

*In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful*

# Submitters Perspective

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## The Danger of Humanizing God

When I was growing up in Christianity, there were certain ideas that I heard over and over and just took for granted. I didn't give them much thought. Looking at those phrases now I can see Satan's hand in them. They make it easy to diminish God, to humanize Him.

Things like: "God is sad when you don't believe." God doesn't need our worship. He doesn't need our prayers. If we fail to heed His guidance, it doesn't hurt Him in any way. Under the subtitle: *Believe For Your Own Good*, 39:7 makes this clear.

*If you disbelieve, GOD does not need anyone. But He dislikes to see His servants make the wrong decision. If you decide to be appreciative, He is pleased for you. No soul bears the sins of any other soul. Ultimately, to your Lord is your return, then He will inform you of everything you had done. He is fully aware of the innermost thoughts.*

Or: "He created man in His image." This phrase gives one a mental pic-

ture of God with a face and a body, feet and hair. The painting on the Sistine Chapel of God reaching out His hand to give life to Adam makes it seem like one man touching another, equals. God is Light and Energy and Truth and Peace. He doesn't have or need a body; He is so much more.

Or: "He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son..." To place God on the level of a human male, begetting a child, is blasphemous, as the Quran clearly tells us in 19:88-92.

*They said, "The Most Gracious has begotten a son!" You have uttered a gross blasphemy. The heavens are about to shatter, the earth is about to tear asunder, and the mountains are about to crumble. Because they claim that the Most Gracious has begotten a son. It is not befitting the Most Gracious that He should beget a son.*

Or: "On the seventh day He rested." Perhaps more than any other, this to me made God seem human. I get

tired; I need to sit down and relax; I need to sleep. If I exercise strenuously or work hard at a task, I need some time to recuperate. This phrase put God on that same level. Putting together this whole universe (in fact, seven universes), and then figuring out how to make the world work properly for millions of years—well, that's hard work. It must have tired Him out. Of course, He needed to rest.

How easy it is to get caught up in those thoughts. Unless we're blessed with God's guidance, we may never examine closely what they really say. The first time I read 2:255, it hit me how awesome God is, how high above all of our follies. And the phrase that really struck me was: "*Never a moment of unawareness or slumber overtakes Him.*" Never a moment. He is never unaware of anything on earth or in the heavens. He never takes a vacation or a coffee break or a power nap. Doesn't even close His eyes for a second. Because He doesn't need to.

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We are not created in His image. We are not like Him. Compared to God we are less than a speck of dust. Remembering that can help us to be truly appreciative of all of His qualities and thankful that He offers us chance after chance to stay on His right path.

*[59:22] He is the One GOD; there is no other god besides Him. Knower of all secrets and declarations. He is the Most Gracious, Most Merciful.*

*[59:23] He is the One GOD; there is no other god besides Him. The King, the Most Sacred, the Peace, the Most Faithful, the Supreme, the Almighty, the Most Powerful, the Most Dignified. GOD be glorified; far above having partners.*

*[59:24] He is the One GOD; the Creator, the Initiator, the Designer. To Him belong the most beautiful names. Glorifying Him is everything in the heavens and the earth. He is the Almighty, Most Wise.*

Lydia

\* \* \* \*

## The Obligatory Charity (Zakat)

Zakat must be given away “on the day of harvest” (6:141). Whenever we receive “net income,” we must set aside 2.5% and give it to the specified recipients—the parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, and the traveling alien, in this order (2:215). The vital importance of Zakat is reflected in God’s law: “My mercy encompasses all things, but I will specify it for the righteous who give Zakat” (7:156).

Zakat must be carefully calculated and given away on a regular basis whenever we receive any income. Government taxes should be deduct-

ed, but not other expenses such as debts, mortgages, and living expenses. If one does not know needy persons, he or she may give the Zakat to a mosque or charitable organization with the distinct purpose of helping poor people. Charities given to mosques or hospitals or organizations cannot be considered Zakat. *(From Appendix 15, Quran: The Final Testament, R. Khalifa, Ph.D.)*

### Obligatory Charity (Zakat) verses in the Quran

*[2:43] You shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and bow down with those who bow down.*

*[2:83] We made a covenant with the Children of Israel: “You shall not worship except GOD. You shall honor your parents and regard the relatives, the orphans, and the poor. You shall treat the people amicably. You shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat).” But you turned away, except a few of you, and you became averse.*

*[2:110] You shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat). Any good you send forth on behalf of your souls, you will find it at GOD. GOD is seer of everything you do.*

*[2:177] Righteousness is not turning your faces towards the east or the west. Righteous are those who believe in GOD, the Last Day, the angels, the scripture, and the prophets; and they give the money, cheerfully, to the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the traveling alien, the beggars, and to free the slaves; and they observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat); and they keep their word whenever they make a promise; and they steadfastly persevere in the face of persecution, hardship, and war. These are the truthful; these are the righteous.*

*[2:277] Those who believe and lead a righteous life, and observe the Contact*

*Prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), they receive their recompense from their Lord; they will have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve.*

*[4:77] Have you noted those who were told, “You do not have to fight; all you need to do is observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat),” then, when fighting was decreed for them, they feared the people as much as they feared GOD, or even more? They said, “Our Lord, why did You force this fighting on us? If only You respite us for awhile!” Say, “The materials of this world are nil, while the Hereafter is far better for the righteous, and you never suffer the slightest injustice.”*

*[4:162] As for those among them who are well founded in knowledge, and the believers, they believe in what was revealed to you, and in what was revealed before you. They are observers of the Contact Prayers (Salat), and givers of the obligatory charity (Zakat); they are believers in GOD and the Last Day. We grant these a great recompense.*

*[5:12] GOD had taken a covenant from the Children of Israel, and we raised among them twelve patriarchs. And GOD said, “I am with you, so long as you observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and believe in My messengers and respect them, and continue to lend GOD a loan of righteousness. I will then remit your sins, and admit you into gardens with flowing streams. Anyone who disbelieves after this, has indeed strayed off the right path.”*

*[5:55] Your real allies are GOD and His messenger, and the believers who observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and they bow down.*

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[7:156] “And decree for us righteousness in this world, and in the Hereafter. We have repented to You.” He said, “My retribution befalls whomever I will. But My mercy encompasses all things. However, I will specify it for those who (1) lead a righteous life, (2) give the obligatory charity (Zakat), (3) believe in our revelations,...

[9:5] Once the Sacred Months are past, (and they refuse to make peace) you may kill the idol worshipers when you encounter them, punish them, and resist every move they make. If they repent and observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), you shall let them go. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

[9:11] If they repent and observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), then they are your brethren in religion. We thus explain the revelations for people who know.

[9:18] The only people to frequent GOD's masjids are those who believe in GOD and the Last Day, and observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and do not fear except GOD. These will surely be among the guided ones.

[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.

[19:31] “He made me blessed wherever I go, and enjoined me to observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and the obligatory charity (Zakat) for as long as I live.

[19:55] He used to enjoin his family to observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and the obligatory charity (Zakat); he was acceptable to his Lord.

[21:73] We made them imams who guided in accordance with our commandments, and we taught them how to work righteousness, and how to observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and the obligatory charity (Zakat). \* To us, they were devoted worshipers.

[22:41] They are those who, if we appointed them as rulers on earth, they would establish the Contact Prayers (Salat) and the obligatory charity (Zakat), and would advocate righteousness and forbid evil. GOD is the ultimate ruler.

[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.

[23:4] And they give their obligatory charity (Zakat).

[24:37] People who are not distracted by business or trade from commemorating GOD; they observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and they are conscious of the day when the minds and the eyes will be horrified.

[24:56] You shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and obey the messenger, that you may attain mercy.

[27:3] Who observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and they are, with regard to the Hereafter, absolutely certain.

[31:4] Who observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), give the obligatory

charity (Zakat), and as regards the Hereafter, they are absolutely certain.

[33:33] You shall settle down in your homes, and do not mingle with the people excessively, like you used to do in the old days of ignorance. You shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and obey GOD and His messenger. GOD wishes to remove all unholiness from you, O you who live around the Sacred Shrine, and to purify you completely.

[41:7] “Who do not give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and with regard to the Hereafter, they are disbelievers.”

[58:13] If you failed to give to charity before conferring, then repented thereafter, GOD accepts your repentance. You shall observe the contact prayers (Salat), give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and obey GOD and His messenger. GOD is fully Cognizant of everything you do.

[73:20] ...Instead, you shall read what you can of the Quran. He knows that some of you may be ill, others may be traveling in pursuit of GOD's provisions, and others may be striving in the cause of GOD. You shall read what you can of it, and observe the contact prayers (Salat), give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and lend GOD a loan of righteousness. Whatever good you send ahead on behalf of your souls, you will find it at GOD far better and generously rewarded. And implore GOD for forgiveness. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

[98:5] All that was asked of them was to worship GOD, devoting the religion absolutely to Him alone, observe the contact prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat). Such is the perfect religion.

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## Question from a Submitter

### **How and when should I meditate (on God)?**

There are no rules for meditation. You are free to mediate and worship God as you wish (17:110).

We actually have an article on meditation that addresses your questions <http://www.masjiduntucson.org/God/meditation.html>. We also have a zikr (commemoration of God) page at <http://www.masjiduntucson.org/God/zikr/>. You can find mp3 audios of zikr there. We hope it will be useful for you God willing.

To commemorate and remember God, you can lie down (4:103), walk, sing (15:98), think of God as and when you wish and for as long as you wish. However, God also tells us that we cannot always do this (73:20). Sometimes we are more conscious, sometimes less. The idea is to make us conscious, reverent and remember God as much as we can throughout our lives.

While we are free to do meditation any way we like, if we have certain methodology, we should be careful not to make it a rule for others. Rules and habits are very difficult to explain and undo or maintain later.

Meditation can be done anytime. Night time is more effective because there are less preoccupations and distractions. In the Islamic system the night

starts at sunset and ends at sunrise, through dawn.

*[7:205] You shall remember your Lord within yourself, publicly, privately, and quietly, day and night; do not be unaware.*

*[3:191-4] They remember GOD while standing, sitting, and on their sides, and they reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth: "Our Lord, You did not create all this in vain. Be You glorified. Save us from the retribution of Hell...."*

*[3:17] They are steadfast, truthful, submitting, charitable, and meditators at dawn.*

*[73:2] Meditate during the night, except rarely....*

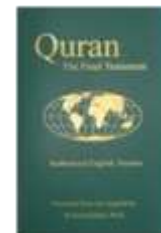
*[73:6] The meditation at night is more effective, and more righteous....*

*[17:79] During the night, you shall meditate for extra credit, that your Lord may raise you to an honorable rank.*

*[39:9] Is it not better to be one of those who meditate in the night, prostrating and staying up, being aware of the Hereafter, and seeking the mercy of their Lord?...*

Ed.'s note: God willing we hope this has answered your questions. Peace and may God bless you. Please do not hesitate to ask questions anytime by email at [info@masjiduntucson.org](mailto:info@masjiduntucson.org).

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