

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Become Fit Through Submission

I often think when we evaluate others or ourselves, we base it on the title of submitter. It reminds me that when you call yourself a submitter it can be something like having joined a gym or fitness club. The important thing for me to remember is: The work doesn't finish when you join the gym. When you join the gym, the work begins.

[49:14] The Arabs said, "We are Mu'mens (believers)." Say, "You have not believed; what you should say is, 'We are Muslims (submitters),' until belief is established in your hearts." If you obey GOD and His messenger, He will not put any of your works to waste. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

We know joining the gym is not enough through verses like *[10:90] We delivered the Children of Israel across the sea. Pharaoh and his troops pursued them, aggressively and sinfully. When drowning became a reality for him, he said, "I believe that there is no god except the One in whom the Children of Israel have believed; I am a submitter."*

He joined but never worked out. He

became like the person in the joke who says: "I've just been to the gym and there's a new machine. I only used it for an hour as I started to feel sick. It's good though, it does everything—Kitkats, Mars bars, Snickers and chips!"

We can take a look at 41:33 to see that 'works righteousness' is part of the verse. The words alone are not enough. *[41:33] Who can utter better words than one who invites to GOD, works righteousness, and says, "I am one of the submitters"?*

I came across an interesting blog post that compares joining a gym to the benefits of a place of prayer.

The author reminds us that people join a gym for personal development. They want to grow. We know how we feel when we haven't exercised or eaten well. We want to do better. How then do our souls feel when we haven't fed them? What happens when we've been distracted in our prayer and irreverent in our meditation? We get hungry and hopefully we remember we've joined submission. The writer says: "Not only do these fitness programs focus on physical health, but they also

contain an element of general self-improvement. They are not about merely maintaining your lifestyle and fitness level—they are about improving. Even the most fit participants are looking to press and challenge themselves. A desire for personal development and health (certainly in the sense of spiritual health) are big motivations for my active faith life. I'm not looking just to maintain some base level of faith practice: there is room for spiritual growth and improvement. There are always ways for me to grow in love and faith and to encounter my faults and failings."

God reminds us that we were created in stages, and we move through stages in our lives. *[71:14] He is the One who created you in stages. [84:19] You will move from stage to stage.*

This is a reminder to me that we can always be looking to make continuous, incremental improvements no matter how small. Otherwise why did we join the gym of submission? We also don't join submission to show off as the joke that says, "I don't always go to the gym, but when

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I do, I make sure Facebook knows about it.”

Another item mentioned were rites. I think of rites as the exercises. If you're like me, you might get a list of exercises upon joining a gym. You might laminate the list, put it in a frame, put it on the wall, but never actually do the exercises! That's not how it works. In order to strengthen our muscles, we need to do the exercises. Joining the gym of submission gives us rites. Abraham's prayers were answered when he said: [2:128] *“Our Lord, make us submitters to You, and from our descendants let there be a community of submitters to You. Teach us the rites of our religion, and redeem us. You are the Redeemer, Most Merciful. We are hopefully one of the communities mentioned in this prayer!*

After we finish our workout, which may last an hour in the case of the gym; we don't forget all about our health and rush out to find unhealthy food to eat. In that same way, when we complete a rite like prayer, we don't forget God after we finish. [2:200] *Once you complete your rites, you shall continue to commemorate GOD as you commemorate your own parents, or even better. Some people would say, “Our Lord, give us of this world,” while having no share in the Hereafter.*

Are we appreciative of the efficiency of GOD's gym? A 5-minute prayer may improve our mood more than if we spent that long at a gym. [22:32] *Indeed, those who reverence the rites decreed by GOD demonstrate the righteousness of their hearts. [22:34] For each congregation we have decreed rites whereby they commemorate the name of GOD for providing them with the livestock. Your god is one and the same god; you shall all submit to Him. Give good news to the obedient.*

The third part mentioned was accountability. Gyms and fitness programs can give you a sense of responsibility. The author mentions:

“Some of these fitness programs are even using social media for greater accountability. November Project, which doesn't require a financial investment, keeps people accountable with online ‘verbals,’ which are commitments to attend a workout. People who don't show are then featured on their ‘We Missed You’ section. Nothing like a little social-media peer pressure to get you out of bed and working out!”

He mentions that his accountability is that people miss him when he is not in attendance. For us, we can and do miss seeing submitters, and the rite of Friday prayer provides that accountability and opportunity. [62:9] *O you who believe, when the Congregational Prayer (Salat Al-Jumu'ah) is announced on Friday, you shall hasten to the commemoration of GOD, and drop all business. This is better for you, if you only knew.*

The fourth idea is discipline. The gym of submission, like other gyms, instills in us the discipline and requires of us discipline. The author says, “Orange Theory straps on a heart-rate monitor before your workout. The goal is to get your heart rate high for a portion of your workout (into the ‘orange zone’), which not only burns calories during the workout, but also boosts your metabolism a full day beyond. That's right—your body is still working out after you're done!”

What is our submission zone? How do we know when we are in it? Can we monitor it and get into it? I know for me, slowing down, doing one thing at a time while remembering God, focusing on the gift of my breath, Quran reading, appreciation, are all tools and workout equipment for me. I know one of the ways I'm in the zone is when I'm present.

Then there is Community. The gym of submission can bring people together. The author says, “Forget about going to the gym alone: these popular fitness programs are all about group participation. And this

might be the most important part. They bring people together and emphasize a spirit of community. All of the fitness programs mentioned involve workouts done in groups, from Yoga sessions to CrossFit WODs. At a Tough Mudder, people hang out at obstacles to help other people get through them, or even just to cheer them on.”

Could you imagine submission where we might look out for obstacles others may face and cheer them through it? [90:17] *And being one of those who believe, and exhorting one another to be steadfast, and exhorting one another to be kind. [103:3] Except those who believe and lead a righteous life, and exhort one another to uphold the truth, and exhort one another to be steadfast.*

Let's think of a pushup as when we could say something to boost our ego, and instead stay silent or praise God instead. Let's think of a bicep curl as each time we submit to what is happening in this moment. The up curl is when we stop and refrain from objecting, the down curl is when we let go, to allow God to use this moment for our own good.

We can't flex our souls in the mirror and admire them. So how do we know when our soul muscles are growing? We can flex our smiles. We can admire our Creator's gift of contentment that He gives to those who grow their souls. A quote by Marcel Proust reminds me that we must take responsibility for our own works in the submitter gym: “We do not receive wisdom, we must discover it for ourselves, after a journey through the wilderness which no one else can make for us, which no one can spare us, for our wisdom is the point of view from which we come at last to regard the world. The lives that you admire, the attitudes that seem noble to you.”

Rizwan

Reference: <https://thejesuitpost.org/2014/10/5-reasons-to-avoid-the-gym-or-why-i-go-to-church/>

Promises

According to Wikipedia, a promise is a commitment by someone to do or not do something. We commit many things to many people, but do we think before we make a promise to someone? What if we can't deliver on our word? Does it really matter? The world isn't going to come to an end, is it? Well, actually no, but have we considered its effect?

There are different kinds of promises we may come across in this world from marriage vows to campaign promises, to "let's do lunch". Some are very solemn, and some are casual. But even casual promises not kept can have consequences. A promise represents honesty, trust and even love. So, when you break a promise, it can indicate that you do not care about these virtues. It implies an arrogance—that your needs are more important than anyone else's.

When we make a promise or a commitment to someone, we need to do our very best to fulfill that promise, and remember to say, "God willing" (18:23-24).

In the light of Quran, fulfilling promises and covenants is an important commandment of God. A true believer will not think of breaking a promise. Fulfilling promises is one of the most important qualities of the righteous person.

[6:152] ... You shall fulfill your covenant with GOD. These are His commandments to you, that you may take heed.

[17:34] ... You shall fulfill your covenants, for a covenant is a great responsibility.

God has decreed great benefits for fulfilling promises in this world and in the hereafter. Apart from creating a righteous and stable society, it elevates the

follower to higher rank and brings him closer to God.

[3:76] Indeed, those who fulfill their obligations and lead a righteous life, GOD loves the righteous.

[3:77] As for those who trade away GOD's covenant, and their obligations, for a cheap price, they receive no share in the Hereafter. GOD will not speak to them, nor look at them, on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them. They have incurred a painful retribution.

God forbids Submitters to break their promises after they have confirmed them. God witnesses everything we say and will call us to account for our sins. God is so Clement that He has excused us for our unintentional promises. At the same time, He has explained in detail the procedure of atonement for breaking intentional promises.

[5:89] GOD does not hold you responsible for the mere utterance of oaths; He holds you responsible for your actual intentions. If you violate an oath, you shall atone by feeding ten poor people from the same food you offer to your own family, or clothing them, or by freeing a slave. If you cannot afford this, then you shall fast three days. This is the atonement for violating the oaths that you swore to keep. You shall fulfill your oaths. GOD thus explains His revelations to you, that you may be appreciative.

God is not pleased with those who are weak in fulfilling their promises. If we swear by God when taking an oath, we must not forget that we made God a guarantor for its fulfillment. It would be an extremely serious offense to break it.

[16:91] You shall fulfill your covenant with GOD when you make such a covenant. You shall not violate the oaths

after swearing (by God) to carry them out, for you have made GOD a guarantor for you. GOD knows everything you do.

[16:92] Do not be like the knitter who unravels her strong knitting into piles of flimsy yarn. This is your example if you abuse the oaths to take advantage of one another. Whether one group is larger than the other, GOD thus puts you to the test. He will surely show you on the Day of Resurrection everything you had disputed.

God's laws are practical and directly related to human behavior. Promises can give us the security that something is being fully guaranteed, just as we know that God never breaks His promise (3:9, 10:55, 30:6, 40:55). False promises put stress that you are guaranteeing something that cannot be verified at that given moment.

Let us today resolve that we will protect ourselves from false promises. May God help us in implementing His commands.

[66:2] GOD has decreed for you the laws dealing with your oaths. GOD is your Lord, and He is the Omniscient, Most Wise.

Abdul Ghani

* * * * *

God's promise vs. Satan's promise

[10:55] Absolutely, to GOD belongs everything in the heavens and the earth. Absolutely, GOD's promise is truth, but most of them do not know.

[17:64] You may entice them with your voice, and mobilize all your forces and all your men against them, and share in their money and children, and promise them. Anything the devil promises is no more than an illusion.

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Letter from Submitter

I have known for a long time that I was a submitter. I go to regular Christian churches for worship, but cannot subscribe to the traditions of man, which always change the desires of God. I have always been a searcher, and I have read 1/2 of the Quran, but I stopped because all the trouble and the rumors I have heard that the 2nd half of the Quran is where it turns mean with the need to kill everyone that does not subscribe to a particular sect and all their ideas.

I was reading a book about the 9/11 Commission Report and ran across the word Hadith, with the word Quran, as though it was another religious source. I looked it up and found the real source of the evil befalling our world. It is so easy to see that Hadith is too vulnerable to the manipulations of man. So much easier to see than when the Christian writings got distorted 2,000 years ago with the writings of Paul, and the early church fathers. But I can see even that, seeing the problem with the Hadith was easy.

I googled Islam without Hadith and there you were. Thank you. I have subscribed to your newsletter and I feel good about this. I am presently moving my house and my Quran has been packed away (after all, I had

stopped reading it thinking it was just leading to the evil parts of America's perception of Islam). After the move I will get it out and start studying again. I feel this brings me closer to my personal search for the will of God. He has always guided me. I do not know why He bothers with someone so unworthy as myself, but I can only be thankful and submit to His Will.

Thank You,

Ann

Letter from Submitter in Texas prison

Assalaamu Alaikum to all the Submitters at Masjid Tucson

I am writing this short missive thanking you for the wonderful service that you have provided both me and the students of Islam over this past year.

We ask that Allah continue to show His favor upon us and you, as we strive with what He has provided us with. You have been a total inspiration to me and the brothers here on this unit who are coming to the understanding of truth as taught by God's messenger of the covenant, Dr. Rashad Khalifa.

I don't know how much longer I will be at this facility, before I am trans-

ferred closer to home, which is in Houston, Texas. I will be in touch, God willing, wherever I go and upon my release. INSHA ALLAH.

I just wanted to say thank you for all your help because you have provided service that no other will.

Timothy

Letter from Submitter in California prison

I pray all is one with you at the Masjid. All is one with myself even in this troubling times. Thanks to Allah; I have faith in Him. After reading the February issue of the Submitters Perspective speaking about happiness, I make my take on the situation or pandemic that's going on with this covid-19. Individuals need to recognize that the only happiness comes from full submission to Allah, anything else is unheard of, that's for me, at least. I'm filled with peace because I'm focused on God and God alone. I pray that all real Muslims believe that and most importantly just remember to keep God first and the rest will be taken care of by God, our heavenly Lord. I pray you stay safe. All praise to Allah.

In solidarity,

Jovon Joseph