

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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GOD GIVES EVERY CREATURE WHAT IT NEEDS

He created the earth for all creatures. [55:10]

...There is not a creature that He does not control. [11:56]

God created every single creature on earth. *He knows its course and its final destiny. [11:6]*

He precisely designed every creature, designed it to fit perfectly into its niche in this world. The camel would have a very hard time surviving in the rain forest. God gave the camel adaptations to allow it to live perfectly in the desert. Conversely, put a penguin down in the Sahara Desert and it won't survive long. It's not adapted for the dry sand, and it needs oceans to feed in.

[29:60] Many a creature that does not carry its provision, GOD provides for it, as well as for you. He is the Hearer, the Omniscient.

[42:19] GOD is fully aware of all His creatures; He provides for whomever He wills. He is the Powerful, the Almighty.

One adaptation I found especially interesting concerns tigers and their

domesticated feline relatives. There is something called a hyoid bone present in man and many other mammals. It's in the throat and allows for movements of the tongue, pharynx and larynx. God designed this bone differently for big and for small cats, giving each of them what they need. According to Seaworld.org:

"The elastic hyoid, combined with the fibroelastic tissue on top of the big cats' undivided vocal folds, acts like a slide trombone, enabling the big cats to roar Because of the elastic hyoid, big cats can purr only when breathing out. The hyoid of smaller cats is solid bone. These cats can purr when breathing both in and out, but they can't roar."

I found this very interesting. It's a great example of God's incredible plan for His creatures.

Tigers don't need to purr; they need to roar. Their survival may depend on it. They range over hundreds of miles and must communicate over these vast distances. They warn invaders that this is their territory; stay away. To hear a big cat roar—well, there's no question of the ferocity, confidence,

and majesty of a creature who can roar.

But a roar would be a huge disadvantage to an animal who is meant to live indoors and share life with humans. Most people who take a cat into their home want a soft, cuddly creature, a creature who can sit in their lap. They don't want an animal that scares them to death every time it opens its mouth!

So God gave each creature what it would need to survive in this world. The lion and tiger can loudly and firmly communicate their presence and their power. The tabby and the calico meow demurely (or insistently) to be fed, and then cuddle on your lap and purr as you stroke them. We find this purring sound soothing and rewarding. We feed the cat so he doesn't have to hunt, and he repays us with his purr. And probably in its own way, the roar and the purr serve the same function—each cat is claiming its territory. What amazing creations of God.

[42:29] Among His proofs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the creatures He spreads in them. He is able to summon them, when He wills.

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Like the camel adapted to his desert environment or the penguin suited to life in Antarctica, like the tiger with his roar and the tabby with his purr, so too God has given to humans everything we need.

The Quran: Everything We Need [18:109] Say, "If the ocean were ink for the words of my Lord, the ocean would run out, before the words of my Lord run out, even if we double the ink supply."

These Are All the Words We Need [31:27] If all the trees on earth were made into pens, and the ocean supplied the ink, augmented by seven more oceans, the words of GOD would not run out. GOD is Almighty, Most Wise.

What a great gift from God. He created us, just as he created the camel and the tiger, and He knows what it is that each of us needs. He lists in the Quran some of our needs, reminding us that we need to be thankful that God fulfills our needs.

[36:35] This is to provide them with fruits, and to let them manufacture with their own hands whatever they need. Would they be thankful?

[40:79] GOD is the One who created the livestock for you; some you ride, and some you eat. [40:80] They also provide you with additional benefits that satisfy many of your needs. On them, as well as on the ships, you are carried.

[41:10] He placed on it stabilizers (mountains), made it productive, and He calculated its provisions in four days, to satisfy the needs of all its inhabitants.

Ultimately all we ever really need is God: *[35:15] O people, you are the ones who need GOD, while GOD is in no need for anyone, the Most Praiseworthy.*

And God, most generously, gives us the Quran, this amazing book to help

us everyday. We know that the Quran contains all the words we need. God didn't leave anything out of the Quran (6:38).

The Quran is "glorious" (50:1, 85:21). It is full of proof and full of wisdom (38:1, 27:1, 36:1-2). It's a beacon (27:2, 5:15-6). It's a mercy and a healing (7:52, 17:82).

The Quran is a special revelation: *[76:23] We have revealed to you this Quran; a special revelation from us.* It brings good news as well as warnings. It provides so many examples for us to study and learn from: *[39:27] We have cited for the people every kind of example in this Quran, that they may take heed.*

It's even a messenger of God: *[11:1] A.L.R. This is a scripture whose verses have been perfected, then elucidated. It comes from a Most Wise, Most Cognizant. [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.*

As the subtitle for 17:9 says, the Quran is our means to salvation. If we follow it, if we take heed of its warnings, if we study it, then through the Quran, God will provide everything we need.

Quran: Our Means to Salvation [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.

[7:204] When the Quran is recited, you shall listen to it and take heed, that you may attain mercy.

[54:17] We made the Quran easy to learn. Does any of you wish to learn?

What a gift from God. All the words we need, mercy, healing, profound truth, and our best means to salvation.

To succeed in their world, the lion and the tiger need to roar, so God has designed them to roar. To succeed in your home, the kitten needs to purr, so God gave them the mechanism and

the instinct to do those things that are pleasing to humans. For us to succeed both in this world and in the Hereafter, we need to seek the ways and means to God and He has provided us with all the tools we need. May we always be appreciative of the wondrous things God has put in this world, and may we steadfastly persevere to stay on the right path.

[6:38] All the creatures on earth, and all the birds that fly with wings, are communities like you. We did not leave anything out of this book. To their Lord, all these creatures will be summoned.

Lydia

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JIHAD

The name Islam has become synonymous with jihad, terrorism, violence, fanaticism and suicide bombings. The word "Jihad" does not mean "holy war" as that is a concept which does not have basis in the Quran. The word Jihad is derived from *Jahd* or *Juhd* which means a striving, an ability or a continual endeavour to the greatest capacity as granted by God. I understand there being 2 different aspects of Jihad. 1) against Satan and all enemies of God and His religion, and 2) against the evil inclinations of our inner self. The biggest struggle we have to conquer is our rebellious nature and ego and the devil within us who promotes deceit, desire, greed and revenge. The objective is not to propagate Islam but to subdue tyrannical forces which do not allow the freedom of worship of God alone. This constant struggle against evil is at two levels: within and without, internal and external. The struggle within is against a human's lower and evil impulses such as greed and lust, aggressiveness and anger. The struggle without is against evil and wrong, oppression and persecution of the weak by the strong.

Jihad also refers to the performance of

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noble deeds, refining our character and to come closer to God and achieve his Grace. [29:69] *As for those who strive in our cause, we will surely guide them in our paths. Most assuredly, GOD is with the pious.*

We have to make a firm commitment to uphold the truth. All prophets, messengers and martyrs showed a firm resolve and a confidence in God and they were ultimately blessed with success.

[29:6] *Those who strive, strive for their own good. GOD is in no need for anyone.*

Another great Jihad would be to strive ceaselessly against ignorance and to spread knowledge to those who need it. If we have the God-given intellect, we could help others for their emancipation in the path of true Submission to God alone. This is why we don't have a Chapter entitled *The Sword* but rather *The Pen*. In fact, there is no mention of a sword in the Quran (though there is mention of shields). We should strive in the way of God with all our faculties to promote justice and truth. [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....*

War is permissible but for self-defense and within well-defined boundaries to restore peace and the freedom to worship God alone. So we cannot initiate hostilities. [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.*

War is permissible only when there are no other options left. All acts of war should cease immediately when the objective is achieved. The rules of war and captives were set out long before the Geneva Convention.

[2:191-192] *You may kill those who wage war against you, and you may evict them whence they evicted you. Oppression is worse than murder. Do not fight them at*

the Sacred Mosque (Masjid), unless they attack you therein. If they attack you, you may kill them. This is the just retribution for those disbelievers. If they refrain, then GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

Furthermore, there will be unbelievers who are not at war with you. They should be shown kindness and equality.

[60:8] *GOD does not enjoin you from befriending those who do not fight you because of religion, and do not evict you from your homes. You may befriend them and be equitable towards them. GOD loves the equitable.*

Unambiguously, the Quran states that any acts of terror are condemned.

[7:56] *Do not corrupt the earth after it has been set straight, and worship Him out of reverence, and out of hope. Surely, GOD's mercy is attainable by the righteous.*

God is the One who has set the earth and universe in order by commanding all natural forces to work in a regulated and fully coordinated manner. So we are directed to work in a proper manner using His guidance and not create any social or moral chaos. [55:7] *He constructed the sky and established the law. [55:8] You shall not transgress the law. [55:9] You shall establish justice; do not violate the law.*

How can people think that this great religion of Submission / Islam condones terrorism when the Quran preaches:

[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.*

We are commanded to be courteous to all people. They are also creations of God whether believer or pagan and we can set a good example by finding common grounds of belief with them. We must be courteous, kind and truthful with them.

[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.

When we explain to others about Submission, we must be gentle, considerate and not offensive, inflexible or self-righteous. We can thus avoid confrontation, people would be attracted, the atmosphere would be amiable and dialogues made easier.

[29:46] *Do not argue with the people of the scripture (Jews, Christians, & Muslims) except in the nicest possible manner—unless they transgress— and say, “We believe in what was revealed to us and in what was revealed to you, and our god and your god is one and the same; to Him we are submitters.” [16:125] You shall invite to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kind enlightenment, and debate with them in the best possible manner. Your Lord knows best who has strayed from His path, and He knows best who are the guided ones.*

So we can enlighten people and help refine their conduct and behavior. Yet we must respect their cultures and traditions and not try to forcibly indoctrinate them.

It is also wrong to stereotype all Muslims as terrorists. There are Catholics and Protestants too who fought several bloody wars, the Crusades, the Inquisition—all in intentional defiance of the teachings of Christ. (Matthew 5:39) *But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. (Luke 6:29) To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either.*

Each and every person is accountable to God alone. [53:38-39] *No soul bears the sins of another soul. Every human being is responsible for his own works.*

We can even perform Jihad with our wealth and influence in the way of God, which can be utilised effectively for the welfare of others. It will have value and

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significance. We must not just condemn terrorism but do something which has a decisive effect. We have to set a good example ourselves and educate others by kind acts etc.

[8:72] Surely, those who believed, and emigrated, and strove with their money and their lives in the cause of GOD, as well as those who hosted them and gave them refuge, and supported them, they are allies of one another... [9:41] You shall readily mobilize, light or heavy, and strive with your money and your lives in the cause of GOD. This is better for you, if you only knew.

Suicide bombers are generally the alienated, economically deprived and uneducated. Self-appointed mullahs indoctrinate them against those they presume guilty and then brainwash them into thinking they have a one-way ticket to Paradise where the 72 Houris await them. They propagate this as Jihad.

The two main crimes they commit are: firstly, that they promote suicide.

Murder, Suicide, and Illicit Gains Prohibited [4:29] O you who believe, do not consume each others' properties illicitly—only mutually acceptable transactions are permitted. You shall not kill yourselves. GOD is Merciful towards you.

[2:195] You shall spend in the cause of GOD; do not throw yourselves with your

own hands into destruction. You shall be charitable; GOD loves the charitable.

Secondly, we have the wanton killing of innocent humans and malicious acts of destruction which are against the spirit of the humanitarian law of the Quran. A suicide act is one of cowardice involving deceit and treachery, not the traits of a true Submitter.

[5:32] Because of this, we decreed for the Children of Israel that anyone who murders any person who had not committed murder or horrendous crimes, it shall be as if he murdered all the people. And anyone who spares a life it shall be as if he spared the lives of all the people. Our messengers went to them with clear proofs and revelations, but most of them, after all this, are still transgressing.

The word “person” is mentioned here. The person may belong to any faith or perhaps have no faith at all. With regard to unbelievers God reveals *[109:6] “To you is your religion, and to me is my religion.”* Compulsion too is rejected by the verse *[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.*

The Quran does not ask us to sit back and be stagnant but rather be dynamic and move swiftly to aid the less fortunate.

Higher Ranks for the Strivers

[4:95] Not equal are the sedentary among the believers who are not handicapped, and those who strive in the cause of GOD with their money and their lives. GOD exalts the strivers with their money and their lives above the sedentary. For both, GOD promises salvation, but GOD exalts the strivers over the sedentary with a great recompense.

Indiscriminate killing of humans regardless of when and where they take place must be unequivocally condemned. Our great religion is compassionate and respects the sanctity of life. Insha Allah, we have to wage a “Jihad” against sin, enforce the right and evict the wrong.

Alim

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The Winners

[9:71] The believing men and women are allies of one another. They advocate righteousness and forbid evil, they observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and they obey GOD and His messenger. These will be showered by GOD's mercy. GOD is Almighty, Most Wise.

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.