

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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How to Treat Others and Why

Sometimes I find myself aggravated with others. I am impatient with them, or bored with the situation, or caught in some other negative train of thought. When this happens, it always helps me to remember the scriptures' excellent advice to treat others in the best way possible:

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. (17:53)

In fact, God tells us to regard everyone: *You shall worship GOD alone—do not associate anything with Him. You shall regard the parents, the relatives, the orphans, the poor, the related neighbor, the unrelated neighbor, the close associate, the traveling alien, and your servants. GOD does not like the arrogant show-offs. (4:36)*

The Bible tells us that Jesus taught with very similar words: Do unto others as you would like them do unto you. (Luke 6:31)

I find that when I follow this good

advice, the situation almost always changes from frustration and aggravation on my part to a comfortable peace with the other person. It gives me the added benefit of helping me work on subduing and, God willing, eventually killing my ego as Moses told the Children of Israel they must do:

Recall that Moses said to his people, "O my people, you have wronged your souls by worshiping the calf. You must repent to your Creator. You shall kill your egos. This is better for you in the sight of your Creator." He did redeem you. He is the Redeemer, Most Merciful. (2:54)

Since we know that Satan tricked Adam and Eve into eating from the only tree which God forbade for them (7:19-25) we should work hard to kill our egos and grow our souls by performing the religious duties God blessed us with. Then we can withstand God's immense energy in the Hereafter and be close to Him:

Had we willed, we could have given every soul its guidance, but it is

already predetermined that I will fill Hell with jinns and humans, all together. (32:13)*

**32:13 The majority of humans "insist" upon going to Hell, by choosing to ignore God's invitations to redeem them. God will not put a single person in Hell. Those who fail to redeem themselves by denouncing idolatry and devoting themselves to God ALONE, and fail to develop their souls through the practices prescribed by our Creator, will have to run to Hell on their own volition. They will be too weak to stand the physical presence of God's energy.*

Again, the Bible gives similar advice: "Look at the proud! They trust in themselves, and their lives are crooked. But the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God." (Habakkuk 2:4)

When I follow this advice, I do not hurt other people and incur the black mark of sin for it. Often my change in attitude allows a friendship or a deepening of one to grow between us. This illustrates one more advantage of following the guidance that God has sent to us through the scriptures.

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Many years ago, even before I ever read the Quran, I experienced the truth of yet another of its verses. At the time I was living in a spiritual community in my hometown. Jim came to join us from one of the eastern states of the US. He had a somewhat abrasive personality initially, possibly as a cover for shyness. I don't remember exactly why we were at odds, but I found that my being kind to him changed the situation so dramatically that he became one of my friends.

Though I didn't know then about this verse in the Quran, I recognized it when I first read it several years later: *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. (41:34)*

And the Bible teaches: "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matthew 22:37-39)

I realized then that once again God's guidance had manifested in my life. *[3:73] Say, "The true guidance is GOD's guidance...."*

[2:38] We said, "Go down therefrom, all of you. When guidance comes to you from Me, those who follow My guidance will have no fear, nor will they grieve.

[31:18] "You shall not treat the people with arrogance, nor shall you roam the earth proudly. GOD does not like the arrogant showoffs.

[3:8] "Our Lord, let not our hearts waver, now that You have guided us. Shower us with Your mercy; You are the Grantor.

Patience

[21:37] The human being is impatient by nature. I will inevitably show you My signs; do not be in such a hurry.

God is the one who created us and He knows us best. And in this verse He is telling us that this is one of the qualities that He knows about us. We are impatient by nature. This is just one of our many weaknesses as human beings. And God tells us so.

[4:28] GOD wishes to lighten your burden, for the human being is created weak.

Ok, so, we are weak and impatient by nature. Yet God commands us to be patient! You know it will not be easy.

[16:126] And if you punish, you shall inflict an equivalent punishment. But if you resort to patience (instead of revenge), it would be better for the patient ones.

[16:127] You shall resort to patience—and your patience is attainable only with GOD's help. Do not grieve over them, and do not be annoyed by their schemes.

[Proverbs 14:29] Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one who is quick tempered displays folly.

Surely, patience is one of our most common tests. Think of how many things in life we can get impatient about—traffic, waiting in a line at the store, children, other people, Heinz ketchup!

When you are impatient, you also feel annoyed, agitated, edgy and frustrated. You behave as if everything and everyone is against you; you're long-suffering and discontented. But when you are patient, your feelings are calmer and more relaxed. You react to things with composure, tolerance, poise and self-control.

During the pandemic, I had to wait

almost two years to see my son Daniel. Praise God that at least during that time we had technology to stay in touch, I knew he was alive and well the entire time. But what about Jacob? When Joseph's brothers came back from throwing Joseph in the well, they produced a shirt with fake blood on it. Jacob was wise enough to know that it was fake blood.

[12:18] They produced his shirt with fake blood on it. He said, "Indeed, you have conspired with each other to commit a certain scheme. All I can do is resort to a quiet patience. May GOD help me in the face of your conspiracy."

Jacob knew his sons had conspired and he didn't think Joseph was dead. We know he lost him as a boy, but what we don't know is exactly how many years passed until they were reunited in Egypt. Based on the story one may deduce that it was at least 15 years, and it could have been decades.

[12:83] He said, "Indeed, you have conspired to carry out a certain scheme. Quiet patience is my only recourse. May GOD bring them all back to me. He is the Omniscient, Most Wise." [12:84] He turned away from them, saying, "I am grieving over Joseph." His eyes turned white from grieving so much; he was truly sad. [12:85] They said, "By GOD, you will keep on grieving over Joseph until you become ill, or until you die." [12:86] He said, "I simply complain to GOD about my dilemma and grief, for I know from GOD what you do not know. [12:87] "O my sons, go fetch Joseph and his brother, and never despair of GOD's grace. None despairs of GOD's grace except the disbelieving people."

Think about this, all those years Jacob knew deep down Joseph was alive. He said to his sons, "Go fetch Joseph". Think about how patient Jacob was.

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Lisa

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And ultimately he was rewarded, by God's grace, reuniting with Joseph and the reunification of his entire family.

Think about Noah who stayed with his people 950 years! How patient was he? Having his people laugh at him and his family while building his ark made of logs and ropes.

[11:49] This is news from the past that we reveal to you. You had no knowledge about them² neither you, nor your people² before this. Therefore, be patient. The ultimate victory belongs to the righteous.

We also learn from the Quran that even the prophets of God exhibit human qualities. The story of Moses and his teacher is an illustration of this:

[18:66] Moses said to him, "Can I follow you, that you may teach me some of the knowledge and the guidance bestowed upon you?" [18:67] He said, "You cannot stand to be with me.

[18:68] "How can you stand that which you do not comprehend?" [18:69] He said, "You will find me, GOD willing, patient. I will not disobey any command you give me."

But Moses was not patient and on three different occasions Moses questioned the teacher's actions when he was specifically told not to, and the teacher forced them to part ways. But ultimately Moses showed his patience by submitting to God, going to Egypt, approaching Pharaoh many times asking him to let the Children of Israel go.

And God mentions other messengers...

[21:85] Also, Ismail, Idris, Zal-Kifl; all were steadfast, patient.

God tells us to have patience when dealing with disbelievers. We see Satan running amok on this planet through the internet, instantaneous news, and all kinds of evil caused by disbelieving unrighteous people. If we let ourselves

get sucked into all the bad stuff it can have a very negative effect on us.

Learn From History

[40:53] We have given Moses the guidance, and made the Children of Israel inherit the scripture. [40:54] (Their history) is a lesson and a reminder for those who possess intelligence. [40:55] Therefore, be patient, for GOD's promise is true, and ask forgiveness for your sin, and glorify and praise your Lord night and day. [40:56] Surely, those who argue against GOD's revelations without proof are exposing the arrogance that is hidden inside their chests, and they are not even aware of it. Therefore, seek refuge in GOD; He is the Hearer, the Seer.

When God talks about the arrogant disbelievers who reject his proofs and disbelieve in the scripture, He tells us: *[40:77] You shall be patient, for GOD's promise is truth. Whether we show you some of (the retribution) we have promised for them, or terminate your life before that, they will be returned to us*

God knows we are weak. He wants us to strive and overcome the tests He has prepared for us. He wants us to choose the difficult path, which sometimes requires great patience. So, the next time you're stuck in line, or some other time-sensitive issue is causing you irritation and frustration, use that precious time to think about God and be appreciative of His uncountable blessings. We can turn a negative trait—impatience—into a positive one—appreciation. Praise God.

Bob

Write for the Submitters Perspective

We appreciate your contributions to the *Submitters Perspective* in the form of articles, comments and suggestions. Please do not hesitate to contact us at: info@masjdtucson.org

Conference Report 2023

[16:18] If you count GOD's blessings, you cannot possibly encompass them. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

The 38th annual conference of United Submitters International was held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada on July 28-30, 2023. "Are we worth it?" That was the question asked in the khutba given by brother Sanad. God does so much for us all the time; do we do enough for our souls? Are we appreciative? God willing, we will keep striving to be always thankful and do our best to be worthy of God's immense mercy.

How wonderful to have a big crowd able to attend this year's conference. About 150 submitters came together from all over the world. The greetings as we registered are always so full of joy. To be able to hug one another and be with our real family is such a gift from God.

We had a fun session of getting to know one another with questions from the Quran for all of us to ponder. And then we met about 20 newcomers. Maybe not new to submission, but attending their first conference. Their stories of how they came to find submission are always heartwarming.

The talks were wonderful, as always. Saturday began with a fun and thought-provoking talk about burned toast! The reminder is that we all are tested through our lives and how we face the tests determines the level of our submission. In fact, many of the speeches used tests as a theme. This is important for us to remember.

[2:214] Do you expect to enter Paradise without being tested like those before you?...

[2:155] We will surely test you through some fear, hunger, and loss of money,

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lives, and crops. Give good news to the steadfast.

The meditation and commemoration were wonderful. It is such a blessing to spend time with fellow submitters praising and glorifying God. It fills the heart with great joy. It was especially wonderful to see the young submitters sharing in the singing with their youthful enthusiasm. [15:98] *You shall sing the praises of your Lord, and be with the prostrators.*

This was such a beautiful venue for the conference. The city is lovely and the weather was perfect. We enjoyed good food throughout the conference. The Vancouver community outdid themselves in hosting this event, and we are all very grateful for the time and effort they put in to make it such a success. Over 100 people joined the excursion up Grouse Mountain to enjoy a lovely view of the city and the ocean. And there was warm hospitality extended to anyone who stayed in Vancouver after the conference ended.

As our 38th annual conference—a nice divisible number—this was truly a special time. We pray that everyone will stay focused and motivated through the year, and we look forward to seeing everyone in Tucson in 2024, God willing.

Nargis and Lydia

LEAVES, BRANCHES AND ROOTS

People will come and go in your life. Some become friends but most will be acquaintances. You will have to make judgments on their impact in your life, but remember that their position may change. Don't make a snap judgment, either positive or negative. Know that everyone is learning and growing and their influence on you may fluctuate.

Like a tree, people in your life can be divided into three categories: leaf people, branch people and root people.

Leaf people are those who come into your life just for a season. You can't depend on them because they are weak. They only come to take what they want from you. If the wind comes up, they will leave you. You need to be careful of these people because they will love you when things are okay, but they will not stay with you in difficult times.

Branch people are stronger than the fickle leaf people, but you need to be careful with them as well. They may break when life becomes too tough. They can't handle too much weight.

They may stay more than a season, but they will go when things get harder.

Fair Weather Friends

[22:11] *Among the people there is the one who worships GOD conditionally. If things go his way, he is content. But if some adversity befalls him, he makes an about-face. Thus, he loses both this life and the Hereafter. Such is the real loss.*

Root people are the ones you can count on. They love God and they aren't doing things to be noticed. They are supportive even when you go through a difficult situation. They won't waver; they are steadfast. They love you for who you are, not what you have. They will stay no matter the season.

[14:24] *Do you not see that GOD has cited the example of the good word as a good tree whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches are high in the sky?*

[14:26] *And the example of the bad word is that of a bad tree chopped at the soil level; it has no roots to keep it standing.*

May God keep in our lives root people who will be there with support; who will remind us with kindness when we falter and not harshly condemn; who will strengthen us on our path to the worship of God alone.

Taareq