



In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

Monthly Bulletin of International
Community of Submitters

www.masjidtucson.org



Published by Masjid Tucson
Jumada II 1435

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Building Faith

Without faith it is impossible to please God. You can obey God. You can do the right thing and still not be pleasing God because you're not doing it in faith. How can I build my faith? I can pray and ask God to increase my faith. But how does God build my faith?

Here's one secret. And it's not really something you're real excited about when you first hear it. But the truth is God builds your faith and my faith by testing it. He builds our faith by putting it to the test, by trying it. Faith is like a muscle and when it's stretched and it's pulled, then it develops. When you test your muscles against weights then your muscles develop. And your faith develops as it is tested.

Did you realize that God is testing you every moment of your life? Every day you have faith-building opportunities. The problem is most of us don't recognize them when they're there. We flunk the test because we don't even realize it is a test and that God is trying to help us grow.

These are the four most common ways that God tests and builds our faith. You'll probably get tested on every one of them this week.

1. God tests our faith through difficulties.

That's trials, problems, pressures, tough circumstances, all the stresses of life. Nothing comes into your life without God's permission. The bad that happens is a result of our own doing (4:79), but it's in God's control. There are no accidents.

For example, Jonah had a custom made problem. It just swallowed him up and got his attention. Sometimes God creates problems that swallow us up. And we have to turn to God.

[21:87] *And Zan-Noon (Jonah) the one with an N in his name) abandoned his mission in protest, thinking that we could not control him. He ended up imploring from the darkness (of the big fish's belly) "There is no god other than You. Be You glorified. I have committed a gross sin."*

Also [Jonah 2:7] the Bible says, "When I lost all I once again turned my thoughts to God."

God uses these kinds of things to test our faith. If life were easy then it wouldn't require faith. So what should I do when I'm going through difficulties? How should I respond?

When the problems come, turn to God. When you face trials of any kind, remember that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. He says when you've got a test, trust God. In fact He says, rejoice (9:111). Thank God. Praise God (8:45). Why? Because I know that God is with me. God has a plan for me. He has a purpose for my life and He's going to help me through it. God's purpose is greater than the pain or the problem or the challenge I'm going through right now.

This is the first lesson. If I want to learn to live by faith I must learn to rejoice continually. He doesn't say be thankful for the problem; just be thankful in the problem. I must learn to rejoice in the situation continually if I'm going to learn to live and trust in Him. God makes it up to the believers.

2. God tests our faith through commands.

When I have a command and it seems like I can't do it, then the issue at that moment is: Who am I going to believe? Who is it I'm going to trust? Am I going to believe what God says to do or am I going to believe what I think is right to do? All of the promises, all of the commands are there to test us. Some of

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

them may seem simple at first but when you look at them, they can be demanding.

A simple command like, “Don’t worry about anything.” How often do we forget we have God as an advocate and waste our time and efforts worrying?

[22:15] 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 sever (his dependence on anyone else). He will then see that this plan eliminates anything that bothers him.

But it is so difficult to do that. We humans choose willingly the path to self-destruction, the path of risk. We try to solve issues our way **instead of God’s way**, which is simply TRUST IN GOD. This plan is fool proof.

3. God tests our faith with money.

Money is one of the greatest tests of faith in your life. Few people understand how God uses our material possessions as a test of character and a test of faith. For many people finances are the greatest of all. They have no idea that God is actually testing them when they get into wealth or debt, or **when they’re going through blessings or problems, or when they’re asked to give to charity**. All of these things have to do with faith.

Will we fall into the trap of earning a few quick bucks only to later realize that the price was just too high, and we missed heaven for a measly few rupees. Or when we cheat others of their right in property or deals, do we not think that there is someone above us watching us wronging someone? We must realise that these acts lead only to hell. Nothing is hidden from the One above who knows everything which is revealed or concealed.

4. God tests our faith through delays.

We are called the Instant Gratification Generation. This is what the world has come to. People take the easy way out through bribery, corruption, status, power, money, all ways to

get things done quickly, but not necessarily the right way. However, sometimes God wishes to teach us the lesson of patience.

Imagine if every prayer were immediately answered, if every need were automatically met, if every problem were instantly solved. Would your faith and trust in God be tested? But it is not that way. We trust that God knows what is best for our souls. It is human nature that we are impatient and we must work on overcoming it.

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

A large percentage of your life is spent **waiting. If you and I can’t learn how** God wants to stretch and grow our souls during times of waiting, we miss out on much of the faith lessons that God wants to teach in our lives.

It pays to be patient. Just remember this: while you are waiting, God is in **working His ways. You’re not waiting alone**. God is doing things behind the scenes, in your heart and other **people’s hearts that you cannot even see**.

[10:109] Follow what is revealed to you, and be patient until GOD issues His judgment; He is the best judge.

[42:43] Resorting to patience and forgiveness reflects a true strength of character.

So what’s the faith lesson? If we really want to learn to live by faith, we have to learn to rejoice continually. We have to learn to obey immediately. We have to give generously. And we must learn to wait patiently.

Praise God.

Iqbal

The Inevitable Test

[3:186] You will certainly be tested, through your money and your lives, and you will hear from those who received the scripture, and from the idol worshipers, a lot of insult. If you steadfastly persevere and lead a righteous life, this will prove the strength of your faith.

Only God Controls Life And Death

[39:42] GOD puts the souls to death when the end of their life comes, and also at the time of sleep. Thus, He takes some back during their sleep, while others are allowed to continue living until the end of their predetermined interim. This should provide lessons for people who reflect.

[9:116] To GOD belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. He controls life and death. You have none beside GOD as a Lord and Master.

[3:102] O you who believe, you shall observe GOD as He should be observed, and do not die except as Submitters.

A late night knock on the door or that phone call no one wants to receive. There it is—the most difficult news a human can face. The death of a loved one. Be it mother, father, sister, **brother, spouse, uncle or friend. It’s unbearable news. You’re in shock. It’s unbelievable**. You just talked to them a few hours ago; just had dinner with them yesterday; were going to have lunch with them next week.

Well, how do you cope, because they’re gone. Some people say they passed away; they’re no longer here; they made their transition back to God. It can be hard to say “they’re dead.” But however you say it, it can be an intense sadness. You may feel grief and it’s a hard reality to accept. You try to be okay, but inside sometimes it feels like an elephant sat on your chest. Not everyone grieves the same. Sometimes you may try to be strong for other family members, to give them your support. And you tell yourself you’ll grieve later. Some shed tears and others try to sleep. Some don’t eat or rest.

But there are good and bad ways to grieve, and one should try for the best way—**accept the reality that they’re gone**, let go of the anger or regret one may feel—because you have no control

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

over death. It's understandable to feel loneliness—the house feels empty; you can't call them on the phone; you look at pictures and remember what you used to share with them. But be assured, you're not alone in the grief. So find good ways to cope, like talking to someone, especially someone else who knew the person, reading God's scriptures, talking to God, and prayer always works.

Don't have guilt. Don't go with the negative feelings—I should have been there; I should have spent more time with them; I neglected them; etc. etc. No matter what, remember we have no control over their life or even our own life. God has that. Nor can we prevent time and unforeseen events from happening. Dwelling upon all kinds of “if onlys” will not change a thing. Accept help from others, and offer help to the family. Pay bills, take out the trash, go to the bank or the grocery store, little things that will help a lot. And it will help you too—keep you from overeating in your grief or sleeping too much. Remember that you do need to eat and sleep for your health, just don't take it to extremes.

It's normal to feel shock, numbness, sadness, even guilt or anger. Just don't let those emotions overwhelm you. No one can put a time limit on the grieving process; everyone grieves differently. It's a process that cannot be rushed.

Some tips to cope:

- ◆ Socialize with other people—don't go it alone. Talk it out and release it.
- ◆ Remember the good times you shared.
- ◆ Write out your feelings in a book of what you should or could have said or done with God's help. This may help you heal.
- ◆ Take the opportunity now to tell the people you love how you feel about them before it's too late.
- ◆ Hold onto some personal things from your loved one.
- ◆ Rely on God for all comfort. *He comforts us in all our afflictions and thus enables us to comfort those who*

are in trouble, with the same consolation we have received from Him. [2 Corinthians 1:4]

Do not let it dominate you. Time heals all wounds. In time you will remember the good times and be glad you had them for the time you had your loved one. Mourn and grieve as you must, but don't forget that you still have to make the best of the life that is ahead of you. May Almighty God keep all believers on the right path and accept our worship to Him alone. Death is no mystery to a Submitter.

[3:169-71] Do not think that those who are killed in the cause of GOD are dead; they are alive at their Lord, enjoying His provisions. They are rejoicing in GOD's grace, and they have good news for their comrades who did not die with them, that they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. They have good news of GOD's blessings and grace, and that GOD never fails to reward the believers.

[29:56-9] O My servants who believed, My earth is spacious, so worship Me. Every soul will taste death, then to us you will be ultimately returned. Those who believe and lead a righteous life, we will surely settle them in Paradise, with mansions and flowing streams. Eternally they abide therein. What a beautiful reward for the workers. They are the ones who steadfastly persevere, and trust in their Lord.

[31:34] With GOD is the knowledge regarding the Hour (end of the world). He is the One who sends down the rain, and He knows the contents of the womb. No soul knows what will happen to it tomorrow, and no one knows in which land he or she will die. GOD is Omniscient, Cognizant.

[3:145] No one dies except by GOD's leave, at a predetermined time. Whoever seeks the vanities of this world, we give him therefrom, and whoever seeks the rewards of the Hereafter, we bless him therein. We reward those who are appreciative.

[21:35] Every soul will taste death, after we put you to the test through adversity and prosperity, then to us you ultimately return.

Marvels of GOD

Part 3

[2:2] This scripture is infallible; a beacon for the righteous.

[55:13++] Which of your Lord's Marvels can you deny?

Analyzing more areas of knowledge contained in the Quran in light of modern education and science.

Oceanography: Modern science has discovered that in the places where two different seas meet, there is a barrier between them. This barrier divides the two seas so that each sea has its own temperature, salinity and density. However, when the water from one sea enters the other sea, it loses its distinctive characteristic and becomes homogenized with the other water. In a way this barrier serves as a transitional homogenizing area for the two sea waters. Oceanographers have been researching this subject from 1873 by collecting data from several meeting points of the two seas, but the actual answer appeared for the first time in scientific books in 1942. Studies of marine characteristics revealed these separations between neighbouring seas which maintained the distinctive properties of each sea with respect to density, salinity, marine life, temperature and solubility of oxygen in water. This is in addition to the barrier of evaporation.

[25:53] He is the One who merges the two seas; one is fresh and palatable, while the other is salty and undrinkable. And He separated them with a formidable, inviolable barrier (evaporation).

[27:61] Who is the One who made the earth habitable, caused rivers to run through it, placed on it mountains, and created a barrier between the two waters? Is it another god with GOD? Indeed, most of them do not know.

[55:19-20] He separates the two seas where they meet. A barrier is placed between them, to prevent them from transgressing.

Who but God could have explained this phenomenon 1400 years ago in so much detail?

(Continued on page 4)

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ISSN 1089-053X

Happiness is Submission to God Alone

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Biology: We know that the Microscope was invented in 1590 by two Dutch spectacle makers called Zacharias Janssen and his father Hans. Later Anthony Leeuwenhoek became more involved in science and with his new improved microscope was able to see things that no man had ever seen before. He saw bacteria, yeast, blood cells and many tiny animals swimming about in a drop of water. From his great contributions, many discoveries and research papers, Anthony Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723) has since been called the "Father of Microscopy." And only after the research and study of modern science, do we know that cytoplasm, the basic substance of the cell is made up of 80% water. Modern science research has also revealed that most organisms consist of 50% to 90% water and that every living entity requires water for its existence.

[21:30] Do the unbelievers not realize that the heaven and the earth used to be one solid mass that we exploded into existence? And from water we made all living things. Would they believe?

[24:45] And GOD created every living creature from water. Some of them walk on their bellies, some walk on two legs, and some walk on four. GOD creates whatever He wills. GOD is Omnipotent.

[25:54] He is the One who created from water a human being, then made him reproduce through marriage and mating. Your Lord is Omnipotent.

God has clearly mentioned this important aspect of the living organisms in the Holy Quran 1400 years ago. Will you deny this?

Botany: Previously humans did not know that plants too have male and female gender distinctions. Botany states that every plant has a male and female gender. Even the plants that are unisexual have distinct elements of both male and female. Fruit is the end product of reproduction of the superior plants. The preceding stage is the flower, which has male and female organs (stamens and ovules). Once pollinated, they bear fruit, which in turn matures and frees its seed. All fruits therefore imply the existence of male and female organs. In some species, fruit can come from non-fertilized flowers (parthenocarpic fruit), e.g., bananas, certain types of pineapple, fig, orange, vine etc. They also have definite sexual characteristics.

[13:3] He is the One who constructed the earth and placed on it mountains and rivers. And from the different kinds of fruits, He made them into pairs—males and females. The night overtakes the day. These are solid proofs for people who think.

[20:53] He is the One who made the earth habitable for you, and paved in it roads for you. And He sends down from the sky water with which we produce many different kinds of plants.

[36:36] Glory be to the One who created all kinds of plants from the earth, as well as themselves, and other creations that they do not even know.

[51:49] We created a pair (male and female) of everything, that you may take heed.

Thus the above mentioned verses in Holy Quran clearly prove that 1400 years ago

only this Holy Scripture could reveal such important information about the creation of plants and fruits in pairs. And to verify this fact we don't need any sophisticated instrument. Just stroll around a garden and observe the creation of God carefully. You can find umpteen number of specimens for verification.

Abdul Ghani

* * * * *

God's Signs: Plants

[26:7] Have they not seen the earth, and how many kinds of beautiful plants we have grown thereon?

[31:10] He created the heavens without pillars that you can see. He established on earth stabilizers (mountains) lest it tumbles with you, and He spread on it all kinds of creatures. We send down from the sky water to grow all kinds of beautiful plants.

[6:99] He is the One who sends down from the sky water, whereby we produce all kinds of plants. We produce from the green material multitudes of complex grains, palm trees with hanging clusters, and gardens of grapes, olives and pomegranate; fruits that are similar, yet dissimilar. Note their fruits as they grow and ripen. These are signs for people who believe.

[39:21] Do you not see that GOD sends down from the sky water, then places it into underground wells, then produces with it plants of various colors, then they grow until they turn yellow, then He turns them into hay? This should be a reminder for those who possess intelligence.