads them on. When they get up for the Contact Prayer (Salat), they get up lazily. This is because they only show off in front of the people, and rarely do they think of God." [4:44]. "And you to those who observe the contact prayers (Salat), who are totally heedless of our daily bread," and they ask for forgiveness: "Forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

In the New Testament, the Lord’s Prayer is as follows:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.”

In the Quran, the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples was, in fact, Al-Fatihah (The Key). This should not come as a surprise to Methodists. We know that Jesus was a true messenger who preached to his people the worship of God alone. We have been simplified and are easier to understand. And interestingly, the last line is not there at all. But in either version, this is clearly a prayer to God alone. And it is easy to compare it to Al-Fatihah, the Key.

The first part of both prayers is naming God, acknowledging his power, and praising Him. We say, “Praise be to God.” We call Him “Lord of the universe,” and “Master of the Day of Judgment.” Christians recognize that God's name is “hallowed,” and His will is done on both earth and in heaven.

Then both prayers ask for God's help. We say, “You alone we worship. You alone we ask for help.” And then, “Guide us in the right path.” Christians ask for provisions: “Give us this day our daily bread,” and they ask for forgiveness: “Forgive us the wrong we have done,” and they ask for guidance: “deliver us from the evil one.”

Clearly then, the Lord’s Prayer is a true prayer to God alone, taught to the disciples by Jesus, messenger of God. I wonder if the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples was, in fact, Al-Fatihah. Through time and translation perhaps the words were altered, but its meaning remains intact for Christians, for all of us, for today.

Lysie Kelly

God tells us in the Quran how a nation can prosper by following God’s commandments (10:98). One of the most important commandments is for people to give Zakat (the Obligatory Charity) to the poor and the needy. The practice of Zakat came through the prophets Abraham, Eek the other religious duties of Islam (Submission to God alone). The minimum rate of Zakat is 2.5% of one's net income, and it must be given away as soon as such income is received (6:141). The Zakat charity is the right of the poor (30:28) and is a means of cleansing our earnings and removing our sins (2:278). It shows our appreciation to God for His blessings. Beside giving Zakat, which is obligatory, we are also encouraged to be charitable in any way which we can without being extravagant (25:67).

God specifies for us the order of charity. We should consider our parents first for receiving charity if they are needy. If they are not, we are asked to give to the relatives, the orphans, the poor, and the traveling alien, in this order (3:215). It is a beautiful and very efficient social welfare system which encourages us to take care of our immediate family and the needy people whom we know. Thus we are assured that our charity goes where is needed the most.

Charity is Good For Both Sides

Some people consider charity a loss, and think that they should not be responsible for the misfortune of others. However, giving charity is the best thing we can do for ourselves and others. God tells us that we will be rewarded manifold for the charities we give (57:18). Thus, we not only help the poor and the needy by giving them their rightful share, we reap the benefits of charity by getting more blessings in return. Both the giver and the receiver of the charity are winners.

God knows best what is good for each individual as well as for my community. The Zakat charity is a means of having a prosperous nation that provides its individuals with the best economic welfare. It is the best investment against crime, economic hardship and social disparity.

When they give they are neither extravagant nor stingy; they give in moderation. [2:267]

They ask you about giving: say, "The charity you give shall go to the parents, the relatives, the orphans, the poor, and the traveling alien." Any good you do, God is fully aware thereof. [2:216]

They also ask you what to give to charity: say, "The excess." [2:219]

... Give to charity during the good times, as well as the bad times. [3:134]

Who spend their money in the cause of God, then do not follow their charity with iniquity or harm, will receive in their recompense from their Lord: they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. [2:262]

Kind words and compassion are better than a charity that is followed by insult... [2:268]

What prevented the acceptance of their spending is that they disbelieved in God and His messenger, and when they observed the Contact Prayers (Salat), they observed them lazily, and when they gave to charity, they did so grudgingly. [5:94]

Those who give to charity night and day, secretly and publicly, receive their recompense from their Lord: they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. [2:274]

... Give (to charity) for your own good. Any one who is protected from his own stinginess these are the successful ones. [6:162]

... Any charity you give is for your own good. Any charity you shall give shall be for the sake of God. Any charity you give will be repaid to you, without the least injustice. [2:272]

Your Lord has decreed: "The more you give, the more I give you." [14:7]
Hajj 1994: Disaster Strikes Again

Idol Worshippers Continue to Ignore God's Commandment on Sacred Months

Impressions will be different for every single pilgrim, but no one who made Hajj pilgrimage this year can say that it was a small crowd. From some reports this was one of the largest Hajj season. Estimates range from 2 to 3 million people.

According to traditional Muslim belief, because the day spent on Arafat fell on Friday, the day of the Jews' congregational prayer, anyone who made Hajj got the same credit as if they had performed this important religious duty seven times.

But they turned unappreciative and challenged: "Our Lord, we do not care if you increase the distance of our journeys (without any station)." They thus wronged their own souls. Consequently, we made them history, and scattered them into small components throughout the land. This would provide lessons for those who are steadfast, appreciative. (3:14-19)

Whenever God makes things easy for us, and we make them hard for ourselves, he pays the price.

Lisa Spay

QURAN
THE FINAL TESTAMENT
Authorized English Version
Translated from the Original
by Rashad Khalifa, Ph.D.

Rashad Khalifa

9th Annual Conference

God willing, the 9th Annual International Conference of United Submitters will be held in Hellingham, Washington, July 15-17. Attendance is by invitation and prior registration only. If you would like to attend the conference but did not receive the registration form, please contact us immediately.

Seminar: Mathematical Structure of the Quran

A seminar will be given by brother Milan Sale from Switzerland about the mathematical structure of the Quran. This seminar is free for the participants of the conference, and it will be held at the conference site. Seminar will begin on Wednesday the 13th of July, and will finish on Thursday, July 14th.

Join Forces

We believe that Islam today is like a precious jewel that is buried under piles upon piles of man-made innovations. Our aim is to purge these innovations by upholding the Quran, and present the jewel of Islam to the world.

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