

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

# Submitters Perspective

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## Abuse of Scripture

We believe that the Quran is God's Word and that it is therefore authoritative for us in matters of faith and practice. The Quran indicates the great truths of who God is, how we can relate to Him, how we can understand ourselves and the world. In short, the Quran contains the words of life. Believers use it to guide them in recognising God's will, from the monumental to the mundane. We read it to gain hope as well as to gather truth. It affects our beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour. In short, the Quran is our pipeline to heaven: without it, we are adrift, unprotected in a hostile place. Ironically this final testament is also misconceived, misunderstood and abused to a great extent.

[15:91] *They accept the Quran only partially.*

[25:30] *The messenger said, "My Lord, my people have deserted this Quran."*

[17:45] *When you read the Quran, we place between you and those who do not believe in the Hereafter an invisible barrier.*

In the world media, many articles continue to perpetuate misinformation

and repeat the same common misconceptions, thus giving a distorted picture of what Islam is about, and what the Quran actually says.

These misconceptions are nourished and spread in the world due to false practices followed by so-called Muslims and absurd verdicts issued by Islamic scholars from time to time. Some of the misconceptions related to Quranic teachings are as follows:

**1. Jihad:** The true meaning of *jihad* is widely misunderstood. Jihad is an Arabic word which literally means striving or struggling, especially with a praiseworthy aim. It can have many shades of meaning in an Islamic context, such as struggle against one's evil inclinations, an exertion to convey the message of God, or efforts toward the moral betterment of society, though it is most frequently associated with the Holy War. Some fanatic Islamic groups refer to it as armed struggle against unbelievers. The term has gained additional attention in recent decades through its use by terrorist groups. The word *jihad* appears frequently in the Quran with and without military connotations, often in the idiomatic expression

"striving in the path of God (*al-jihad fi sabil Allah*)". In the modern era, the notion of *jihad* has lost its philosophical relevance and instead given rise to an ideological and political discourse. God has clearly forbidden aggression, but the fanatic Islamic groups fail to understand the following verses.

[2:190] *You may fight in the cause of GOD against those who attack you, but do not aggress. GOD does not love the aggressors.*

[2:193] *You may also fight them to eliminate oppression, and to worship GOD freely. If they refrain, you shall not aggress; aggression is permitted only against the aggressors.*

**2. Prophet Mohammed is the founder of Islam:** Generally Islamic scholars think that the prophet Muhammad from Arabia was the first to introduce Islam. The word "Islam" can be translated as "submission" (to God). A "Muslim" can be translated as one who surrenders or submits (to God). According to the Quran, everything in the universe, willingly or unwillingly, has ultimately submitted to God, thus the basic concept of Submission to God

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

is as old as the universe itself, whereas the practices of Submission such as *Shahada, Salat, Zakat, Suyaam* and *Hajj* came to us through the prophet Abraham.

*[22:78] You shall strive for the cause of GOD as you should strive for His cause. He has chosen you and has placed no hardship on you in practicing your religion—the religion of your father Abraham. He is the one who named you “Submitters” originally. Thus, the messenger shall serve as a witness among you, and you shall serve as witnesses among the people. Therefore, you shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and hold fast to GOD; He is your Lord, the best Lord and the best Supporter.*

**3. Polygamy:** By and large the world thinks that Islam (and the Quran) promotes polygamy and men can marry as many wives as they want. This misconception spread due to the false practice of marrying more than one wife by some ignorant Muslims. The Quran is very clear on this subject, that monogamy is the basis for normal relationships, while polygamy is the exception. The Quranic verse speaking of marrying more than one wife (4:3) relates to marrying the mothers of orphans so they are taken care of. For example, in the aftermath of war, it is likely that many men would have lost their lives, resulting in widows with fatherless children. Thus, the Qur'an allows an exception in these cases so that the needs of the wider community can be met. Men are reminded that they must work hard to treat all of them equitably (4:129), and if they fear that they cannot, they should not engage in polygamy.

*[4:3] If you deem it best for the orphans, you may marry their mothers—you may marry two, three, or four. If you fear lest you become unfair, then you shall be content with only one, or with what you already have. Additionally, you are thus more likely to avoid financial hardship.*

#### 4. Women's rights and Divorce:

God in His infinite wisdom and grace provided numerous verses on women's rights, freedom and divorce. Political and other religious leaders have exploited and oppressed women in numerous ways. Qur'an conveys to us that oppression is worse than murder (2:191, 217). For example: *[81:7-9] The souls are restored to their bodies. The girl who was buried alive is asked: For what crime was she killed?*

In the Qur'an it is clear that there must be a waiting period before a divorce can be made official and divorcing a woman by saying “*talaq*” thrice is forbidden (2:226-7, 2:229, 4:35).

*[2:226] Those who intend to divorce their wives shall wait four months (cooling off); if they change their minds and reconcile, then GOD is For-giver, Merciful. [2:227] If they go through with the divorce, then GOD is Hearer, Knower.*

*[4:35] If a couple fears separation, you shall appoint an arbitrator from his family and an arbitrator from her family; if they decide to reconcile, GOD will help them get together. GOD is Omniscient, Cognizant.*

**5. False punishment practices:** The practice of cutting the hand of the thief is unfortunately acceptable in Gulf countries. It is justified by some as coming from the Qur'an, although this is not true.

*[5:38] The thief, male or female, you shall mark their hands as a punishment for their crime, and to serve as an example from GOD. GOD is Almighty, Most Wise. [5:39] If one repents after committing this crime, and reforms, GOD redeems him. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.*

In verse 5:38 the Arabic word (Iqtaa) means to cut (not cut off, as evident from the same word used in 12:31). Marking the hand of a thief is a form of social pressure to punish the thief that they may repent and reform, and to serve as an example. If we think that God has commanded us to chop off the hands of the thief, then who

will take responsibility for the sustenance of that person? Can we just leave him to die without food? Chopping the hands is irreversible and leaves no room for repentance. A person without hands cannot repay damages either. Therefore, cutting off the hand of a thief cannot be true.

There is another punishment common in some Islamic countries, which is stoning to death as punishment for adultery. In fact, there does not exist this kind of punishment in the Qur'an, yet it is practiced on the basis of traditional narrations called “*Hadith*”. For proven cases of adultery, the following punishment is authorized by God through Qur'an.

*[24:2] The adulteress and the adulterer you shall whip each of them a hundred lashes. Do not be swayed by pity from carrying out GOD's law, if you truly believe in GOD and the Last Day. And let a group of believers witness their penalty.\**

\*24:2 Social pressure, i.e., public witnessing of the penalty, is the basic punishment (see also 5:38). The lashes shall be symbolic, not severe.

*[24:3] The adulterer will end up marrying an adulteress or an idol worshiper, and the adulteress will end up marrying an adulterer or an idol worshiper. This is prohibited for the believers.*

*[4:25] Those among you who cannot afford to marry free believing women, may marry believing slave women. GOD knows best about your belief, and you are equal to one another, as far as belief is concerned. You shall obtain permission from their guardians before you marry them, and pay them their due dowry equitably. They shall maintain moral behavior, by not committing adultery, or having secret lovers. Once they are freed through marriage, if they commit adultery, their punishment shall be half of that for the free women. Marrying a slave shall be a last resort for those unable to wait. To be patient is better for you. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.*

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

In the above-mentioned verses, there are three important points to prove that stoning to death punishment is absurd. (1) Only hundred lashes are commanded for this offence. (2) The adulterer will marry an adulteress. Now how is it possible to marry two dead persons? (3) There will be half the punishment to the adulterer or adulteress if that person was a slave before marriage. Now just imagine how will you half stone to death? Is this not a mockery of the commandment of God?

**6. Hijab:** It is given to understand that Muslim women must cover their whole body, including the face when in public. Women's dress code in Islam is one of the most discussed subjects not only in the Western media but also in Muslim countries, yet it remains one of the most distorted and misunderstood. The reality is quite different. The dress code criteria mentioned in Qur'an are as follows.

[33:59] *O prophet, tell your wives, your daughters, and the wives of the believers that they shall lengthen their garments. Thus, they will be recognized (as righteous women) and avoid being insulted. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.*

[7:26] *O children of Adam, we have provided you with garments to cover your bodies, as well as for luxury. But the best garment is the garment of righteousness. These are some of GOD's signs, that they may take heed.*

[24:30] *Tell the believing men that they shall subdue their eyes (and not stare at the women), and to maintain their chastity. This is purer for them. GOD is fully Cognizant of everything they do.*

*\*24:30-31 Dressing modestly, therefore, is a trait of the believing men and women. The minimum requirements for a woman's dress is to lengthen her garment (33:59) and to cover her chest. Tyrannical Arab traditions have given a false impression that a woman must be covered from head to toe; such is not*

*a Quranic or Islamic dress.*

[24:31] *And tell the believing women to subdue their eyes, and maintain their chastity. They shall not reveal any parts of their bodies, except that which is necessary. They shall cover their chests, and shall not relax this code in the presence of other than their husbands, their fathers, the fathers of their husbands, their sons, the sons of their husbands, their brothers, the sons of their brothers, the sons of their sisters, other women, the male servants or employees whose sexual drive has been nullified, or the children who have not reached puberty. They shall not strike their feet when they walk in order to shake and reveal certain details of their bodies. All of you shall repent to GOD, O you believers, that you may succeed.*

The garment of righteousness or piety could refer to choosing a garment that reflects the quality of oneself. The righteous and pious conduct is the best garment of modesty. What women learn from the verses is to lengthen their garments, cover their chests and avoid striking their feet while walking so as not to shake and reveal certain details of their bodies. And lastly the most important command is for all of us to subdue our eyes.

These are a few major misconceptions and misunderstandings by which the scripture is abused largely. There are many more. God is Most Gracious, Most Wise. Whoever repents after his wrongdoing and makes amends, then God will forgive and guide him. Truly, God is Forgiving, Merciful. May God guide us and provide us the wisdom to understand Qur'an in its true sense and implement its teaching in our day to day life.

Abdul Ghani

*The Quran is All We Need*

[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.*

## Why Reject Hadith and Sunnah?

For most Muslims *Hadith* (the reported sayings of the prophet Muhammad) and *Sunnah* (the reported actions of Muhammad) form a major portion of their religious understanding and practice. With so many followers of Islam using these sources, why do I reject them as part of my religion?

For the first part of my answer let's take a short look at the history of Submission (Islam) as God gives it to us in the Quran. We know from Verse 22:78 that Abraham first used the term "Submitters" (Muslims) and God founded Submission (Islam) through Abraham. Yet we do not follow Abraham's Hadith and Sunnah. Instead we follow the practices of the religion that God blessed us to have through Abraham and God's own words—the Quran, which He sent to mankind through Muhammad.

When I first became a Muslim, all I knew about was traditional Islam. And so I began trying to become a traditional Muslim. I read reams of confusing instructions on how to live as a Muslim. It seemed overwhelming.

I tried to read the Hadith, which I had been told I must read in order to understand the Quran. By this time I had been reading the Quran for about five years and it was clear and understandable to me. But when I read the Hadith I was totally confused. They made little sense to me, especially as they often contradicted each other. It wasn't until a few years later when a friend pointed out the following verses that the distinction between them became clear to me:

39:28-29 *An Arabic Quran, without any ambiguity, that they may be righteous. God cites the example of a man who deals with disputing partners (Hadith), compared to a man who deals with only one consistent source (Quran). Are they the same? Praise be to God; most of them do not know.*

Even more important for my guidance, God tells us in several verses of the Quran not to follow any other sources besides His words

(Continued on page 4)

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*(Continued from page 3)*

for our religion. Here are some of those verses:

*6:114-115 - Shall I seek other than God as a source of law, when He has revealed to you this book fully detailed? Those who received the scripture recognize that it has been revealed from your Lord, truthfully. You shall not harbor any doubt.*

*The word of your Lord is complete, in truth and justice. Nothing shall abrogate His words. He is the Hearer, the Omniscient.*

*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.*

*39:23 - God has revealed herein the best Hadith; a book that is consistent, and points out both ways (to Heaven and Hell)....*

*45:6 - These are God's revelations that we recite to you truthfully. In which Hadith other than God and His revelations do they believe?*

*77:50 - Which Hadith, other than this, do they uphold?*

God also tells us that if Muhammad had delivered other teachings besides the Quran he would have been punished and the revelations given through him would have stopped.

*69:44-47 - Had he uttered any other teachings. We would have punished him. We*

*would have stopped the revelations to him. None of you could have helped him.*

All of these verses make it clear that God wants us to follow only His words. He does not want us to follow any other source for our religion as 6:114-115 above say.

If God does not want us to follow these sources, when and why did they get started?

According to Wikipedia the first Hadith were not recorded until many generations after Muhammad's death. Then the Hadith were reviewed and collected "into large collections during the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunnah>), [also] generations after the death of Muhammad... over 1,000 km (620 mi) from where Muhammad lived."

And according to the Britannica website the Sunnah was finally codified in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, neither the Hadith nor the Sunnah was written down for many generations after the prophet's death and also many generations after the lives of any actual eye witnesses to the events of that time.

As for why Muslims began deviating from the clear commandments of the Quran and began recording and using the Hadith and Sunnah, we have only to look to the following passage from the Quran, which describes Satan's reaction after he refused to follow God's command to prostrate before Adam:

*7:16-17 - "...I will skulk for them on Your straight path. I will come to them from be-*

*fore them, and from behind them, and from their right, and from their left, and You will find that most of them are unappreciative."*

Also, we know that most humans are idolatrous by nature:

*12:106 - The majority of those who believe in God do not do so without committing idol worship.*

Finally, God's system requires that all believers must go through the test, so He allows fabrications to develop as part of that test:

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

*6:112 - We have permitted the enemies of every prophet—human and jinn devils—to inspire in each other fancy words, in order to deceive. Had your Lord willed, they would not have done it. You shall disregard them and their fabrications.*

From my own experience I understand how difficult many find it to give up the Hadith and Sunnah, which they followed for their whole lives. It did not happen all at once for me, but once I made the decision to follow only God's own words in His Holy Quran, my life began to blossom in ways I could not have imagined. Now I am happier than I ever knew was possible. All praise and glory goes to my Creator!

[Adapted from: <https://medium.com/the-heart-of-quran/why-reject-hadith-and-sunnah-15d203c59a37>]

Lisa