

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

# Submitters Perspective

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## Who is God and why should we seek Him?

### Reflections on Sura 1: The Key (Al-Fatehah)

[2:185] Ramadan is the month during which the Quran 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.

Our worship practices include an entire month focused on glorifying God and showing our appreciation for His guidance. In this article we will be reflecting on the following questions: Who is God and why do we glorify Him? Why should we seek and appreciate His guidance?

The Quran is our guide and the first sura, The Key (Al-Fatehah), is very revealing:

#### Sura 1: The Key (Al-Fatehah)

[1:1] In the name of **GOD**, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

God is introducing himself as the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Although God has many attributes, He emphasizes His Grace (57:21,

8:29, 3:174, 17:110) and Mercy (7:153) in His book of guidance to us. Every sura except one begins with this phrase and our daily Contact Prayers start with this reminder.

Indeed, He has provided us with so many blessings and provisions, from family and community, to the natural beauty on earth, to tasty foods and pure water. We can especially appreciate the delicious food and water during the month of Ramadan when we avoid these pleasures during the day. His blessings are countless and include His immense mercy which means we can always ask for forgiveness and repent to Him when we make mistakes.

[39:53] Proclaim: "O My servants who exceeded the limits, never despair of **GOD**'s mercy. For **GOD** forgives all sins. He is the Forgiver, Most Merciful."

[6:54] When those who believe in our revelations come to you, you shall say, "Salāmun 'Alaykum (Peace be upon you). Your Lord has decreed that mercy is His attribute...."

[1:2] Praise be to **GOD**, Lord of the universe.

God is also revealing to us that He is the Lord of the Heavens and the earth, the true Sovereign (3:189, 5:120). He is the Most Powerful, the Almighty (59:23). He is in control of all things (4:126, 39:62). All He has to do is say "Be" and it is. We cannot fathom His greatness. God is so great and powerful that the universes are folded within His hand (allegorically).

[23:116] Most exalted is **GOD**, the true Sovereign. There is no other god beside Him; the Most Honorable Lord, possessor of all authority.

[2:117] The Initiator of the heavens and the earth: to have anything done, He simply says to it, "Be," and it is.

[39:67] They can never fathom the greatness of **GOD**. The whole earth is within His fist on the Day of Resurrection. In fact, the universes are folded within His right hand. Be He glorified; He is much too high above needing any partners.

[1:3] Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

In the next verse, God reminds us that

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despite all His power, He is still the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful. It is truly amazing that despite His greatness, God is forgiving, the Most Kind, the Compassionate (4:96, 6:103, 15:49, 16:18, 38:66, 85:13-15).

*[67:2] The One who created death and life for the purpose of distinguishing those among you who would do better. He is the Almighty, the Forgiving.*

*[57:9] He is the One who sends down to His servant clear revelations, in order to lead you out of the darkness into the light. **GOD** is Compassionate towards you, Most Merciful.*

#### **[1:4] Master of the Day of Judgment.**

God is informing us that He is the ultimate judge (6:62). His deep and immense knowledge of everyone allows Him to be absolutely just (17:54-55, 21:112). Indeed, His scales are precise.

*[21:47] We will establish the scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection. No soul will suffer the least injustice. Even the equivalent of a mustard seed will be accounted for. We are the most efficient reckoners.*

God is the best judge since He knows all the facts and He never errs or forgets (20:51-52). The depth of His knowledge is reflected in the fact that He knows the innermost thoughts (5:7, 17:25, 39:7, 64:4).

Noah leaves judgment to God in the following verse: *[11:31] "...Nor do I say to those despised by your eyes that **GOD** will not bestow any blessings upon them. **GOD** knows best what is in their innermost thoughts. (If I did this,) I would be a transgressor."*

This verse [1:4] also reminds us that we will be held accountable (69:19-20); we are responsible for our actions, utterances and thoughts. This life is our opportunity to redeem our souls by believing and leading a righteous life (2:62, 25:71, 42:13, 87:14-15). It is not wise to become pre-occupied with this worldly life for it is an illusion that will quickly come

to an end (10:45, 31:33, 35:5, 40:39, 57:20, 79:46).

*[6:32] The life of this world is no more than illusion and vanity, while the abode of the Hereafter is far better for the righteous...*

*[17:52] The day He summons you, you will respond by praising Him, and you will then realize that you had lasted in this life but a short while.*

#### **[1:5] You alone we worship; You alone we ask for help.**

When we get to know God and His awesome attributes, we realize that He is the only One that is worthy of worship. Imploring Him for help is logical behavior for He is the only One that can help us. This gives us hope and a real refuge. Any time there is adversity, no matter how severe, we can turn to Him for help and He will hear us and answer our prayers (22:61).

*[2:186] When My servants ask you about Me, I am always near. I answer their prayers when they pray to Me. The people shall respond to Me and believe in Me, in order to be guided.*

Job sets the example for us: *[21:83-84] And Job implored his Lord: "Adversity has befallen me, and, of all the merciful ones, You are the Most Merciful." We responded to him, relieved his adversity, and restored his family for him, even twice as much. That was a mercy from us, and a reminder for the worshipers.*

This story reassures us that God will answer our prayers when we pray to Him, just like He answered Job's prayer and relieved his afflictions. All we need to do is worship Him and implore Him alone.

Zachariah is another good example. He did not despair even when asking God for a miracle: *[19:4-5] He said, "My Lord, the bones have turned brittle in my body, and my hair is aflame with gray. As I implore You, my Lord, I never despair. I worry about my dependants after me, and my wife has been sterile. Grant me, from You, an heir.*

God answered his prayer and not only granted him a son but granted him John, a wise, kind and righteous child (19:7,12-13), another demonstration of His immense grace and mercy.

#### **[1:6] Guide us in the right path;**

Why should we seek and appreciate God's guidance? His guidance is the ultimate blessing, the gift to pray for and appreciate. For it will bring us peace, security and contentment and help us on the road to redemption (6:127, 20:47, 24:55, 48:4-5). The gift of guidance benefits us in this life and in the eternal Hereafter. As we nourish our souls on the path of faith, we also attain happiness, a quality of the soul that is elusive for many.

*[16:97] Anyone who works righteousness, 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) for their righteous works.*

God's guidance is available to anyone, regardless of race, background or name; God will guide us if we want to be guided (16:93). He will show us His signs and proofs (2:164, 10:101, 21:37, 27:93). He will show us the truth (22:54).

*[10:6] Surely, in the alternation of night and day, and what **GOD** created in the heavens and the earth, there are proofs for people who are righteous.*

As we start to see the rewards of believing in God and doing good and we start to feel the presence of God in our lives and experience how He provides for us, helps, supports, protects, reassures and heals us and fills our hearts and souls with contentment (29:60, 40:64, 51:58, 26:77-80, 7:128, 8:62, 61:13, 3:150, 3:173, 12:64, 2:260, 8:9-11, 48:4), our fear, grief and worries start to dissolve (2:112, 5:69).

*[10:62-64] Absolutely, **GOD's** allies have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. They are those who believe and*

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lead a righteous life. For them, joy and happiness in this world, as well as in the Hereafter. This is **GOD's** unchangeable law. Such is the greatest triumph.

**[1:7] the path of those whom You blessed; not of those who have deserved wrath, nor of the strayers.**

Those who are blessed are those who are guided, protected, supported and loved by God (3:173, 12:64, 3:160, 61:13).

*[3:150] GOD alone is your Lord and Master, and He is the best supporter.*

*[19:96] Surely, those who believe and lead a righteous life, the Most Gracious will shower them with love.*

In addition, God's commandments, from abstaining from alcohol, drugs and unchaste behavior to observing the Contact Prayers to being kind and appreciative have inherent wisdom and help us lead healthier and happier lives. His path of guidance is thus a very blessed path. The commandments and Contact Prayers (Salat) help us to avoid evil (29:45) which would first hurt ourselves; they advocate righteousness and help us nourish and grow our souls. Since happiness is a quality of the soul, we then attain the elusive happiness that most people are seeking.

Let us reflect upon and appreciate the presence of God in our lives and the many blessings He has showered upon us. Let us thank God for the opportunity to come closer to Him and to purify our souls through our worship practices. Let us examine our relationship with God and consider how we want to strengthen it in the next year.

*[24:20] GOD showers you with His grace and mercy. GOD is Most Kind towards the believers, Most Merciful.*

*[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...*

*[27:19] "...My Lord, direct me to be appreciative of the blessings You have bestowed upon me and my parents, and to do the righteous works that please You...*

*[15:98-99] You shall sing the praises of your Lord, and be with the prostrators. And worship your Lord, in order to attain certainty.*

*[22:78] You shall strive for the cause of GOD as you should strive for His cause...Thus, the messenger shall serve as a witness among you, and you shall serve as witnesses among the people. Therefore, you shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and hold fast to GOD ...*

*[20:76] The gardens of Eden, beneath which rivers flow, will be their abode forever. Such is the reward for those who purify themselves.*

#### Reference for verses:

Quran: The Final Testament  
(Authorized English Version) translated by Dr. Rashad Khalifa.

Farinaz

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## Heavenly Detox

For the residents of heaven who sided with God, a clean, safe and contamination free environment is a necessary attribute of God's kingdom. Casting out those who disagree is like sucking a dirty toxic fog out of the environment, or dropping dead growths off the skin. God wants a clean and clear environment for His creatures.

Casting us out is not just a favor from God, Most Gracious, unto us, rather it serves the inhabitants already existent and preserves the environment for those of us who want to return! God be glorified.

God encourages this detox, in the Quran, where He tells you that

you should run away from any idol worshippers, including family. It is the parallel of our world/relationships today. You try your hardest to remove the toxic people from your environment, so you become a different and happier submitter. Now this is the short life, don't we also want it in the eternal life? Who wouldn't want a toxicity free environment?

So, just like removing toxic people from your life is important for happiness, removing toxic souls from Heaven is also important for you to experience happiness. In other words, removing the negative talkers/toxic people from your life allows you to experience joy (from the Lord); the same in heaven, where removing negative talkers/toxic souls allows others (by God's will "others" can later include us) to experience the best joy from the Lord.

Concluding, we are now in a grey area, literally, slightly contaminated, slightly not, but STILL CONTAMINATED. God's practices bestowed upon us are the means of detoxification!!

Detox diet with Salat (Contact Prayers)! It really is the best method of INSIDE OUT cleansing.

*Let us meditate on God, His glorious attributes,  
who is the basis of everything in this universe as its Creator,  
who is fit to be worshiped as Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient and self existent conscious being,  
who removes all ignorance and impurities from the mind  
and purifies and sharpens the intellect.*

[Gayatri Mantra, Yajur Veda]

He removes (DETOX) all ignorance (TOXIC) and impurities (TOXIC) from the mind and purifies (DETOX) and sharpens intellect!

Abeer

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## Be included in our email list for weekly reminders

We have been sending weekly reminders to submitters in our email list and it is a great success, praise God. The weekly reminder email is not very long. It usually consists of the topic of the week, and the corresponding link or links to get the information from. The reminder is sent every Thursday, God willing.

*[51:55] And remind, for the reminder benefits the believers.*

We would be happy if every submitter, whether receiving our newsletters or not, is included in the list. God willing you can join the list by sending an email to [info@masjiduntucson.org](mailto:info@masjiduntucson.org) and saying that you want to be in the weekly reminder list. If you want to make it a really short email, just write "weekly reminder" in the subject line and send it. If you also include in the email the city and state that you live in, God willing we can compile this information and use it for the submitters without a community who are asking to communicate with other submitters in their area. You can also join by visiting <http://masjiduntucson.org/current/weekly.html>

Please help us to help you and other submitters by joining the list and by being proactive, God willing.

*[3:200] O you who believe, you shall be steadfast, you shall persevere, you shall be united, you shall observe GOD, that you may succeed.*

*[87:9] Therefore, you shall remind; perhaps the reminder will benefit.*

*Note: Your comments are also welcome and appreciated.*