

## United Submitters International

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### BEARING WITNESS — a Quranic perspective

Millions of Muslims all over the world recognize Five Pillars of Islam (Submission). However, all the Pillars, as practiced by the Muslims of today, are in direct violation of the Quran. Let us examine the First Pillar. Verse 3:18 states: "God bears witness that there is no god except He, and so do the angels and those who possess knowledge. He is the absolute God. There is no god except He, the Almighty, Most Wise." The words of "shahaada" or the First Pillar of Islam are thus decreed by God in the above verse. "There is no god except God" is repeated in the Quran numerous times.

However, Muslims all over the world have a "shahaada" of their own — "I bear witness there is no god except God and I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of God." This so called "shahaada" is not found anywhere in the Quran. Bearing witness about the messenger of God is mentioned in the Quran only once. It is in Sura 63, entitled, "The Hypocrites" (Al Munaafiqoon). Verse 63:1 states: "When the hypocrites come to you they say, 'We bear witness that you are a messenger of God.' God knows that you are his messenger and God bears witness that the hypocrites are liars." We understand from this verse that no matter what people utter, it is what is in their hearts that counts.

#### Believing or witnessing?

The meaning of the word "believe" in the dictionary is: To credit upon the ground of authority, testimony, argument or any other circumstances than personal knowledge — to be more or less firmly persuaded of the truth of anything. The Quran consistently talks about believers as those who believe in God and His Messengers. The hypocrites, on the other

hand, expose their hypocrisy by their articulation of the false "shahaada."

The verse 7:172 states: "Recall that your Lord summoned all the descendants of Adam, and had them bear witness for themselves: 'Am I not your Lord?' They all said 'Yes, we bear witness.'" Thus you cannot say on the Day of Resurrection, "We were not aware of this."

All of us bore witness that God alone is our Lord. The statement, "There is no god but God and Muhammad is a messenger of God" is also wrong for the following reasons. First, the statement violates the commandment of not making a distinction amongst God's messengers which is repeated in the Quran numerous times. Verse 2:285 states: "The messenger has believed in what was sent down to him from his Lord, and so did the believers. They believe in God, His angels, His scripture, and His messengers: 'We make no distinction among any of His messengers.' They say, 'We hear, and we obey. Forgive us, our Lord. To You is the ultimate destiny.'"

In addition, verse 3:144 also states: "Muhammad was no more than a messenger like the messengers before him." Lastly, Muhammad was a messenger of God, just like Jesus, Moses and other messengers and prophets in the past. Muhammad at the present time is not a messenger of God. Therefore, grammatically, the "shahaada" of idolworshippers is also wrong.

The first commandment in all of God's scriptures is the same, "There is no god but God." A true Muslim (submitter) will not associate anyone next to God, unlike the example of false Christians and false Muslims (Muhammedans) who CANNOT believe in God without as-

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sociating Jesus or Muhammad or some other idols next to God in some form or fashion.

Is God not sufficient for His servant? They frighten you with the idols they set up beside Him . . . When God ALONE is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter shrink with aversion. But when others are mentioned besides Him, they become satisfied. (39:36, 45).

Azhar Khan

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

# Submitters Perspective

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## WHY DO PEOPLE USE DRUGS?

The use of drugs to alter consciousness is nothing new. It has been a feature of human life throughout history. Alcohol has always been the most commonly used drug because of the ease in producing it by fermentation. In many cultures, the consumption of drugs and alcohol has been associated with one's entrance into the adult social world.

The Arabic word "khamr" (intoxicant) is from the root word "kamara" which means "to cover or obscure." Contrary to what many people think, drugs cloud and cover the mind rather than open it up.

The so-called high that people think they experience when intoxicated is actually a state of disorientation and looseness portrayed as pleasure. The devil not only leads one to take intoxicants, but continues to entice the intoxicated person to do things that they would refrain from when sober or oriented.

O you who believe, intoxicants and gambling, and the altars of idols, and the games of chance are abominations of the devil; you shall avoid them, that you may succeed. The devil wants to provoke animosity and hatred among you through intoxicants and gambling, and to distract you from remembering God; and from observing the Contact Prayers (*Salat*). Will you then refrain? (5:90-91).

In addition to the need to feel good and overcome anxieties, peer acceptance and approval are critical factors underlying drug consumption and addiction. Most people have been socialized to be overly-dependent on someone or something in the material world to make them happy. Many people also turn to intoxicants to make them happy. There is a myth that drugs allow an individual to imagine being what he or she wants to be free of inhibitions, worries, and tension. Drugs are also sought as a means toward inner-fulfillment; many people are lead to believe that chemical substances and drugs are a cure-all for their negative feelings.

Despite widespread use and acceptance of so-called legal drugs like alcohol, there can be no compromise regarding their prohibition by God. God knows us more than we know ourselves. God certainly knows what can make us really happy, and he knows what is dangerous to us.

They ask you about intoxicants and gambling: say, "in them there is a gross sin, and some benefits for the people. But their sinfulness far outweighs their benefit." ... (2:219)

Recent studies show that every year cigarette smoking causes 390,000 deaths, alcohol causes 90,000 deaths, cocaine causes 8,000 deaths, and heroin causes 6,000 deaths. Alcoholism accounts for about fifteen percent of all deaths annually in the United States and costs more than forty-eight billion dollars in health costs and lost productivity. That amount averages to two hundred dollars per year for every man, woman, and child in the United States.

Chronic drug addiction leads to a drug personality — the type of person whose action and thoughts are determined by his constant need to take drugs. Drug personalities may anger easily, can become violent, are frequently depressed, alienated from family members, have few friends except fellow addicts, are unable to maintain jobs, often feel persecuted, and may be unable to acknowledge their addiction; drugs become their idols.

"He idolizes what is more apt to harm him than benefit him. What a miserable lord; what a miserable companion." (22:13)

#### Worship God Alone To Overcome Drug Abuse

Because of their addictive quality, drugs and intoxicants stay with a person for a long time. In order to stop taking drugs, a person must have a better substitute in life — a belief, a bond, a greater motivation to seek happiness and balance in fulfilling ways. God is the source of all happiness. When a person begins to realize this, he or she can wean away from substance abuse. In the Quran, God enjoins worshippers not to pray when intoxicated.

O you who believe, do not observe the Contact Prayers (*Salat*) while intoxicated, so that you know what you are saying..." (4:43)

Evidently, during the time verse 4:43 was revealed, there were people who took intoxicants, probably alcohol. Yet, they were motivated to pray to God and seek His guidance. Being human, we are all susceptible to Satan's tricks to distract us from remembering God. The sincere believers who took intoxicants gradually overcome their alcoholism to please God. How could a sincere believer pray five times a day and continue to take intoxicants? Verse 4:43 also indicates that alcohol obscures the mind.

*continued on the next page*

## Why do people use drugs?

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Happiness and peace of mind is only attainable by worshipping God alone, and God relieves one from confusion, fear, grief and a sense of hopelessness.

Anyone who works righteous, male or female, while believing, we will surely grant them a happy life in this world, and we will surely pay them their full recompense (on the Day of Judgement) for their righteous works. (16:97)

The more one depends on drugs, the more unhappy one becomes. The drug user must learn to trust God and stop taking

intoxicants. This is the most effective substance or drug abuse program.

If anyone thinks that God cannot support him in this life and in the Hereafter, let him turn completely to (his creator in) heaven, and severe (his dependence on anyone else). He will see that this plan eliminates anything that bothers him. We have thus revealed clear revelations herein, then God guides whomever He wills. (22:15-16).

Frank Yeargin

## tests help develop our souls

Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe," without being put to the test? We have tested those before them, for God must distinguish those who are truthful, He must expose the liars. (29:2,3)

If we choose to continuously submit absolutely to God alone, God in His infinite grace and mercy guides us to save us from committing major sins (16:93; 19:75,76; 28:56; 39:36,37; 42:13). It is, however, essential that we strengthen our faith by steadfastly persevering so that we fear none but God and strive to remember during most of our day, everyday, that God is running everything (8:17; 23:84-89; 42:30).

Steadfast are those who when affliction befalls them say "We belong to God, and to Him we are returning" (2:156).

To improve our abilities to pass tests and develop our souls, we should count our blessings (14:34;16:18) and rejoice in remembering God (10:58; 13:27-28).

Your Lord has decreed: "The more you thank Me, the more I give you." But if you turn unappreciative, then My retribution is severe (14:7).

Our responsibilities are greater when God gives us signs to upgrade our submission, to upgrade our efforts to fulfill His laws for our own good, and to upgrade our efforts to remember that God plans everything perfectly for the believers.

We are not to fear except God (9:18), and in order to improve us, God allows Satan to test us based on our weaknesses. Whenever we slip, we must repent immediately upon realizing it and continuously

strive to make amends so that we remain eligible to be guided by God. Because human minds are far more developed now than say 1400 years ago, our tests are expected to be mental rather than physical (3:111,120,173).

God commands us to compete in righteousness (2:148, 5:48) and eagerly race towards forgiveness and Paradise (3:133). The width of Paradise encompasses the heavens and the earth and awaits the righteous. We may compare this unimaginably beautiful and infinite reward with any Olympic medal won. Apart from the years of tough efforts for physical development, this gold and fame would create tougher tests or risks of pride and ego unconsciously becoming our god—at least temporarily. Its credit back home i.e. in the Hereafter, which is our permanent abode, would be only on how much we remembered and appreciated God and strove in His way—before, during and after victory.

Our races towards righteousness, forgiveness and paradise have to be only to please God and fulfill all His commandments—not to impress or please even our family of believers. Here there is not just one gold, silver and bronze winner for each race or game! If one decides to enter the race and steadfastly stays in it with sincerity and absolute faith in God alone, then God takes over and starts training

him or her. Everyone is a winner although there would be unimaginably different levels or ranges of "winning" (17:21) whose width encompass the heavens and the earth.

God starts rewarding us here too on passing the admission tests (24:55), and we start getting signs, both mathematical and otherwise, that we are under His protection and training.

However, for God to give us the best possible rewards and sovereign status which our twice criminally transgressed souls are capable of getting without the least injustice, He has to push us continuously to improve and toughen us spiritually. God wants to redeem us—by our choosing Him as our only Lord and Master—on the basis of our steadfastly striving with our own free will. God's rewards in the Hereafter are just mind boggling—everything our souls desire, all the time and for infinity.

God in His infinite mercy regards the righteous works of believers as "loans of righteousness" to Him that He would multiply manifold for a generous recompense (57:11). We have also to be certain that all our righteous works would be nullified if we try to hedge any of our stakes, reject faith or lose our priorities (5:5; 9:69; 11:15-16; 16:94,107; 17:18).

Ahmed Currim

## Brief Answers (17:36; 39:18)

Edip Yuksel

Ben, a reader from Switzerland, asked the following two questions.

**Q.** Can you give me information about the methodology for studying the Quran?

**A.** The methodology is taught by the Quran itself. If you accept God as your teacher (55:1-2) and read Quran frequently (17:78; 73:20), by God's blessings you will get the keys.

Here are some highlights on this subject. You may find a more complete answer by your own study and experience.

1. We must seek refuge in God from the devil (16:98).

2. We must believe that God's word is perfect, fully detailed and complete. We must worship Him alone, and avoid any kind of idolatry. Our belief in the Hereafter must be certain. Otherwise we will be blocked by God Almighty from understanding His words (6:25; 17:46).

3. We must be optimistic that we can learn the Quran, and increase our knowledge by God's grace. The Quran is difficult to understand for the idol worshipers. On the other hand, it is easy for believers (54:17,22,32,40). Ironically, the idol worshipers confess that the Quran is a very difficult book to understand.

4. We must use our God-given senses to understand the Quran. The more we concentrate and reflect on the verses the better understanding we will get. If we believe nonsensical narrations and contradictory sectarian teachings, we corrupt our intelligence. In so doing, we cannot benefit from the Quran (10:100; 30:28).

5. We must accept the Quran as a whole. God condemns "Muslims" who abrogate some verses of the Quran (15:90-93). Verses of the Quran are interwoven by the Creator. They explain each other (38:29; 11:1). We have numerous examples of this phenomenon.

6. We should have patience. We should not rush to understand everything. God's law of teaching is the same as of creation; it is gradual. If we feel that God did not reveal the meaning of a particular verse to us, we should practice the rule of patience and contentment (20:114).

7. When we encounter a problem we should discuss with experts who devote

their time and intellect for understanding of the Quran (3:7; 9:122). Follow up by studying their answers and verifying them for yourself. We should not accept any information blindly (17:36).

8. We should also keep in our mind that the meaning of some verses is destined to be unveiled in the future. Future generations may understand some verses better than us. Some Quranic prophecies about the just government of Zulkarnayn -The One with Two Generations- (18:83-99) and the second punishment of the Children of Israel (17:7) are two examples.

9. Our limited knowledge or lack of information about a subject can also be a barrier preventing full understanding of some verses. For instance, we understand 16:8, 21:30, 27:82&88, 36:80, 39:6, 41:11, 51:47, 74:30, 75:3-4 and 96:2 better than previous generations.

**Q.** I live in Europe, and I wonder whether is it possible to marry a Christian or a Jewish woman? How do we behave when we live among them? What about the verse 5:51?

**A.** Your question regarding the marriage with a Christian or Jewish woman is a good example of fifth point mentioned earlier. A believer cannot marry an idol worshiper (2:221); but a believer can marry a monotheist Christian or Jew (5:5). Idol worshipers can be Christians, Jews, or Muslims. We cannot isolate 5:51 from other related verses. If we take all of them together, we will find the correct answer. Please look at 3:113. The basic relationship with disbelievers is briefly explained in 60:8-9. Notice that the words "Al Yabud" (The Jews) and "Al Nasara" (The Nazarenes) in 5:51 are in definite forms; they are certain Jews or Christians. Thus, you have to look at the context. Please see verses 5:46-50, 52-66.

**Q.** The verses 6:76-78 tell us that Abraham worshiped idols before he became monotheist. Does this not contradict the verses that Abraham was never an idol worshiper (2:135; 3:95)?

Laleh, Iran

**A.** The verses you refer to do not tell us that Abraham worshiped idols in his youth. He was not looking for God. He

was already a monotheist. He was trying to teach his people the irrationality of their religion. The verses 6:74-81 narrates Abraham's rhetorical argument based on assumptions. Any normal teenager cannot be ignorant of risings and settings of the moon, the stars and the sun.

**Q.** In the "Quran The Final Testament" Dr. Rashad Khalifa translated the word "Zan-Noon" in 21:87 as "Jonah, 'the one with an 'N' in his name'". However, all other translations translate it as "him of the great fish" or "the man of the fish." Why then did Rashad translate it that way? Why refer Jonah with the letter 'N'? Solomon has it too. Noah has it as the capital letter. Why is not Moses mentioned as Zaa-Seen, or Luqmaan Zal-Qaf? What is the uniqueness of letter Noon? What is the peculiar relation of letter 'Noon' with Jonah?

Anonymous

**A.** You remember that the people who rejected Lot are consistently called "Qawm" (People), except in Chapter "Q"; they are called "Ikwan" (Brothers). This indicates the importance of the number of letter "Q" in Chapter "Q". The unique naming of Jonah in 21:87 has the same indication.

Jonah is mentioned six times in the Quran. Four of these occurrences refer him by his name, that is "Jonah" (4:163; 6:86; 10:98; 37:139). In 21:87 he is described as "Zan-Noon", which means "The one who possess 'Noon'". The last reference to Jonah is in 68:48 as "Sahebul Hoot" which means, "The friend of the fish", or simply "The man of the fish."

Out of this six references only one of them does not contain the letter "Noon" (N). It is "Sahebul Hoot" and it is found in Chapter 68. This chapter is called Chapter "Noon", since it starts with the letter "Noon". God Almighty confirms this mathematical relation in 21:87 by emphasizing the existence of the letter "Noon" in the name of Jonah. By this way God tells us that he deliberately did NOT use Jonah's proper name in Chapter "Noon", since Jonah possess the letter "Noon" in his name.

What a marvelous way of communicating this message! This single incidence tells us so many things that I cannot summarize here. God, our great Teacher, tells us that He is not obligated to use particular words that contain the initials such as "Q" or "N" in order to create the intricate mathematical design based on number 19. This is a great lesson from the Omniscient Lord.

Please send your questions to: Brief Answers, P.O. Box: 43476, Tucson, AZ 85733-3476, USA.