

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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Imploring GOD

[40:60] Your Lord says, "Implore Me, and I will respond to you. Surely, those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter Gehenna, forcibly."

The first part of the verse says, "Your Lord says." My research showed that the translation of these words, in this order, only occurs in this verse. The way this verse begins is setting up the rest of the verse as the truth and a command for us.

The next part of the verse is "Implore Me." This is a command from our Lord.

The rest of this sentence contains a truthful fact: "And I will respond to you." So God is teaching us how to ask for responses from Him. This creates a cause and effect scenario. Imploring God leads to Him responding to us. So if you want God to respond to you, implore Him.

The next part of the verse defines the opposite cause and effect of imploring: "Surely, those who are too arrogant to worship Me..."

"Arrogance" is defined (from Google) as: "having or revealing an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities." By thinking that what you do, say or think is because of your own skills—this is arrogance.

So I can say: "I went to college, I got a degree, and therefore I'm well educated. This enables me to have the ability to read and write well. I got a sales manager's position because of my degree and had to run meetings six days a week, which created my ability to speak well in front of people. I use my education to study topics in the Quran and write a sermon. I then use my speaking ability to perform a khutba."

This statement would be arrogant and not being aware of and worshiping God. Here's how I can correct the statement: "God allowed me to attend college and He gave me the ability to read and write well. By His grace, I got a sales manager's position and He supported me in meetings, giving me the ability to speak well. He guides me to study Quran and write a sermon, and then gives me the words and the ability to deliver it. Praise God."

We don't want to be arrogant, because by the definition of "arrogance" in Google, we will not be worshiping God when we are arrogant.

The final part of verse 40:60 shows the effect of being too arrogant to worship God: "...will enter Gehenna, forcibly." So, the effect of not worshiping God will cause you to enter Hell.

Webster's Dictionary defines "implore" as: "to make a very serious or emotional request to (someone); to say (something) as a serious or emotional request; to ask or beg for (something) in a very serious or emotional way."

God defines imploring Him as the only legitimate supplication. *[13:14] Imploring Him is the only legitimate supplication, while the idols they implore beside Him, cannot ever respond. Thus, they are like those who stretch their hands to the water, but nothing reaches their mouths. The supplications of the disbelievers are in vain.*

What are some ways to implore God?

- We can implore God with our Contact Prayers. We are acknowledging His greatness. But we must take the meaning of what we're saying, while we're saying it.
- You can implore God with your heart, mind, soul and regular words, e.g., "God help me say this khutba so it pleases You."
- You can implore Him when starting your car (43:13), when cooking, reading, or eating (6:119, 121)
- You can implore Him in your mind or out loud, by yourself or in a group.

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- Most important is that you implore God alone. [19:48] *"I will abandon you and the gods you worship besides GOD. I will worship only my Lord. By imploring my Lord alone, I cannot go wrong."*

When should we implore God?

- Implore God in good times as well as bad times (21:90)
- God sends adversity and hardship because He wants us to implore Him. [6:42] *We have sent (messengers) to communities before you, and we put them to the test through adversity and hardship, that they may implore.*
- Be mindful not to implore Him only during times of adversity. God tells us this is a human trait. [10:12] *When adversity touches the human being, he implores us while lying down, or sitting, or standing up. But as soon as we relieve his adversity, he goes on as if he never implored us to relieve any hardship! The works of the transgressors are thus adorned in their eyes.*
- Really we must remember and implore Him all the time—when we get up, when we wash, when we eat, when we talk with others, all through our day.
- Many of the verses with the word "implore" also have "forgive" in them. It must be very important to implore God for forgiveness. [4:106] *You shall implore GOD for forgiveness. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.*

Sometimes we implore, and God doesn't seem to answer our prayer. It may be that we're imploring for things which are bad for us. [17:11] *The human being often prays for something that may hurt him, thinking that he is praying for something good. The human being is impatient.* (Also 2:216.) Maybe our car didn't start because had we left at that time we would have been in an accident. God knows while we do not know.

In the January 1996 issue of Submitter's Perspective, there's an article

("Implore God with the Best Prayers") by an unnamed author (living in a country where printing their name might have been dangerous to them) that addresses this same issue in a concise way, including many prayers from the Quran to help us find the words to implore God.

The most important thing is to remember to implore God alone, and to do so as often as we can.

[55:29-30] *Imploring Him is everyone in the heavens and the earth. Every day He is in full control. Which of your Lord's marvels can you deny?*

Robert

* * * * *

You alone we ask for help

There is a common belief among many cultures and societies that humans who have died are somehow watching over their loved ones who remain on earth. Even in today's technological society you can hear things like "Your dad was watching over you" or "Mother must be turning over in her grave to hear you say that".

Sometimes this belief goes even farther into veneration and outright worship of ones ancestors, but often it is just a "comforting thought" that our dear departed family members and friends are still there with us in some manner.

While the bonds of love may not be broken by the departure from this earthly realm, the Quran is quite definite that actual contact is broken. The clearest statement of this is in 23:99-100

The Dead Never Come Back Until the Day of Resurrection

When death comes to one of them, he says, "My Lord, send me back. I will then work righteousness in everything I left." Not true. This is a false claim that he makes. A barrier will separate his soul from this world until resurrection.

The argument has been made that verses 23:99-100 refer only to the disbelievers, since the one being discussed is a disbeliever. However we have other examples

in the Quran showing that the righteous also lose contact with this world.

In 5:117 God is speaking with Jesus on the Day of Resurrection and Jesus responds in part with: *"... I was a witness among them for as long as I lived with them. When You terminated my life on earth, You became the Watcher over them. You witness all things."*

And in 36:26-27 the believing Egyptian appears to wish he could tell his people of his blessings at death: *(At the time of his death) he was told, "Enter Paradise." He said, "Oh, I wish my people knew that my Lord has forgiven me, and made me honorable."*

There has long been a Christian tradition, especially among non-Protestants, of praying to Jesus or Mary or the saints. It is not clear if the Bible condemns this practice, but the Quran certainly does:

The Dead Prophets and Saints
[16:20-21] *As for the idols they set up beside GOD, they do not create anything; they themselves were created. They are dead, not alive, and they have no idea how or when they will be resurrected.*

[35:14] *If you call on them, they cannot hear you. Even if they hear you, they cannot respond to you. On the Day of Resurrection, they will disown you. None can inform you like the Most Cognizant.*

So it is especially ironic that many Muslims pray to the saints, or believe that the righteous family members of the prophets can help them in some manner. And many go to Medina to pray to Muhammad, though even when alive, he could not help them:

[7:188] *Say, "I have no power to benefit myself, or harm myself. Only what GOD wills happens to me. If I knew the future, I would have increased my wealth, and no harm would have afflicted me. I am no more than a warner, and a bearer of good news for those who believe."*

[10:49] *Say, "I possess no power to harm myself, or benefit myself; only what GOD wills takes place." Each community has a predetermined life span. Once their inter-*

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THE QURAN SPEAKS

THREE BIG REASONS "RADICAL ISLAM" IS "ANTI-ISLAMIC"

They have names like ISIL, Al Qaeda, Taliban, etc. But we are told they belong to one group: "Radical or Extreme Islam." They insist on calling themselves "Islamic," and many observers concur, but this label is entirely wrong, because killing and hurting innocent people is the total opposite of the true religion of Islam. What is today dubbed "Radical Islam" is in actuality, "Anti-Islam". These criminals are breaking, disobeying, and doing the opposite of every major moral requirement of the Quran, and therefore, not Islamic whatsoever!

Why are they "anti-Islamic"? Because "Islam" is just an Arabic short-hand for Submission to the will of the Creator. That includes peacefully accepting everyone and everything in the world. Aggression and killing people in the name of religion is unquestionably against the teachings of Submission (*Islam*).

These groups have entirely invented their own religion. The proof is that they go against God's own words—the holy Quran. The Quran is an unchanged, consistent sacred manual to religious life for all Submitters (*Muslims*). It is the same as it was 1400 years ago when revealed to the prophet Mohammad. If one disobeys the Quran, chooses another source besides it, then one's actions are not "Islamic" (6:19, 6:113-115, 18:27, 42:21, 17:45-46), and are not authorized by God. They represent only that person, not God's religion, nor our Almighty, Most Gracious, Most Merciful God.

The Quran speaks clearly for itself. Here are 3 Big Reasons "Radical Islam" is in fact "anti-Islam".

(1) The Quran says, Thou Shalt Not Kill

Thyself. Suicide Bombers are inherently un-Islamic. Suicide is hugely taboo in Islam. The Quran is totally clear [4:29-31] ... *You shall not kill yourselves. GOD is Merciful towards you. Anyone who commits these transgressions, maliciously and deliberately, we will condemn him to Hell. This is easy for GOD to do. If you refrain from committing the gross sins that are prohibited for you, we will remit your sins, and admit you an honorable admittance.*

(2) The Quran says, Thou Shalt Not Kill Innocents & You Shall Fight in Self-Defense Only.

[17:33] *You shall not kill any person—for GOD has made life sacred...*

[5:87] *O you who believe, do not prohibit good things that are made lawful by GOD, and do not aggress; GOD dislikes the aggressors.*

*Rules of War**

[2:190-191] *You may fight in the cause of GOD against those who attack you, but do not aggress. GOD does not love the aggressors. You may kill those who wage war against you, and you may evict them whence they evicted you. Oppression is worse than murder. Do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque (Masjid), unless they attack you therein. If they attack you, you may kill them. This is the just retribution for those disbelievers. If they refrain, then GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.*

**2:190 All fighting is regulated by the basic rule in 60:8-9. Fighting is allowed strictly in self-defense, while aggression and oppression are strongly condemned throughout the Quran.*

These verses make murder or unprovoked attacks or aggression strictly forbidden. They only permit Submitters (*Muslims*) to defend themselves if under siege.

(3) The Quran says, on Unbelievers—Live and Let Live. There is no need to provoke a war, instead God says be equitable towards the peaceful who have no desire to fight you (60:8-9).

A dedicated chapter of the Quran tells

Submitters (*Muslims*) to leave disbelievers alone; let each worship what they choose. There is no compulsion in religion. It's Chapter 109.

[109:0-6] *In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Say, "O you disbelievers. I do not worship what you worship. Nor do you worship what I worship. Nor will I ever worship what you worship. Nor will you ever worship what I worship. To you is your religion, and to me is my religion."*

[60:8] *GOD does not enjoin you from befriending those who do not fight you because of religion, and do not evict you from your homes. You may befriend them and be equitable towards them. GOD loves the equitable.*

What really is "extreme Islam" if you go by what God says in Quran? Truth be told, a bunch of smiling, happy people, whose lives revolve around peaceful worship of God, prayer, charity, fasting, praise songs, and most of all— practicing Submission. To reiterate, that includes accepting everyone and everything in the world peacefully and equitably (60:8-9). That's Submission. That's Islam.

Submitters to God (*Muslims*) are required to be inherently peaceful because we believe God is in charge (3:109, 6:102, 57:22-23) and thus who are we mere mortals to take away the freedom that God gave to all on Earth (2:256)? Our goal is to be happy, steadfast, truthful, submitting, charitable, and meditate at dawn. We want to advocate righteousness and forbid evil, that includes enjoining people against terrorism and violence. "Extreme Islam" would really be extreme peace through submission to God, to the point of not even opening one's mouth to complain or object to anything! And there are some in my congregation who totally have this down, accepting everything in life with a happy attitude and appreciation of God. We can stand up for our rights and fight in self-defense, but never aggress or oppress or take innocent lives.

MASJID TUCSON United Submitters International

PO Box 43476 Tucson AZ 85733-3476 USA

Tel: (520) 323 7636

internet web site www.masjiduntucson.org

e-mail: info@masjiduntucson.org masjiduntucson@gmail.com

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im comes to an end, they cannot delay it by one hour, nor advance it.

No matter how you look at it, the only one who can ever help is God, Lord of the Universe!

[23:88] Say, "In whose hand is all sovereignty over all things, and He is the only one who can provide help, but needs no help, if you know?"

Lisa

* * * * *

GOD'S GIFT OF HAIR

This article is about appreciating God's design of the hair. God is the best Designer. Your hair begins growing from a root in the bottom of the follicle. The root is made up of cells of protein. Blood from the blood vessels in your scalp feed the root, which creates more cells and makes the hair grow. The hair gets pushed up through the skin as it grows, passing an oil gland along the way. The shape of your follicles determines whether your hair is straight or curly. People with very curly hair have follicles that are oval-shaped, and people with straight hair have round follicles. The kind of hair you have is decided by the genes you get from your parents. Your hair may change its texture when you start be-

coming an adult. If it's straight now, it may become more curly, or it may not.

You are born with all of the hair follicles you will ever have—about five million! About 100,000 of them are on your scalp. Hair grows very fast—male hair grows faster than female hair. You lose about 50 to 100 hairs every day. As you get older, some follicles stop growing hair, leading to balding. While this may be a source of complaint for some people, Submitters know God is in control and they submit to His plan and pray to Him to grant them what is good for the soul.

Like skin, hair can be different colors. It can be blond, brown, black or red, or something in between—like strawberry blond or auburn (red and brown). Like your skin, the color comes from melanin. The more melanin your hair has, the darker its color. If you're born with light hair, it often gets darker as you get older. When you're much older, it will probably turn gray or white.

[30:54] GOD is the One who created you weak, then granted you after the weakness strength, then substituted after the strength weakness and gray hair. He creates whatever He wills. He is the Omniscient, the Omnipotent.

Taking care of your hair doesn't take much. God has given us water and shampoos. With God's help we take care of the body and the hair He gave us by keeping it clean and washing our hair and scalp regularly.

God designed us, including our hair. It

is a gift, as it protects the scalp and other parts of the body. He mentions hair a few times in the Quran. Two references are to cutting our hair after fulfilling the Hajj rituals (2:196, 48:27):

[48:27] GOD has fulfilled His messenger's truthful vision: "You will enter the Sacred Masjid, GOD will-ing, perfectly secure, and you will cut your hair or shorten it (as you fulfill the pilgrimage rituals) there. You will not have any fear. Since He knew what you did not know, He has coupled this with an immediate victory."

And He reminds us that the aging process is a natural part of life, as Zachariah notes: *[19:4] 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.*

Then He gives us a hint as to how overwhelming the Day of Resurrection will be for the disbelievers by using an allegorical description involving the graying of hair: *[73:17] If you disbelieve, how can you evade a day so terrible that it makes the infants gray-haired?*

So, take care of your hair and enjoy the stages that it goes through, always thanking God for the gifts He gives us.

[2:152] You shall remember Me, that I may remember you, and be thankful to Me; do not be unappreciative.

Taareq