

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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The Believers' Shahadah (Proclamation of Faith)

Before we humans were banished to this earth God, Most Merciful, gave us crucial information we would need to redeem ourselves:

[7:172-4] *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." 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?" We thus explain the revelations, to enable the people to redeem themselves.*

[4:36] *You shall worship GOD alone —do not associate anything with Him. ...*

We took a covenant with God to uphold these commandments.

[36:60-2] *Did I not covenant with you, O Children of Adam, that you shall not worship the devil? That he is your most ardent enemy? And that you shall worship Me alone? This is the right path. He has misled multitudes of you. Did you not possess any understanding?*

How did we go wrong? Satan, our most ardent enemy, has once again caused multitudes of humans to disregard our Creator's soul-saving advice. He has whispered to us that there is no harm in associating others with God; we are merely acknowledging and giving respect to God's messengers. Whom should we believe? God, Lord of the Universe, or Satan who duped us before and caused our eviction from Paradise? (7:19-22)

The Quran, God's great gift to us, repeatedly gives us the correct information.

[3:18] *GOD bears witness that there is no god except He, and so do the angels and those who possess knowledge. Truthfully and equitably, He is the absolute god; there is no god but He, the Almighty, Most Wise.*

[37:35] *When they were told, "Lā Elāha Ella Allāh [There is no other god beside GOD]," they turned arrogant.*

[39:45] *When GOD ALONE is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter shrink with aversion. But when others are mentioned beside Him, they become satisfied.*

The Most Gracious further informs us that He sent all of His messengers with the same message (*Shahadah*).

One God/One Message/One Religion [21:25] We did not send any messenger before you except with the inspiration: "There is no god except Me; you shall worship Me alone."

In addition, God gives us enough examples of His messengers to eradicate all doubt.

Noah: [7:59] *We sent Noah to his people, saying, "O my people, worship GOD; you have no other god beside Him. I fear for you the retribution of an awesome day."*

Abraham: [21:56] *He said, "Your only Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, who created them. This is the testimony to which I bear witness.*

Moses: [7:158] *Say, "O people, I am GOD's messenger to all of you. To Him belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. There is no god except He. He controls life and death." Therefore, you shall believe in GOD and His messenger, the gentile prophet, who believes in GOD and His words. Follow him, that you may be guided.*

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Jesus: [3:51] "GOD is my Lord and your Lord; you shall worship Him alone. This is the right path."

Muhammad: [6:19] Say, "Whose testimony is the greatest?" Say, "GOD's. He is the witness between me and you that this Quran has been inspired to me, to preach it to you and whomever it reaches. Indeed, you bear witness that there are other gods beside GOD." Say, "I do not testify as you do; there is only one god, and I disown your idolatry."

Rashad: [13:30] We have sent you (O Rashad) to this community, just as we did for other communities in the past. You shall recite to them what we reveal to you, for they have disbelieved in the Most Gracious. Say, "He is my Lord. There is no god except He. I put my trust in Him alone; to Him is my ultimate destiny."

Hûd: [7:65] To `Âd we sent their brother Hûd. He said, "O my people, worship GOD; you have no other god beside Him. Would you then observe righteousness?"

Jonah: [21:87] And Zan-Noon (Jonah, "the one with an 'N' in his name"), abandoned his mission in protest, thinking that we could not control him. He ended up imploring from the darkness (of the big fish's belly): "There is no god other than You. Be You glorified. I have committed a gross sin."

Joseph: [12:38] "And I followed instead the religion of my ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We never set up any idols beside GOD. Such is the blessing from GOD upon us and upon the people, but most people are unappreciative.

Sâleh: [7:73] To Thamûd we sent their brother Sâleh. He said, "O my people, worship GOD; you have no other god beside Him. Proof has been provided for you from your Lord: here is GOD's camel, to serve as a sign for you. Let her eat from GOD's land, and do not touch her with any harm, lest you incur a painful retribution.

Shu`aib [7:85] To Midyan we sent

their brother Shu`aib. He said, "O my people, worship GOD; you have no other god beside Him. Proof has come to you from your Lord. You shall give full weight and full measure when you trade. Do not cheat the people out of their rights. Do not corrupt the earth after it has been set straight. This is better for you, if you are believers.

Aaron: [20:90] And Aaron had told them, "O my people, this is a test for you. Your only Lord is the Most Gracious, so follow me, and obey my commands."

Elias: [37:125-6] "Do you worship a statue, instead of the Supreme Creator? "GOD; your Lord, and the Lord of your forefathers!"

Unknown [23:32] We sent to them a messenger from among them, saying, "You shall worship GOD. You have no other god beside Him. Would you not be righteous?"

The Quran: Messenger of God
[11:2] Proclaiming: "You shall not worship except GOD. I come to you from Him as a warner, as well as a bearer of good news.

What of those of us who are not messengers? God gives us our examples.

[46:13] Surely, those who say, "Our Lord is GOD," then lead a righteous life, will have no fear, nor will they grieve.

[31:13] Recall that Luqmân said to his son, as he enlightened him, "O my son, do not set up any idols beside GOD; idolatry is a gross injustice."

[18:14] We strengthened their hearts when they stood up and proclaimed: "Our only Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We will never worship any other god beside Him. Otherwise, we would be far astray."

[18:38] "As for me, GOD is my Lord, and I will never set up any other god besides my Lord.

Even the jinns: [72:1-3] Say, "I was inspired that a group of jinns listened, then said, 'We have heard a wonderful Quran. It guides to righteousness, and we have believed in it; we will never

set up any idols beside our Lord. The Most High is our only Lord. He never had a mate, nor a son."

In all the examples God has given in the Quran of believers proclaiming their faith in Him (Shahadah) there is not one who has mentioned any other name with God. The only example in the Quran where this occurs is in 63:1-3.

[63:1] When the hypocrites come to you they say, "We bear witness that you are the messenger of GOD." GOD knows that you are His messenger, and GOD bears witness that the hypocrites are liars.

[63:2] Under the guise of their apparent faith, they repel the people from the path of GOD. Miserable indeed is what they do.

[63:3] This is because they believed, then disbelieved. Hence, their minds are blocked; they do not understand.

God calls these people hypocrites and alerts us to their ultimate destiny.
[4:145] The hypocrites will be committed to the lowest pit of Hell, and you will find no one to help them.

If any person still harbors doubt after all these examples from his Creator, perhaps he/she should choose to be on the safe side and consider Abraham's conclusion. [19:48] "I will abandon you and the gods you worship beside GOD. I will worship only my Lord. By imploring my Lord alone, I cannot go wrong."

Lory

[40:62-5] Such is GOD your Lord, the Creator of all things. There is no god except He. How could you deviate? Deviating are those who disregard GOD's revelations. GOD is the One who rendered the earth habitable for you, and the sky a formidable structure, and He designed you, and designed you well. He is the One who provides you with good provisions. Such is GOD your Lord; Most Exalted is GOD, Lord of the universe. He is the Living; there is no god except He. You shall worship Him alone, devoting your religion absolutely to Him alone. Praise be to GOD, Lord of the universe.

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And the Ravens are Black

Ravens are large, all black birds in the same family as crows and magpies. The Raven has coexisted with humans for thousands of years, and they're looked upon as an annoying pest, a trickster, and a highly intelligent creature. They are skillful hunters, but even more clever in finding easier sources of food. They will follow wolf packs, and then scavenge at the kill, or they will alert the wolves to a dead carcass, and let the wolves tear into it. Then the ravens will come in, grab a piece of meat and fly off before the wolves can react. They have no qualms about eating carrion, don't hesitate to steal eggs or kill small animals, but they're just as happy to eat grain, berries and fruit, and you'll always find them around garbage dumps, feeding on whatever is there.

Just as God says, they are entirely black, right down to their beaks, their eyes and their legs. But God gave ravens so many other wonderful features besides their radiant jet-black color and their resourcefulness in finding food. They are considered a song bird. Their primary call is a raucous sort of "Caw" that can be very harsh-sounding, and can be heard for up to a mile. But they also have a wide range of other sounds, imitating many of the natural and man-made sounds around

them. It's also been observed that they use non-verbal communication—pointing with their beak to indicate an object or holding up an object to get another bird's attention.

They have a clever, fun-loving personality and will often work together to torment a dog or a cat in a yard, always staying just out of reach. Young ravens sometimes slide down snow-banks or snow-covered roofs, just for fun. They put on gymnastic displays mid-air, looping around each other and locking talons, or dropping twigs in order to dive and catch them again. They are excellent and acrobatic fliers on par with falcons and hawks. They put on amazing aerial displays, especially during breeding season, and then they mate for life. Ravens can live up to thirty years, making a nice long marriage. [42:11] *Initiator of the heavens and the earth. He created for you from among yourselves spouses—and also for the animals. He thus provides you with the means to multiply.* They lay three to seven eggs in spring, and when the fledglings fly off, these teenagers group together in large gangs until they find a mate.

Their intelligence has been tested over the years and researchers find them to be good problem solvers, inventive in their solutions. The Quran bears this out. It was the raven who came to show Cain how to bury his brother after he murdered him.

[5:31] *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.*

Both the Bible and Quran indicate that God has made the ravens to be just who they are. He is the One who created them and He is

the One who feeds them. "Who provides nourishment for the ravens when their young ones cry to God, and they rove abroad without food?" (Job 38:41) God is the One who provides for everything. "He [God] giveth to the beasts his food, and to the young ravens which cry." (Psalm 147:9)

Yes, God feeds the young ravens. But what does that mean to us? Jesus put it best when he warned his disciples: "That is why I warn you, do not be concerned for your life, what you are to eat, or for your body, what you are to wear. Life is more important than food and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; they have neither cellar nor barn—yet God feeds them: how much more important you are than the fowls?" (Luke 12:22-24)

The Quran, in 35:27, refers to the raven's color, but the verse begins with the reminder that God is the Provider: *Do you not realize that GOD sends down from the sky water, whereby we produce fruits of various colors? Even the mountains have different colors; the peaks are white, or red, or some other color. And the ravens are black.* [35:27]

So, like the ravens, we need to realize that God provides for us; He gives us enough; He takes care of us. He sends examples from among all His wondrous creatures for us to learn from. The raven, with all his clever character traits, provides us with proof of God's greatness.

[45:3-4] *The heavens and the earth are full of proofs for the believers. Also in your creation, and the creation of all the animals, there are proofs for people who are certain.*

Lydia