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BOOK

حب الاله

Love of God

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Introduction

Have you ever wondered what exactly love is? Take a moment to think about it.

It is not easy to define. A poet once wrote that when the pen is put to paper and writes about love, it breaks in two. When we try and express our love, we find it very hard to find the right words. The expressions we use

do not fully represent what is burning deep down inside our hearts. This may explain why we associate love with actions and not just words.

We embrace each other, buy our loved ones gifts and kiss our children. Love is truly a powerful, unique and irresistible feeling. We love a thing or a person because they make us feel good. Many people love others because of what they have done for them. For example, people love their parents because of what they have done for them. They cared, nurtured and provided for us. This leads to feelings of gratitude and love.

From this, we can see that love certainly, in part, stems from a deep and profound feeling of gratitude. It is that feeling that makes us want to reciprocate and return the favour. We can also love someone not because they have done something for us, but rather because their very nature is such that it makes us love them.

An example of this are inspirational historical figures. Although we may not be direct beneficiaries of something they did, their very qualities, such as bravery, generosity, and creativity make us love them.

Loving God

Sadly, you can love someone that has lost love for you or never loved you in the first place.

This can be extremely painful and disturbing. But there is one love that is not like that. A love that is totally unique; that is the love of God. God wants us to seek His love. For those who embark on that journey, God surely loves them back.

You may actually be someone that God loves, and a sign of that love is that you are reading this right now! One of God's names is 'The Most Loving'; He is the source of all love. His love is greater than any worldly love we have experienced.

This should instill in us a deep yearning for His love, as this is the greatest gift that anyone can ever receive. God's love is a source of internal tranquility, peace, and eternal bliss in the hereafter.

“Those who have faith and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of God – truly, it is in the remembrance of God that hearts find peace.”

The Qu'ran, Chapter 13, Verse 28

God's love transcends all types of love, including a mother's love. Motherly love, although selfless, is based on her internal need to love her child. It completes her, and through her sacrifices, she feels whole and fulfilled. But when we talk about God's love, God is an independent being who is self-sufficient and perfect. He does not require anything, nor is His love based on a need or want; it is therefore the purest form of love.

“God is more affectionate to His servants than a mother to her children.”

Prophet Muhammad
(peace be upon him)

The Path to Love

God is the most loving Being,
and He wants to love you with
His special love.

But, in order to fully embrace that love, and for that to be meaningful, you have to love Him and follow the path that leads to His love. Love is expressed in actions; someone who loves you will show their love. A clear sign that you love God is that you make Him the only one that you worship. In Islam, worship is a comprehensive term that refers to knowing God, loving God, obeying and submitting to Him and singling out all actions for Him alone. Anything good that we do can be an act of worship, whether that is praising God, being good to our parents and family, reflecting about nature, giving charity, fasting, smiling, searching for medical cures, or even thinking good thoughts about God and forgiving people's mistakes. All of these are considered worship, if they are done for the sake of God.

“Your God is the one God: there is no god except Him, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy. In the creation of the Heavens and Earth; in the alternation of night and day; in the ships that sail the seas with goods for people; in the water that God sends down from the sky to give life to the earth when it has been barren, scattering all kinds of creatures over it; in the changing of the winds and clouds that run their appointed courses between the sky and earth: there are signs in all these for those who use their minds. Even so, there are some who choose to worship others besides God as rivals to Him, loving them with the love that is due to God, but the believers have a greater love for God.”
The Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verses 164-165

Knowing the vast extent of God's generosity and mercy will make us grateful servants. With gratitude comes love, and as we get closer to God, He also comes closer to us. You will feel the presence of His mercy and forgiveness, and experience the reality of His love because when you remember God, He remembers you. Thus, the servant loves His Lord and the Lord loves His servant.

“God, the Most High, said, ‘I am as My servant expects I am. I am with him when he mentions Me.

If he mentions Me to himself, I mention him to Myself; and if he mentions Me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly greater than it. If he draws near to Me a hand's length, I draw near to him an arm's length. When he comes to me walking, I will come to him running."

Prophet Muhammad
(peace be upon him)

In Islam, to worship God also means that we accept that nothing whatsoever shares in God's creative power and ability. And that we affirm that His names and attributes are unique to Him. All acts of worship are for and directed to Him alone. All praise is for Him and He alone should be called upon when we need help.

"Praise belongs to God, Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy, Master of the Day of Judgement. It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path: the path of those You have blessed, those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray".

The Qur'an, Chapter 1, Verses 2-7

God's names and attributes have no deficiency or flaw.

He has no sons or daughters, and neither does He have a father or mother. He was never born, and He will never die. He is unique and nothing like His creation or like anything we can imagine; He is transcendent and maximally perfect.

Say, 'He is God the One, God the eternal. He begot no one nor was He begotten. No one is comparable to Him.'

The Qur'an, Chapter 112, Verses 1-4

A Sign of Love

A sign of our love is in what we do.
Loving God is not just a statement;
it is proven and expressed in how
we act, and who we become.

Worshipping God is the highest expression of our love for Him. There are three reasons that should compel any rational human being to worship his Lord with all his heart, soul, strength and mind.

God's Nature

God, by definition, is the One who is entitled to our worship; it is a necessary fact of His own existence. We praise people all the time by virtue of their attributes, even though they do not directly benefit us in any way. Consider our applause or admiration for sport stars, artists and scientists. However, unlike humans, God's names and attributes are perfect. This means that God is worthy of our utmost praise. God is the one that we should be in awe of, and it is His greatness that should capture our attention.

We grow in our knowledge of His majestic nature by looking into nature; all of the magnificent life forms in the land, seas and the air have been created by Him. All of this vast universe is just a small part of His entire creation!

“Have you not considered how God sends water down from the sky and that We produce with it fruits of varied colours; that there are in the mountains layers of white and red of various hues, and jet black; that there are various colours among human beings, wild animals, and livestock too? It is those of His servants who have knowledge who stand in true awe of God. God is almighty, most forgiving”.

The Qur'an, Chapter 35, Verses 27-28

An important point regarding worshipping God is that it is His right, even if we are not recipients of any type of comfort. Worshipping God is not like a business, whereby He gives us blessings and we worship Him in return. Not at all! He is worshipped because of who He is, and not necessarily how He decides to distribute His blessings.

“God! There is none worthy of worship except Him, the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verse 255

God's Blessings

If we truly reflect on this, we should be eternally grateful to God, because we could never thank Him enough for all the blessings He has given us. Every single thing we have in our lives, every single thing that we hold dear

to our hearts, is from Him; from our ability to breathe,

to the loved ones He created within our lives. Just think about one of these blessings: the human heart.

The human heart beats around 100,000 times a day. Every heartbeat is precious to us. Any one of us would sacrifice a mountain of gold just to ensure that our hearts would function properly to keep us alive.

Surely we must be grateful to God for each beat that keeps us alive. From this perspective, anything other than a heartbeat is a bonus. Imagine the tremendous gratitude we must express for all the other blessings God has given us.

“It is God who brought you out of your mothers’ womb knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts, so that you might be thankful.”

The Qur’an, Chapter 16, Verse 78

Our Dependency

God has created everything. He continually sustains the entire cosmos and provides for us out of His bounty. The Qur'an continually repeats this concept in various ways, which evokes a sense of awe in the heart of the reader:

“O mankind, it is you who stand in need of God- God needs nothing and is worthy of all praise ”.

The Qu'ran, Chapter 35, Verse 15

Since God created us, our very existence is solely dependent upon Him. We are not self-sufficient, even if some of us are deluded in thinking that we are. Whether we live a life of luxury and ease, or in poverty and hardship, we are ultimately dependent on God. Nothing in this universe is possible without Him and whatever happens, it is due to His will.

Even our success in business or the great things that we may achieve, these are all ultimately because of God. He created the causes in the universe that we use to achieve success, and if He does not will our success, it will never happen.

Understanding our ultimate dependency on God should evoke an immense sense of gratitude and humility in our hearts. Humbling ourselves before God and thanking Him is a form of worship.

“O mankind, remember the favour of God upon you. Is there any creator other than God who provides for you from the Heaven and Earth? There is no deity except Him, so how are you deluded?”

The Qur'an, Chapter 35, Verse 3

Meeting Our Beloved

Love of God is central to the tenets of Islam. It is the very core of everything a Muslim does.

God's love cannot really be explained or reasoned; it must be experienced. Love is a matter of the heart, not the mind. Life is too short and precious to be distracted by things other than seeking God's love, because at the end of our lives we will either meet God in a way that He loves us, because we believed and followed him, or in a way that we would hate because we have disbelieved Him and not followed His path.

“Whoever loves to meet God, God loves to meet him, and whoever hates to meet God, God hates to meet him.”

Prophet Muhammad
(peace be upon him)

Let us humble our hearts and genuinely seek guidance from God. This certainly is the path to His love and to eternal success. God Himself states that he is the Most Merciful and those who believe, worship Him and do good, He shall wrap them in His love.

“As for those who believe and do good, the Most Merciful will certainly bless them with love.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 19, Verse 96

Only those who faithfully follow God's guidance are worthy of His love. This makes perfect sense. God does not love a person because of their riches, beauty, lineage, strength, eloquence, intellect, race or gender. Rather, God loves those who are the most conscious of Him.

“Say (O Muhammad, to mankind), ‘If you love God, then follow me, and God will love you and forgive you for your sins; God is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.’”

The Qur'an, Chapter 3, Verse 31

God has shown us the way to get his love – to follow the path of His prophets and messengers, whom He sent to the generations of mankind. All of them called their people to have that relationship with God.

This included Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and the final messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon them all). They are our guides to loving God.

Muslims love Muhammad (peace be upon him), as he showed us how to connect with God. His message was simple: love God more than anything else and single Him out for all worship, follow His guidance and do good. So if you want to meet God, you first need to align your heart so that nothing is more important in

your life than Him. A man once asked the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about the Hour, the Day of Judgment. This is the day that God will judge who will go to paradise and who is going to hell, based on their own actions.

The man asked “When will the Hour be?”

The Prophet Muhammad said, “What have you prepared for it?” The man said, “Nothing, except that I love God and His Messenger.”

The Prophet said, “You will be with those whom you love.”

Prophet Muhammad
(peace be upon him)

Ask God for guidance - surely God guides whoever is sincere and wants to turn to Him.

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