

The Struggle Within

by Robert Bujarski

I imagine that one of the worst feelings in life has to be uncertainty. It is very frightening to think that one may truly believe he or she is a good person but still be totally astray. God tells us in the Quran in Sura 18:103-104, *"Say, "Shall I tell you who the worst losers are? They are the ones whose works in this life are totally astray, but they think that they are doing good."* Obviously, we pray that this is not the case for each of us. The idea of being unsure of what is inside of our own hearts, knowing neither whether it is good nor bad, is very scary.

The criteria for reaching heaven is basic. God teaches us in the Quran that we are required to believe in Him, the Hereafter, and lead a righteous life. The people who meet these criteria, *"have nothing to fear nor will they grieve" (2:62, 5:69).*

The question then becomes what does it take to meet the criteria? How does an individual come to believe in God and the Hereafter? We learn, in Sura 7:172, that all of us are born with an instinctive knowledge about God, *"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."* Therefore, with this understanding it is possible to reason that belief naturally would follow. However, here is where I would like to make the distinction between knowledge and belief. It is possible to know something but not fully believe it. The quickest example that comes to mind is that of a young individual who knows something is bad for him, such as drugs, but still doesn't really believe that they can harm him. In this case, the person may know that drugs are harmful but not truly believe that they can harm him.

This type of scenario can also be related to belief in God, the Hereafter, the Quran, or religion in general. An individual may know that God exists, read the Quran, or other scripture, accept the Hereafter, yet still not truly believe these things in his heart. This situation could be labeled the "true" jihad or struggle. It is a struggle between what an individual accepts and knows to be true, yet he falls short of making this knowledge 100 percent reality in his life.

We learn from the Quran that Abraham attributes his righteousness to God, and in the same fashion, God is the Granter and provider of all things, including true belief. If God wills, He will assure our hearts and minds at a time that is best for each of us. We are responsible for obeying the system of worship and upholding our covenant with God that is set out in the Quran, and then God-willing, unyielding belief and faith will follow by the grace of God.

Praise Be to God!

