

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

Monthly Bulletin of International
Community of Submitters

www.masjidtucson.org



Published by Masjid Tucson
Muharram 1433

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GIFT OF CONSCIENCE

O you human being, what diverted you from your Lord Most Honorable? The One who created you, designed you, and perfected you. In whatever design He chose, He constructed it. (82:6-8).

He created the heavens and the earth for a specific purpose, designed you and perfected your design, then to Him is the final destiny. (64:3).

We created man in the best design. (95:4).

From the above verses, we can see that every organ, vein, nerve, bone in our body is perfectly designed for us to live on Earth and carry out our test. All our body-systems—the digestive, pulmonary, nervous systems, the brain, left/right movements etc., are all carefully designed, perfectly placed and coordinated in the human body as per God's design. All this He gave us in advance for a predetermined period so that we may redeem ourselves.

But apart from these unique physical aspects, there is something else God gifted us with which we may not often

realize. That is the gift of the 'conscience' or 'realization' that something is wrong and perhaps we should do something about it. Every one of us has this 'inner voice', or 'realization tool' built into us. We may not realize it, but it is this conscience that helps us greatly stay on the right path to God, remember Him, strengthen our faith, be steadfast in carrying out God's commandments, recognize truth from falsehood, acknowledge mistakes, repent, reform, kill our egos and so on.

As children, our parents under God's guidance, taught us not to lie, steal or harm anyone. That was the beginning of the awakening of our 'conscience' in our childhood. As we grow older, we get confronted with several good and bad thoughts or actions and have to make decisions all the time. Our 'good conscience' makes us sense or realize that God does not like certain things, so we refrain. Or if we do bad things, something makes us feel uncomfortable and we think about what we should do to correct it. This voice of conscience is an excellent way of getting us to do what pleases God in

our daily lives.

How much have we thought about this? Can you imagine if we didn't have this gift to prevent us from plunging headlong into Hell? We focus much on our physical tools (hands, ears etc.) because we can see them. But every day God helps us realize things by getting us to think and feel good or bad by this gift of the conscience built into us.

And as believers, we should be thankful. Though every human has this conscience within him (because God wants everyone to have a fair chance), not everyone takes advantage of the positive effects of this conscience.

There are millions and millions of arrogant egoists out in the world who completely disregard this blessing of realization built into them and go ahead with their evil ways. Rather than paying attention to their God gifted 'guilty conscience', they would rather let their jinns cover up their minds and emotions to prevent them from repenting and reforming.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

He is the One who created you, then among you there is the disbeliever, and the believer. GOD is fully Seer of everything you do. (64:2)

He knows everything in the heavens and the earth, and He knows everything you conceal and everything you declare. GOD is fully aware of the innermost thoughts. (64:4).

In Quran we have a few examples of God's servants to show this gift of conscience or realization which we can also learn from:

After they were duped by Satan, Adam and his wife 'realized' their mistake and asked to be forgiven.

He thus duped them with lies. As soon as they tasted the tree, their bodies became visible to them, and they tried to cover themselves with the leaves of Paradise. (7:22-23).

Remorse comes when one realizes one's mistake, which leads to seeking forgiveness, repenting and reforming, as what happened with Adam's son.

GOD then sent a raven to scratch the soil, to teach him how to bury his brother's corpse. He said, "Woe to me; I failed to be as intelligent as this raven, and bury my brother's corpse." He became ridden with remorse. (5:31).

Sheba realized her mistake of worshipping idols after Solomon showed the appropriate signs.

She had been diverted by worshipping idols instead of God. She belonged to disbelieving people. She was told, "Go inside the palace." When she saw its interior, she thought it was a pool of water, and she (pulled up her dress,) exposing her legs. He said, "This interior is now paved with crystal." She said, "My Lord, I have wronged my soul. I now submit with Solomon to GOD, Lord of the universe." (27:43-44).

Solomon himself was a victim of preoccupation with the material world, till God saved him through realization, after which he asked for forgiveness and reformed.

He then said, "I enjoyed the material things more than I enjoyed worshipping my Lord, until the sun was gone. (38:32).

After David gave his judgment to the two men, his conscience kept making him wonder if he had done the right thing. When he showed concern, God helped him out.

He said, "He is being unfair to you by asking to combine your sheep with his. Most people who combine their properties treat each other unfairly, except those who believe and work righteousness, and these are so few." Afterwards, David wondered if he made the right judgment. He thought that we were testing him. He then implored his Lord for forgiveness, bowed down, and repented. (38:24).

When Jonah rebelled, he was swallowed by the fish. He had to have thought about it, 'realized his mistake' and then resorted to meditation to be forgiven.

Consequently, the fish swallowed him, and he was the one to blame. If it were not that he resorted to meditation (on God), he would have stayed in its belly until the Day of Resurrection. (37:142-144).

The Governor's wife knew the truth behind Joseph's imprisonment. Her conscience must have bothered her all those years till God made the truth prevail, forcing her to admit what she was hiding and seek forgiveness.

(The king) said (to the women), "What do you know about the incident when you tried to seduce Joseph?" They said, "GOD forbid; we did not know of anything evil committed by him." The wife of the governor said, "Now the truth has prevailed. I am the one who tried to seduce him, and he was the truthful one. "I hope that he will realize that I never

betrayed him in his absence, for GOD does not bless the schemes of the betrayers. "I do not claim innocence for myself. The self is an advocate of vice, except for those who have attained mercy from my Lord. My Lord is Forgiver, Most Merciful." (12:51-53).

I wish to end by encouraging everyone to take full use of every precious tool God has gifted to us. Even the mighty and arrogant Pharaoh, being a human after all, had to have been thinking about whatever was happening in his life. But his ego was too big to admit and act upon any truth that may have crossed his mind.

So if something is there in our minds, we should come to terms with it and be willing to think it through. It may be God's way of helping us to realize things so we can keep doing better and purify our souls. As believers we should not worry. If we are sincere, God will divert sin and evil from us and help us make the right decision.

Sometimes Satan will also try and confuse us. Again, if we are sincere, God will 'make us realize' Satan's ploy and save us as He did with Abraham and his son. The key is in being 'conscious' of our actions – always being reverent of God and be willing to take his help and guidance to repent, reform and seek forgiveness if we wish to make it back to His most beautiful abode.

Hena R., Mumbai, India

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Responsibility

You shall not accept any information, unless you verify it for yourself. I have given you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brain, and you are responsible for using them. (17:36)

A dear friend of mine whose opinion I deeply respect once told me that one of the greatest rights we can have in this life is the freedom of choice: the ability to choose our own way of life or our own religion without any interference and without any restrictions. I agree with his statement about the significance of freedom of choice, but I also feel that there is an inherent responsibility associated with this freedom.

This responsibility is to examine, to research, and to carefully scrutinize all the various choices and all the possible consequences that may be related to the action we choose to exercise. For example, if you are suffering or are in pain, you are free to take any medication or consult with any doctor. Before you choose a particular treatment, however, you investigate and examine all the possibilities and choose the appropriate remedy that will serve as the best cure for your pain and suffering.

At the age of nineteen, a sense of uneasiness, confusion, and trepidation became pronounced in my life. This anxiety was caused by a void in my life. A void that I later found to be related to a lack of faith. I told myself that I would examine and explore various religions in order to fill this emptiness. I began with Islam (Submission) since I was exposed to that religion the most. Although my mother was a devoted believer and encouraged me to follow her path, I did not accept her words on blind faith. I began to read the Quran for myself in search of the many perplexing questions that were occupying my mind and plaguing my life.

As I read the Quran, all the questions I had were answered one after another. As soon as I would raise a question, it seemed to be answered in the following verses as I read on. It was magical. It was as if someone knew exactly what I was thinking and would respond to my inquiries with amazing clarity and assurance. I was suddenly overcome with an overwhelming sense of freedom and happiness.

My fear was replaced with joy and exhilaration. The void in my life had now become ruled. I became a devoted Muslim and a submitter to God. Practically overnight my life was changed. I gave up all the actions that violated God's commandments and replaced them with actions glorifying God. In return, all the burdens, worries, and preoccupations that I had were lifted from my consciousness.

I was suddenly relieved of the tremendous weight that I knew I would have to carry throughout my life. It was as if I was climbing up a very steep mountain carrying a heavy load on my shoulders. When I looked at the peak of the mountain and thought about the long journey ahead, I would become scared, discouraged, and sometimes even thought I would never make it to the top. As soon as I became a believer, I felt a sense of security and protection. I knew I could not only make it up that steep mountain but I could run up and down its steep paths many times.

While the road that I used to follow came to an end, I embarked upon a new road, a new journey, a new life. I was cured by the healing powers of the Quran. The revelations of God were so overwhelming and so convincing that I did not need to explore other religions in order to confirm my beliefs. After all, what other book can you read that will lead you to completely change your lifestyle forever in a matter of a few days.

People may wonder how I can be certain that I chose the right path when it is the only path I explored. I respond to this inquiry by reciting an example of a woman who is suffering from a terrible disease and who is in constant pain every time she moves a part of her body. The pain is beyond description—it is agonizing.

Every day, every hour, every second she must live with this pain and the pain gets worse each day. If one day, after years of research, a medicine is discovered that will cure her disease, end her pain, and eliminate her suffering, will she take the medicine or continue to seek other cures? Most definitely, her search will be over. Her suffering has ended.

As human beings, most of us are fortunate to be endowed with the gift of eyesight, hearing, and intellectual capacity. Unfortunately, many of us have taken these senses for granted. For example, despite the overwhelming proofs that can be verified in the Quran through examination, billions of people have blindly chosen to follow religions and practices that contradict the logical nature of human existence. The reason for this is simple.

These people have not exercised their responsibilities associated with their freedom of choice. They have neglected to use their God given senses of reason and perception to examine and study their own religion as well as other possible religions. Since these people have neglected this responsibility, God has sealed their hearts and minds: they will never understand.

While those who scrutinize, explore, and sincerely search to find the right path are attracted to one religion that eliminates their problems and worries, those who accept words on blind faith end up following different religions and practices that merely cover up

(Continued on page 4)

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ISSN 1089-053X

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(Continued from page 3)

their problems. They think that they are strengthening their faith but little do they know that their souls are slowly deteriorating and are becoming weaker and weaker.

It is as if they are given a hollow pill, a placebo, and are told that their pain will go away and their disease will be cured. Psychologically this hollow pill may work and their pain may be temporarily relieved but the real problem, the disease, will continue to eat their body away. There will come a day when they will realize that they have been deceived, but on that day it will be too late: their bodies will be feeble, their faith will be weak, and their souls will be malnourished and deprived.

If you are going to devote your whole life to the practice of one religion, it is essential that you carefully examine all the possibilities and fulfill the responsibility that is associated with your freedom of choice. If you do this, God willing you will embark upon the same path that I did. You will choose Islam (Submission) as your way of life.

Amir K.

[reprinted from July 1992 SP]

Ed.'s note: We invite you to email your comments or articles on any subject related to Submission. God bless...

They Followed Their Parents Blindly

[37:69-70] They found their parents astray. And they blindly followed in their footsteps.

[43:22] The fact is that: they said, "We found our parents carrying on certain practices, and we are following in their footsteps."

[43:23] Invariably, when we sent a warner to any community, the leaders of that community would say, "We found our parents following certain practices, and we will continue in their footsteps."

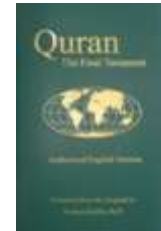
We Are Born With Instinctive Knowledge About God

[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."

[7:173] Nor can you say, "It was our parents who practiced idolatry, and we simply followed in their footsteps. Will You punish us because of what others have innovated?"

[6:89-90] Those were the ones to whom we have given the scripture, wisdom, and prophethood.... These are the ones guided by GOD; you shall be guided in their footsteps. Say, "I do not ask you for any wage. This is but a message for all the people."

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