

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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God guides

[43:27] *“Only the One who initiated me can guide me.”*

[7:178] *Whomever GOD guides is the truly guided one, and whomever He commits to straying, these are the losers.*

There are many kinds of “guides” in this world. In a museum, you might be given a guided tour by a docent. If you travel to a foreign country you might have a tour guide. In an exotic place, you might need a mountain guide, or a wilderness guide, or a safari guide. In school you often visit the guidance counselor to help you plan your future, and your teacher guides you through the course. In the old west there were scouts for the army to guide troops through Indian country. A theater usher guides you to your seat for the performance.

Guide is defined as a person who advises or shows the way to others. All of the above are examples of people who take the role of guide. It’s often very helpful to rely on these experienced people when we’re unfamiliar with a place or activity.

But as verse 43:27 above tells us, it’s really only God who can guide us.

[2:272] *You are not responsible for guiding anyone. GOD is the only one who guides whoever chooses (to be guided).*

[28:56] *You cannot guide the ones you love. GOD is the only One who guides in accordance with His will, and in accordance with His knowledge of those who deserve the guidance.*

All other guides are just people doing the job that God has assigned for them. They may be very helpful, and we should take advantage of their expertise whenever we need to. We can thank them for their assistance, but above all, thank God for His guidance and for His sending us the helping hand.

Every day in our Contact Prayers we implore God to guide us in the right path (1:6). In 3:8, we pray that God will not let our hearts waver now that He has guided us. Wavering is a dangerous thing; it might cause us to fall into disbelief and lose God’s guidance.

[4:137] *Surely, those who believe, then disbelieve, then believe, then disbelieve, then plunge deeper into disbelief, GOD will not forgive them, nor will He guide them in any way.*

[4:143] *They waver in between, neither belonging to this group, nor that group. Whomever GOD sends astray, you will never find a way to guide him.*

God tells us how to maintain steadfastness and thus receive His guidance.

[4:175] *Those who believe in GOD, and hold fast to Him, He will admit them into mercy from Him, and grace, and will guide them to Him in a straight path.*

[6:82] *Those who believe, and do not pollute their belief with idol worship, have deserved the perfect security, and they are truly guided.*

[39:18] *They are the ones who examine all words, then follow the best. These are the ones whom GOD has guided; these are the ones who possess intelligence.*

[10:9] *As for those who believe and lead a righteous life, their Lord guides them, by virtue of their belief. Rivers will flow beneath them in the gardens of bliss.*

God provided for us in this world some humans for our religious guidance. For example, He has sent many prophets

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and messengers with the true message to worship God alone. These guides, while not alive today, have left their legacy for us to follow. Abraham sought to guide his father (19:43), Moses brought the guidance to Pharaoh and his people (79:19); even the believing Egyptian tried to be a righteous guide (40:38). Each of God's messengers knew that their only job was to deliver the message (5:92, 5:99, 36:17, 64:12); that God was the ultimate guide. [25:31] *We also set up against every prophet enemies from among the guilty. Your Lord suffices as a guide, a master.*

God offers His guidance to everyone, but not everyone will take it. Many people prefer to explore a new place on their own without a guide, and this often causes them to miss some wonderful sites. Sometimes people fail to investigate and find the most knowledgeable guide, so their information may not be as thorough or correct. Similarly, the majority of people will not choose the most Knowledgeable Guide (God) for their salvation; they would rather follow their parents or religious leaders without looking any further.

[16:93] *Had GOD willed, He could have made you one congregation. But He sends astray whoever chooses to go astray, and He guides whoever wishes to be guided. You will surely be asked about everything you have done.*

[19:76] *GOD augments the guidance of those who choose to be guided. For the good deeds are eternally rewarded by your Lord, and bring far better returns.*

[47:17] *As for those who are guided, He augments their guidance, and grants them their righteousness.*

It's ultimately the choice of each individual whether to accept the guidance or go astray, and God knows the choice each of us will make. But He doesn't give up showing the way, and He makes it clear the consequences of our decision.

[9:115] *GOD does not send any people*

astray, after He had guided them, without first pointing out for them what to expect. GOD is fully aware of all things.

According to Cambridge Dictionary, a guide is also a book or piece of information that gives advice or help on how to do or understand something. We have the most accurate, complete and perfect guidebook in the Quran.

[5:15-6] *... A beacon has come to you from GOD, and a profound scripture. With it, GOD guides those who seek His approval. He guides them to the paths of peace, leads them out of darkness into the light by His leave, and guides them in a straight path.*

[17:9] *This Quran guides to the best path, and brings good news to the believers who lead a righteous life, that they have deserved a great recompense.*

Even the righteous among the jinns recognize this "wonderful Quran." [72:2] *"It guides to righteousness, and we have believed in it; we will never set up any idols besides our Lord.*

This is truly our guide to salvation. It's a great gift from God. We know it is complete and fully detailed (6:114-5). It contains everything we need to make it to Heaven. It's a source of comfort when we're troubled. It offers mercy and healing (10:57). It is truly a beacon, a guide. [2:2] *This scripture is infallible; a beacon for the righteous;*

[12:111] *In their history, there is a lesson for those who possess intelligence. This is not fabricated Hadith; this (Quran) confirms all previous scriptures, provides the details of everything, and is a beacon and mercy for those who believe.*

This guidance from the most Knowledgeable Guide is something we need to be very appreciative of. We don't deserve this mercy, but God provides it. [10:25] *GOD invites to the abode of peace, and guides whomever He wills in a straight path.*

[22:24] *They have been guided to the good words; they have been guided in the path of the Most Praised.*

We need to ignore the distractions

from Satan and remember always that God is the only One who can guide us. We want to be worthy of that guidance. [39:36-7] *Is GOD not sufficient for His servant? They frighten you with the idols they set up beside Him. Whomever GOD sends astray, nothing can guide him. And whomever GOD guides, nothing can send him astray. Is GOD not Almighty, Avenger?*

[64:11] *Nothing happens to you except in accordance with GOD's will. Anyone who believes in GOD, He will guide his heart. GOD is fully aware of all things.*

Lydia

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How Blessed We Are

[108:1] *We have blessed you with many a bounty. [108:2] Therefore, you shall pray to your Lord (Salat), and give to charity.*

[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. Indeed, the human being is transgressing, unappreciative.*

We cannot deny that God has blessed us with innumerable bounties. Right from our head to toe, every organ of our body is indeed a magnificent example of God's creation. We use our body organs beneficially without ever realizing the complex system of their working. Take for example the eye, it is one of the most complex organs of our body.

Your eyes start to develop two weeks after you are conceived. Eyes are the second most complex organ after the brain in the human body. An eye is composed of more than two million working parts which can process 36,000 bits of information every hour. We blink over 15,000 times in a day. Out of all the muscles in your body, the

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muscles that control your eyes are the most active. The iris has 256 unique characteristics; hence, iris scans can be used for security purpose. These are a few facts sufficient for us to thank God often. (References: discoveryeye.org, vsp.com)

[23:78] He is the One who granted you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brains. Rarely are you appreciative.

Let us look at another complex organ—the brain—and appreciate some facts.

The brain is one of the largest and most complex organs in the human body. It is made up of more than 100 billion nerves. These nerves communicate through trillions of connections called synapses (junctions). The cortex is the outermost layer of the brain cells, thinking and voluntary movements begin in the cortex. Basic functions like breathing and sleep are controlled by the brain stem. A cluster of structures in the center of the brain coordinate messages between other brain areas. The cerebellum is at the base and at the back of the brain which controls the balance. The frontal lobes of the brain are responsible for problem solving, judgment and motor function. The parietal lobes (upper area, behind the frontal lobe) manage sensation, handwriting and body position. The temporal lobes (at the sides and base) are involved with memory and hearing. The occipital lobes (at the back) contain the brain's visual processing system. (References: nursingassistantcentral.com, bebrainfit.com, epyk.com)

And look at the ear, an amazing and wonderful creation of God. Let's review a few of the noteworthy facts about the ear.

In addition to hearing, our ears also provide us with a sense of balance. There are three small bones in our ear. While they are just like the other bones found within our body, all three of them are so small that they can fit on a penny. In fact, the smallest bone in our whole body is

the stirrup bone, found in our ears. Our internal ear is the size of a pencil eraser but there are more than 20,000 hairs on it. It is interesting to note that our ear drum is less than 0.7 inches in width and only has to move less than a billionth of an inch to do its job. Our ears never shut down, not even while we are sleeping. They still hear sounds, but these sounds are blocked by our brain. Many people don't realize that ears clean themselves, thanks to the ear canal's pores that are able to make cerumen (ear wax) coupled with the cilia (very small hairs) that are found there. While too much of this ear wax can make it difficult for you to hear, it will typically come out on its own. It's also interesting to note that you get a new ear canal every year. The skin here continually increases by approximately 1.3 inches per year. If the old skin didn't drop off, you would have a 2 feet long cord coming out of your ear by the time you're 20-years-old. (References: hearingaids.com, factslegend.org, thesinusdoctor.com)

So, these facts are not only amazing but are also wonderful. We may use these organs every day until we die, without ever realizing how much we are blessed by God. These organs are unmatched with any man-made creations. God has commanded us to be thankful and highlight His blessings upon us. We need to humbly appreciate these blessings of God and never forget the supremacy of God in good times as well as in the bad times.

[93:11] You shall proclaim the blessing your Lord has bestowed upon you.

Appreciating God's blessings humbly and proclaiming them is a very important trait of the righteous.

God has created this earth and made it habitable. If we seriously reflect upon this creation and its enormity, it will compel us to accept the supremacy of God. The existence of the living creatures and non-living things in it follow the precision system of God. But this excellent creation of God is not permanent. God has made

this material world for us to spend our temporary life for a fixed period. I often wonder, if this temporary abode is so wonderful then how will it be in our final and permanent abode. It is beyond our imagination (32:17). Just think about the immense mercy of God. Though we were thrown out of paradise for not accepting the absolute authority of God, He has not left us to struggle on a barren land or at a place without any protection. He has sent us fully equipped with wisdom. He kept on sending the guidance through His messengers, prophets and scriptures. He has stored all the necessary resources required for our survival. He has not at all shown vengeance for not upholding the absolute authority of God. In fact, He has given us a chance to redeem ourselves. I think this is the greatest blessing of God.

[68:49] If it were not for his Lord's grace, he would have been ejected into the desert as a sinner.

If God had ejected us on this earth without any help, then it would have been quite a challenge to pass this exam required for admission to Paradise. When we place our trust in God, we can be assured that He provides for all our needs.

Besides our hearing, eyesight and brains, here are a few blessings we receive from the Lord:

Forgiveness. When you place your trust in God and decide seriously to repent and reform, your sins are washed away. He not only forgives you but also transforms your sins into credit and at times overlooks your lesser sins.

[25:70] Exempted are those who repent, believe, and lead a righteous life. GOD transforms their sins into credits. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

[42:34] He can annihilate them, as a consequence of their own works. Instead, He overlooks many (of their sins).

Freedom. God has given us freedom to choose whichever path we want. There is no compulsion, whether to accept the

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guidance of God or to reject it.

[2:256] There shall be no compulsion in religion: the right way is now distinct from the wrong way. Anyone who denounces the devil and believes in GOD has grasped the strongest bond; one that never breaks. GOD is Hearer, Omniscient.

[10:99] Had your Lord willed, all the people on earth would have believed. Do you want to force the people to become believers?

Connection with God. God has blessed us by keeping His doors open 24/7 to connect with Him. In fact, we have a hot line to Him which we can use any time. We contact Him compulsorily five times a day through Salat. We do not need to spend a single rupee to do this. Further He blesses us with His closeness, when we just commemorate Him and glorify Him by singing His praises.

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

[7:205] You shall remember your Lord within yourself, publicly, privately, and quietly, day and night; do not be unaware.

[33:41] O you who believe, you shall remember GOD frequently. [33:42] You shall glorify Him day and night.

Assurance of eternal abode. It is due to

the immense mercy of God that we are blessed with the knowledge and guidance to reach our final destination of the eternal paradise. We need to fulfil the criteria of following the commandments of God. He has also given us time till the age of forty, which I feel is like the icing on the cake. Further, He has not prohibited us from enjoying His blessings in this world.

[4:57] As for those who believe and lead a righteous life, we will admit them into gardens with flowing streams; they abide therein forever. They will have pure spouses therein. We will admit them into a blissful shade.

The blessings of God upon us are innumerable. There are countless blessings scattered around us right from our birth. How many can I name? We are blessed with good home, good caring parents, good food, pure water, pure air to breathe, wisdom, ability to learn, to walk, to talk, loving spouses, loving children and grandchildren and many more worldly comforts and luxuries. We simply cannot count God's blessings upon us. Fortunately, God has blessed us with the beacon of Submission, so we see and feel His blessings upon us. We should not miss any chance to thank God, to glorify Him and to appreciate His each and every blessing earnestly.

Abdul Ghani

Verses on blessings

[17:87] This is but mercy from your Lord. His blessings upon you have been great.

[93:11] You shall proclaim the blessing your Lord has bestowed upon you.

[3:174] They have deserved GOD's blessings and grace. No harm ever touches them, for they have attained GOD's approval. GOD possesses infinite grace.

[9:72] GOD promises the believing men and the believing women gardens with flowing streams, wherein they abide forever, and magnificent mansions in the gardens of Eden. And GOD's blessings and approval are even greater. This is the greatest triumph.

[16:114] Therefore, you shall eat from GOD's provisions everything that is lawful and good, and be appreciative of GOD's blessings, if you do worship Him alone.

[38:46] We bestowed upon them a great blessing: awareness of the Hereafter.

[40:61] GOD is the One who designed the night so you can rest in it, and the day lighted. GOD bestows many blessings upon the people, but most people are not thankful.