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Does God Love Me?

A look at what the Injeel says about God's love for you.

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Unequaled Love?

Many of the concepts taught within the Quran appear at their surface to be quite similar, if not the same, to concepts in the Injeel (Gospels). This is certainly true regarding teachings about many moral standards and codes of personal behavior. However, the basic fundamentals of each faith differ sharply. Probably the most important difference is the teaching about God's love.

In the Torah, the Love of God is given as the very reason that God selected a people for Himself to save.

"Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their decedents after them..." (Deut. 4:37).

The Torah also notes that God loved His people though there was nothing special about them.

"The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for you [were] the fewest of all people...." (Deut. 7:7)

Even in the Injeel we see that God's love for man is given as the primary reason He sent Isa as the Messiah.

"For God so loved the world He gave His One and Only Son...." (John 3:16). Also, "This is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I John 4:10)

These, and many other passages in the Bible portray God as loving those who don't love Him, and working to redeem those very same people. Some apologists call this, *Unconditional Love*. We might also call it, *Unequaled Love*.

As a Muslim, you know that God is merciful, and compassionate, along with many other of descriptions of His character. It is comforting to know that God has such qualities. That God is compassionate and merciful is not in question, rather, to *whom* is He compassionate and merciful, and why? This is the key difference between the Quran and the Injeel; especially if these characteristics are qualities of God's love.

"Just as the Father has loved Me, so I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in my love..." (John 15:9-10)

In the above passage the emphasis is on loving God. The concept is not "prove you love me by obeying me," rather, "keeping," which denotes an action of the heart rather than route obedience. The Greek word used in this passage for "keep" is *Tereo*, meaning to *hold onto*. By this means, we come to know God and His love for us.

Note these other passages:

"And I will give them an heart to know me." (Jeremiah 24:7)

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, [even] in his Son Isa Messiah. This is the true God, and eternal life." (I John 5:20)

God's People Imitate God's Love

My Muslim friend, what is your response to God's love for you? Do you want to experience God's love first hand? You can! And you can know without any doubt that He loves you and has a plan for your life.

Would you like to know more about Gods love for you, and how you can have a personal relationship with the One True God? Visit our web site, www.aboutisa.com and click on *The Five Truths*.

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"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He first loved us..." (1 John 4:10)

In the Quran there is no stated demonstration of God's love, by God, for God's people. But in the Injeel, we read about a practical, physical demonstration of God's love, by God, for everyone. Isa defined the greatest possible expression of love like this: *"Greater love has no one than this, than one lay down his life for his friends."* (1 John 15:13) He then did something remarkable! He expressed His love for in an even greater way.

"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners (God's enemies!) Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

What Does God Want?

God wants something. In the Quran God commands obedience. Certainly in the Injeel He commands obedience as well; but His primary concern is love. Love and obedience are never separate for Isa. He loved us, and enjoins us to love Him. He says a sign that we love Him is if we obey Him as a response to experiencing His love personally. (John 14:23)

The notion of having a personal relationship with God is foreign to the Quran. Within its pages man is not said to have a personal relationship with God, or to know God personally. Instead, man is only a servant from whom God requires obedience. We can contrast the differences between the Injeel and the Quran like this:

- In the Quran obedience to God is the end.
- In the Injeel obedience to God is a means.

In the final say, the Quran regards man's purpose to obey and serve God. The Injeel regard man's purpose to *know* God, and enjoy a love relationship with Him. We obey and serve Him in response to His love. Notice how these passages from the Quran and the Injeel illustrate the difference:

"The answer of the Believers when summoned to God and His Apostle in order that He may judge between them is no other than this: they say "We hear and we obey": it is such as these that will attain felicity. It is such as obey God and His Apostle and fear God and do right that will win (in the end)" (24:51-52).

The picture painted of God's love by the Quran is very different from the Injeel. Each section below outlines the main points the Quran gives regarding God's Love:

The Quran	The Injeel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God does not love the sinner. • God's love is reserved for those who do good. • God's love is conditional, based upon our deeds. • God's people may love him, but obedience is the main requirement. • Consequently, God's people imitate God's love. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God loves everyone, regardless of our sin. • God's love is for everyone. • God's love is unconditional, being based upon His character, proven by His deeds. • God seeks a love relationship with us. • Consequently, God's people imitate God's love.

Does God Love the Sinner?

That Allah does not love the sinner is abundantly clear in the Quran. Note just a few of the many passages in the Quran addressing this topic:

"God loves not transgressors." (2:190)

"He loves not creatures ungrateful or wicked." (2:276)

"God loves not those who do wrong." (3:57, 140)

"God loves not the arrogant the vainglorious." (4:36)

Who is a sinner? Certainly the Quran regards anyone who rejects God as a sinner. But there is another person the Quran regards as a sinner. The person who once obeyed God, but turned away.

"Say: 'Obey God and His Apostle; but if they turn back God loves not those who reject Faith.'" (3:32)

The Quran is littered with dozens of passages like this. It is a fact, nowhere in the Quran is God ever reported to love someone who does not love Him first, nor is God's love ever used as the primary motivation to draw someone close to Him. In contrast, both the Torah and Injeel record that God loves everyone regardless of their sin.

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ." (Ephesians 2:3-5)

Note the contrast between this passage and the Quran in 2:190 "God loves not transgressors." In both passages, people who have not yet turned to God are in focus. What a contrast! In the Quran, God simply does not love them. But if they turn, then God will love them. Whereas in the Injeel, God loves them, and it is *because of His love* that He pursues a relationship with them.

In the Prophets, God's love for man is illustrated by His willingness to endure our sin as He waits for us to come to our senses about His character.

"Then the Lord said to me, 'Go again and love Gomer, who is loved by her husband [Hosea], yet an adulteress, even as the Lord loves the sons of Israel, though they turn to other gods....'" (Hosea 3:1)

It is interesting that such a huge variance in the character of God's love should exist between the two books. Mohammed claimed He was revealing the will of God, who also sent the Prophets and Isa. Both Moses and Isa characterized God as loving the unrighteous and desiring to draw the unrighteous to Himself by means of His love. This is something the Quran does not do.

Take your own normal relationships as an example. Certainly your ability to love and express your love is imperfect, being that you are only human. Yet the Quran ascribes a *lesser ability* to love, on the part of God, than even normal human beings who have rejected Him. Consider: The vast majority of parents love their children unconditionally. Even when their children do wrong, their parents still love them and express their love to them in some fashion.

There are many parents whose children have turned to gross immorality, or violence as a lifestyle. Some even turn against their parents more directly. Yet in the majority of cases, though those parents know their children have filled their lives with evil, *they still love them*, and hope that their expressions of love will eventually turn their children back from the brink of destruction.

Nowhere in the Quran is God ever described in this manner. In fact, the opposite is true. He only loves those who obey or love Him first.

Is God's Love Really for Everyone?

The Quran is replete with a conditional element to God's love. In every passage dealing with God loving an individual, the order is *always* as follows:

- The person does good.
- God loves the person.

There are never any exceptions. Note this example:

"And spend of your substance in the cause of God and make not your own hands contribute to your destruction but do good; for God loves those who do good" (2:195).

Note in the following passage that spiritual purity is a prerequisite for being loved by God:

"For God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean" (2:222).

If the person decided not to be "pure and clean" would they still be loved by God? What if you continue to sin? The answer appears in 3:32

"Say: "Obey God and His Apostle"; but if they turn back God loves not those who reject Faith."

This is important because in the Quran, God does not encourage love from His people, only obedience. According to the Quran a person does well to love God, but God is more interested in obedience rather than love.

I Loved You First, I Can Prove It

"O ye who believe! If any from among you turn back from his faith, soon will God produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him..." (4:54).

Compare the above with this passage from the Injeel, "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12) In the Quran, God says He will form a people who will love Him, *then* He will love them in return. But in the Injeel, God loves people first, and we are to imitate that love.