O what you believe, fasting is decreed for you, as it was decreed for those before you, that you may attain salvation. [2:183]

Specific days (are designated for fasting); if one is ill or traveling, an equal number of other days may be substituted. Those who can fast, but with great difficulty, may substitute feeding one poor person for each day of the breaking of the fast. If one volunteers (more righteous weeks), it is better. But fasting is the best for you, if you only know. [2:184]

Ramadan is the month during which the Qur'an was revealed, providing guidance for the people, clear teachings, and the statute book. Those of you who witness this month shall fast therein. Those who are ill or traveling may substitute the same number of other days. God wishes for you convenience, not hardship, that you may fulfill your obligations, and to glorify God for guiding you, and to express your appreciation. [2:183]

You may eat and drink until the white thread of light becomes distinguishable from the dark thread of night at dawn. Then, you shall fast until sunset... [2:187]

Like all religious practices in Islam (Submission), fasting was decreed through Abraham. God tells us in the Qur'an that he was the one who named us Muslims (Submitters) originally (22:78). The messengers who followed Abraham practiced fasting, as well as the contact prayers (Salat), obligatory charity (Zakat), and the pilgrimage (Hajj), and the prophetic words (Hajj). [2:85, 5:12, 10:87, 2:14, 9:31, 19:55, 31:17, etc.]

There is even mention of these religious practices in the Bible. Therefore, it is very clear that the prophets and messengers, from Abraham, Moses and Aaron, Solomon, Jesus observed the practices, as well as Jesus' followers (Genesis 17, Exodus 40:13-32, Joshua 5:14, 1 Kings 8:54, Matthew 26:36-39 and many others). Fasting, a practice still followed during the time of Jesus' disciples, is mentioned in Acts 13:2-3. Unfortunately, these religious practices are lost by the generations who came after them (19:59). By His grace, God gave us the Qur'an, His final scripture, which confirms and supersedes all previous scriptures. Through the Qur'an, He made the religion of Submission easy for us to practice (22:78).

The word proof is derived from the Latin word probare which means to test. God supports His messengers with proof (7:101) so people can test and then verify for themselves the real identity of the messenger and the truthfulness of the message. Once people take the initiative to examine a messenger's proof they will discover that the seemingly simple proof is in reality a profound miracle from God. As God declares in the Qur'an, miracles are manifested to those who have achieved certainty. Certainty, in turn, is achieved by thorough examination of the proof that God's messenger is supported with.

Those who possess no knowledge say, "If only God could speak to us, or some miracle could come to us!" Others before them have witnessed similar attitudes in their minds. We do manifest the miracles for those who have attained certainty. [2:118]

God provides us with a good example in the Qur'an. Moses was supported with profound proofs when he was sent to Pharaoh (20:31-43). Among them was his staff which he threw down to the ground. Pharaoh was not convinced, so he summoned all the experienced magicians to challenge Moses. The magicians were able to produce a great magic which appeared to match that of Moses. However, Moses' proof was put to the test when he threw down his staff and it swallowed whatever the other magicians had fabricated. Up until that point, the proof of Moses appeared to be merely a form of magic that did not seem special. However, when put to the test, the proof of Moses was found to be imitable, super-human and indeed a miracle for its time. Among the few who recognized this miracle were the experienced magicians who were actively involved with testing the proof (20:70). The majority of people at that time chose to disbelieve in Moses and his message despite his profound proof (10:33).

We narrate to you the history of those communities: their messengers went to them with clear proofs, but they were not to believe in what they had rejected before [7:101]

Throughout the Qur'an, God narrates to us history from the past to serve as a lesson for the future. Like the previous generations who consistently received proof, our generation has been made aware of a proof emboldened within the Qur'an itself. The Qur'an, which was revealed over 1400 years ago, is arranged such that words, letters, verses, chapters, and phrases are all intertwined to create a comprehensive mathematical structure based on the prime number 19. This intricate divisibility not only forms the mathematical literary composition and structure of the Qur'an, but also elucidates the essential meaning of the scripture. The relatively few who have taken the time to thoroughly examine this proof have determined it to be beyond human capability and a true miracle substantiating divine authorship. For the most part, however, this proof has been ignored, labeled as insignificant numerology, and ridiculed just like the proofs of the previous generations.

Indeed, they have rejected this without studying and examining it, and before understanding it. Thus did those before them disbelieve. [28:29]

The Qur'an teaches us that people who will not believe in the messengers' proofs are those who ridicule, ignore, and reject before examining, testing and studying. They disbelieve without disproving.

Those who reflect do so without presenting a counter claim, contrary evidence or a solid argument while those who believe in the proof can substantiate, verify and support their belief. God describes those who take the initiative to test a proof as those who think (16:11), people who understand (16:12), people who take heed (16:13), and people who appreciate (25:62). On the other hand, those who reject a messenger's proof are those who insist on their ways (98:12), follow their own opinions (7:176), listen heedlessly (22:3), ridicule (37:14), and turn away in aversion (64:2). Instead, they ask for a miracle. However, by not examining the proof, they are giving up the opportunity to see the very miracle they demand. The story of Saleh illustrates this point.

continued on the next page
The story of Moses compares the characteristics of one who receives a proof with one who does not.

In Moses (there is a lesson). We sent him to Pharaoh with manifest proofs. But he turned away, in arrogance, and said, "Moses, surely, you are a liar." [51:28-29]

Compare the above response with the following:

A believing man among Pharaoh’s people, who was concerning his belief, said, "How can you call a man just for saying, 'My Lord is God,' and he has shown you clear proofs from your Lord? If he is a liar, that is his problem, and if he is truthful, you benefit by his reminder..." [4:69]

We must ask ourselves, which approach and reaction to a messenger’s proof is more worthy in the sight of God. After all, God gives these examples not only to teach us but to judge accordingly. Rashid Khalifa was a messenger who was killed just for saying, “My Lord is God.” In order to support his claim, he showed “clear proof from his Lord” through the Quran’s mathematical structure and left it up to each individual to examine and draw their own conclusion. He restored the original message of Islam, complete with introduction to God, the creator after centuries of fabrications and distortions. Although he has long since passed away, the Quran’s mathematical structure indeed put our beliefs to the test. At the same time, the examination of the same proof can provide the reassurance needed to overcome this challenge. Those who examine the Quran’s mathematical structure and sincerity for themselves that it is “one of the greatest miracles” (74:35). They will appreciate the true significance and value of the proof.

If we revealed this Quran to a mountain, you would see a trembling, crumbling, out of reverence for God. We create these examples for the people, that they may reflect. [39:51]

The intention here is not to persuade the reader with a convincing argument for the Quran’s mathematical structure and leaves the people, that they may reflect. [39:51]

We draw comfort from the past and concern with the beliefs that have been reinforced by our parents, culture and our upbringing. When presented with something that challenges slightly from our established belief system we immediately react with suspicion, criticism, and defense without giving ourselves the opportunity to listen and think. God knows our innermost thoughts, and for this reason He has protected us that a proof containing a great test (44:53). We must probe, question, and examine. If we fail to prove the point, we are condemned to re-examine our established belief system in light of the proven message we are presented with. An open-minded and objective examination is imperative in such a case.

In fact, those who received the scripture did not dispute until the proof was given to them. [90:41]

In the age of science and computers, the Quran’s mathematical structure is the truth for our generation, providing evidence that the Quran is the direct and unaltered word of God. It gives us evidence to follow the Quran alone rather than unsubstantiated hadith which divide Muslim communities around the world (36-23, 452). Therefore, a new generation can depend on the proofs and testimonial history of those who verified the miracles of previous generations. Dr. Rashad Khalifa, in his book Beyond Probability, discusses the Quran’s mathematical structure and teaches us to believe in God’s words without giving ourselves the opportunity to reject them. [2:212]

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RIGHTEOUS GO TO HEAVEN

We learn from the Quran the righteous people who die in the cause of God are alive and well with their Lord (2:154). When their lives on earth come to the predetermined end, the angel of death simply invites them to leave their earthly bodies and move on to Heaven where Adam and Eve once lived.

Give good news to those who believe in their righteous life that they will have gardens with flowing streams. When provided with a provision of fruits therein, they will say, “This is what we were promised to receive in the world previously.” Thus, they are given allegorical descriptions. They will have pure spouses therein, and abide therein forever. [2:252]

Those who obey God and the messenger belong with those blessed by God—the prophets, the saints, the masters, and the righteous. These are the best company. [4:40]

They do not taste death thereon—beyond the first death— and He has spared them the punishment of Hell. [4.46.56]

(At the time of his death) he was told, “Enter Paradise.” He said, “Oh! I, do you people know? That my Lord has forgiven me and made my evil deeds good?” [46:26-27]

We have lost some dedicated subscribers in the past few weeks. Gauzy Ali (39) and his wife Najah (30) died in a car accident in Florida in the early morning on January 15. Gauzy Ali came across the message of worshiping God alone and following the Quran alone on an electronic (computer) bulletin board in February 1993. He witnessed the Quranic verses proving the absolute worship of God alone by adhering to the Quran alone. In compliance with verse 17:16, he resisted verses and submitted to the words of God in the Quran, regardless of what he was taught, what his family or the majority said and did. In a short time, Gauzy accepted the message of the Quran alone and changed his religious practices. It was a great pleasure and blessing for us to meet Gauzy in person at the conference last July. We also lost brother Otis Smith on February 10. Otis and his wife Carolyn moved to Detroit from Tucson many years ago. Some of us may still remember his visits to the Masjid this year. Our Masjid lost a great brother.

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