

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Kindness in Tests

[29:2] *Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe," without being put to the test?*

As students of the Quran we are very aware of this subject called "Tests". God says He will surely test us, so this is one of the subjects everyone can connect with whenever there is a discussion about it.

There are a lot of articles on tests and the experiences people share with each other about how they overcame their test. Similarly, I too had to go through a test but I am not going to talk about what kind of test it was and how smartly I handled it. Because it was not about me; it was about my believing family who showed great love towards me in that entire test process of mine. It's about them.

The philosopher Shams Tabriz said : *"The universe is a complete unique entity. Everything and everyone is bound together with some invisible strings. Do not break anyone's heart; do not look down on weaker than you. ..."*

So when everything and everyone is connected in some way or the other, that means when one is being tested

by God it's not just a test for him/her **it's also a test for people around him** – his family, his friends and the community in how they are going to treat this person. Will they be hurting him? Will they remind him of what he should or should not have done? Will they show love, kindness, hope, support and all things they can offer to ease his test?

A few believers set a great example for me and taught me about loving, caring and understanding their fellow believers while they are going through their Test. For me in my test, when I felt helpless God made sure one was there to support me. When I felt lonely another was there to give me company. When I was depressed, God sent my family to take care of me making sure I had food on time. When I felt like I had no future ahead, a friend enrolled me into this great institute so I could make a good career and focus on something I like, rather than continue to be stuck in the same place. Thank You God.

"The world is changed by your example, not by your opinion." ~Paulo Coelho

Or to put it in a Quranic perspective,

this is what Abraham prayed for in 26:84 *"Let the example I set for the future generations be a good one."*

The example these believers set for me helped me realize that no matter how many times I read the Quran, observed Salat, memorized Quranic verses, delivered apparently impressive sermons and Quran studies, or how quickly I could calculate the 19 code, it could be lost if I forgot to live by the Quran and instead repelled others from the path of God (16:94). So, if I wanted to make a difference in my life and help others in their spiritual journey, I needed God's help to have kindness, compassion and love in my heart for my believing family. Like how stars add beauty in the sky, flowers to the garden, children to our homes (Maa sha Allah), similarly a believing heart which carries God's love in it can remind people of the beauty of God's creation. Wherever they go, such kind and humble people carry the Quran in their heart. And their actions speak louder than the words one could quote from the verses of Quran.

We sometimes think that helping others means we need to have a lot of

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money. Which is not always the case. God says He will test us through many ways, [2:155] *We will surely test you through some fear, hunger, and loss of money, lives, and crops.* This means sometimes the situation calls for reassurance, kindness and compassion (48:29).

When a believer goes through a test, we may think what they need is a reminder about what they did in the past that caused this test for them. But what they may really need in that situation is support from their real family. Most Submitters are already trying hard to seek God's guidance and forgiveness on their own. So, it may be *our test* in that situation if we incorrectly assume what they need instead of imploring God for His guidance for us to do the right thing.

Of course, reminders are good, in fact, God encourages in the Quran (51:55) *And remind, for the reminder benefits the believers.* But we need to remind in the best possible manner, and we have some beautiful verses from Quran which can help people avoid despair and seek God out of reverence and hope (7:56).

65:2 ... *Anyone who reverences GOD, He will create an exit for him.*

65:4 ... *Anyone who reverences GOD, He makes everything easy for him.*

65:5 ... *Anyone who reverences GOD, He remits his sins, and rewards him generously.*

I heard these reminders from some: You must seek forgiveness, you must have done something wrong! All good is from God and bad from us (4:79)! Yes, this reminder is true, and any reminder from God and His words is good. But this is not the only reminder we can share from Quran. In my test, I appreciated the earlier reminders because I found them more helpful and encouraging.

God says each one of us will be tested. He created each of us unique. Thus, our tests are also designed uniquely for our souls. So, we should remember we may not know the reasons for any-

body else's test and what's going on in their lives. Rather than assuming the worst, we should assume the best as we offer our support, compassion and love as we would to a brother or sister in our family.

God is the best supporter (22:78). God never burdens any soul beyond its ability/means (23:62). And while God does not need us to do anything, I feel it is in my own soul's interest to help someone if God gives me the opportunity to (90:12-17). With God's help, the love and care we show towards a family member will make them feel that they indeed have a family whom they can rely on. This was how those believers treated me when I was going through my test.

In fact Quran teaches us to strive to reach an extraordinary level.

Treat Each Other Amicably

[17:53] *Tell My servants to treat each other in the best possible manner, for the devil will always try to drive a wedge among them. Surely, the devil is man's most ardent enemy.*

Submitters

[41:33] *Who can utter better words than one who invites to GOD, works righteousness, and says, "I am one of the submitters"?* [41:34] *Not equal is the good response and the bad response. You shall resort to the nicest possible response. Thus, the one who used to be your enemy, may become your best friend.* God tells us to work on our responses so that even our enemies become our friends (41:33-34). So we definitely have a greater responsibility when it comes to fellow believers.

All those who follow God's commandments in 2:62 and 5:69 are Submitters. We are united through faith as part of an extended family. We may have some differences, but the common and most important thing between us is our devotion to God alone. It's like we all are travelers on our way to our beloved God. And there are so many paths to reach Him. And we always have something to serve with our co-travelers in this spiritual journey with our spiritual family. If we

have a car, we can give them a lift. If we don't have a car we can walk along with them. If we are blessed with strength, we can carry their baggage, share our food and water. If they fall we can lend them a hand. There are so many ways to serve God and help one another.

One of God's attributes is, He is the Most Merciful. If one truly believes in Him and this quality of His, then one would strive to be merciful, kind and loving towards other creatures.

May God continue to guide us and bless us to show love, mercy, compassion towards our fellow brothers and sisters.

[49:10] *The believers are members of one family; you shall keep the peace within your family and reverence GOD, that you may attain mercy.*

[59:10] ... *"Our Lord, forgive us and our brethren who preceded us to the faith, and keep our hearts from harboring any hatred towards those who believed. Our Lord, You are Compassionate, Most Merciful."*

Mazhar

Racism

God created all humans as descendants of Adam and Eve. [49:13] *O people, we created you from the same male and female, and rendered you distinct peoples and tribes, that you may recognize one another. The best among you in the sight of GOD is the most righteous. GOD is Omniscient, Cognizant.*

We are all from the same race biologically. So, everyone on the planet is a distant relative. Whether it's the queen of England or a pauper. Yes, there are differences among us. But these differences in skin color or other bodily features were put in place so we can recognize one another. Color or ethnicity does not make one human better than another.

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To quote Dr. Douglass Brown: “The word, **race**, literally denotes a species or sub classification of a species. Human beings are one single species—homo sapiens. Contrary to common belief, humans are not composed of different races. The false notion of ‘human races’ is a pseudo-scientific concept born of the misapplication of this term. In large measure, scientists and others who know the true meaning of the word *race* are to blame for either directly perpetuating the *myth of human races*, or not clarifying that humans are one species.

“The notion of any group of people constituting a ‘pure race’ is ludicrous. It is a confirmed scientific fact that all human beings proceeded from the same earthly mother and father.”

[4:1] O people, observe your Lord; the One who created you from one being, and created from it its mate, then spread from the two many men and women. You shall regard GOD, by whom you swear, and regard the parents. GOD is watching over you.

[30:22] Among His proofs are the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors. In these, there are signs for the knowledgeable.

[35:28] Also, the people, the animals, and the livestock come in various colors. This is why the people who truly reverence GOD are those who are knowledgeable. GOD is Almighty, Forgiving.

Wikipedia defines racism: “Racism is the belief that groups of humans possess different behavioral traits corresponding to physical appearance and can be divided based on the superiority of one race over another. It may also mean prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against other people because they are of a different race or ethnicity.”

If people really saw everyone else as a

very distant cousin, they might be able to let go of some misconceptions and biases and ego and selfishness. But our ego works to convince us we are better than someone else. Even when skin color is not a factor, people still oppress others based on other characteristics: poverty, cultural differences, gender, etc. Women as second-class citizens in society, religious oppression—these things don’t go by skin color or ethnicity but still constitute discrimination.

Racism has had a long history, e.g., colonization, slavery, apartheid, Nazism, etc. (unfortunately, it’s a very long list).

Satan was the first racist. He refused to obey an order from God to prostrate before Adam, saying: *[38:76] He said, "I am better than he; You created me from fire, and created him from clay."* And Satan continues to inspire his followers to be arrogant and to treat people badly. Satan loves injustice and arrogance and fear. He does not want peace and harmony. He does not want people to be united. He does not want people to be happy or prosperous.

But Satan can only whisper/invite. It’s up to us to turn back to God. Racism is practiced by the mind / heart / soul not the body. The body is just atoms that come, grow and go away. The problem of ego (arrogance augmented by ignorance) started back before creation during the great feud (38:67-88). And that is compounded by greed and selfishness, a disregard of truth and God’s principles.

We all have some ego, may God forgive us and help us do better. And while none of us are sinless or perfect in our words and actions, by God’s infinite grace and mercy, we’re blessed to have a diverse submitter community. And I think, as long as we’re doing our part to worship God, He protects us from racism / bigotry / oppression. People may call us names or look at us funny, but thank God, we’re very blessed to be able to go about our day without fear of injustice or

oppression.

But that doesn’t take away from the societal problem, which unfortunately still persists. If people stopped to think about simple principles like “treat others like you want to be treated”, they’d be able to do better. But the ego, mental conditioning, selfishness and other human traits get in the way. What’s the solution? Ultimately, to be the best society, we have to worship God alone, prepare for the Day of Judgment, lead a righteous life—being fair and truthful, kind and compassionate, and give everyone maximum freedom and social justice.

[3:104] Let there be a community of you who invite to what is good, advocate righteousness, and forbid evil. These are the winners.

And always remember we all share the same race and ancestry: *[49:13] O people, we created you from the same male and female, and rendered you distinct peoples and tribes, that you may recognize one another. The best among you in the sight of GOD is the most righteous. GOD is Omniscient, Cognizant.*

Faiz

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The Quran and the Bible

[3:109] To GOD belongs everything in the heavens and everything on earth, and all matters are controlled by GOD.

To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. [Deuteronomy 10:14]

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[5:120] To GOD belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth, and everything in them, and He is Omnipotent.

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;
for He founded it on the seas
and established it on the waters.
[Psalm 24:1-2]

[11:123] To GOD belongs the future of the heavens and the earth, and all matters are controlled by Him. You shall worship Him and trust in Him. Your Lord is never unaware of anything you do.

Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power
and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in heaven and earth is Yours.

Yours, LORD, is the kingdom;
You are exalted as head over all.
Wealth and honor come from you;
You are the ruler of all things.
In Your hands are strength and power
to exalt and give strength to all. [1
Chronicles 29:11-2]

[48:7] To GOD belongs all the forces in the heavens and the earth. GOD is Almighty, Most Wise.

[4:132] To GOD belongs everything in the heavens and the earth, and GOD is the only Protector.

Letters from Prisoners

Asalaam Alaikum

Thank you so much for the fruitful knowledge that you send. It is a true blessing that Allah has guided me to you. I hope that it has not been a burden that I have shared such wonderful news with others who have contacted you. Mostly hungry young men seeking truth, and it is not me. It is the Almighty working through me. Without the guidance of Allah it would not be possible.

The Submitters Perspective is always received with joy. Thank you.

Anthony

Peace be upon you,

Praise be to Allah, I received the package you sent to me and I am very grateful for you and the brethren at Masjid Tucson.

The literature you've provided is a blessing. God willing, it will be used to help the submitters here make their Salat properly as well as help newer brothers.

Whenever you have available information and insight, please forward it to me. It will be utilized and propagated with grace. I want to thank you so

much once again for your kindness and support. The students of Islam send their peace and gratitude. My mother truly loves her Quran. She truly loves the Word of God and can't wait for Ramadan to start. I asked her when did she start to prepare for this Ramadan; she said "last Ramadan." All Praise be to Allah!

So, with that I thank you and I thank Allah for all that He has done and is doing in our lives.

Brother Timothy

To the good people at Masjid Tucson

I would like to take the time out and give thanks to you guys for sending me the precious Quran, [translated] by Rashad Khalifa. The true religion (Islam) and the word of God are my main source of peace and serenity in this awful place. Thanks to your help, I'm able to escape the anxieties of prison, which is not always easy to do. We are living in a time where the devil is working at his best with all the distractions we're constantly dealing with. For you guys to take consideration and send me a Quran, really truly meant a lot to me!!! Thank you very much for your efforts. May Allah protect us all, and keep us under His Almighty Grace.

Peace and blessings from a grateful submitter,

Dale, aka Khalil Muhammad