

Questions and Answers about Islam

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Introduction by the Author

Through answering general questions, this book aims to introduce this great religion to people. It aims at highlighting its uniqueness and flexibility throughout the ages in embracing the various cultures and peoples, coexisting with events, and going hand in hand with developments. It also emphasizes its stability and its ability to survive and sustain despite all malicious endeavors to distort its image and endurance that are part of the negative publicity waged against it and which associates it with terrorism and calls people to fight it.

I ask Allah, the High and the Omnipotent, to make this book a lantern that illuminates the way for those who seek the truth and those with open minds and hearts, and to make it a message of peace addressed to all people to know about the religion of Islam.

Belief in the Creator

Should man believe in God?

Man must believe, whether in the true God or in any false deity, which he might call god or something else. This deity could be a tree, a star in the sky, a woman, one's boss at work, a scientific theory, or it could even be some personal whim. However, he must have faith in something that he could follow and sanctify and refer to in his life course, and he might even die for its sake. This is what we call "worship", and worshiping the true God is what sets man free from being a slave to others and to the society.

Who is the True God?

The true God is the Creator and worshiping other than the true God implies the claim that they are deities. The God must be a creator and the

proof of his being a creator must be either by witnessing what he has created in the universe or by revelation from God Who is proven to be a Creator. So, if this claim has no proof to support it, neither from the creation of the witnessed universe nor from the words of the Creator, then such deities are definitely false deities.

It is noticed that in hard times man tries to focus on a single truth and resorts to only one God. Science has proven the unity of matter and the unity of the universal system through examining the manifestations and phenomena of the universe, and through the resemblance and similarity that exist in it.

Let us imagine what would happen to the children of the same family if their parents disagree on an important issue, and how their disagreement would lead to the loss of their children and the destruction of their future. Similarly, what would be the case if two gods or more rule the Universe?!

Allah Almighty said:

﴿لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾
[الأنبياء: 22]

{If there had been gods besides Allah in the heavens and earth, both realms would have fallen in disorder. Glory be to Allah – Lord of the Throne – far above what they ascribe [to Him].} [1]

Moreover,¹ the existence of the creator must precede the existence of time, place, and energy. Accordingly, nature cannot be the cause leading

¹ Surat al-Anbiyā': 22]

to the creation of the universe because nature itself is made up of time, place, and energy. Therefore, this cause must have existed before nature.

In addition, the creator must be a vanquisher, i.e., He must possess authority over everything.

All matters must belong to Him so that He could issue His command of initiating the creation.

He must possess complete knowledge about everything, i.e., He must fully know everything.

He must be one and only one and must need no others besides Himself. He must have no need to be embodied in the form of any of His creatures. He needs no wife and no progeny in all cases because He must combine all the attitudes of perfection.

He must be wise and must do nothing except for a specific wisdom.

He must be just and his justice entails reward and punishment. He must be connected with humans, otherwise he would not be God if He creates them and abandons them. For this reason, He sends them messengers to show them the way and to convey His law. Those who follow the way are entitled to receive His reward, while those who deviate from it deserve His punishment.

What are the attributes of the Creator and why is He referred to as Allah?

In the Middle East, the Christians, Jews, and Muslims use the word "Allah" to refer to God. It means the only true God, the God of Moses and Jesus. The Creator has introduced Himself in the Noble Qur'an by the name "Allah" and by other names and attributes. Moreover, the word "Allah" was mentioned 89 times in the early edition of the Old Testament.

"The Creator" is one of the attributes of Allah Almighty that has been mentioned in the Qur'an.

﴿هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾ [الحشر: 24]

{He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. He has the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and earth glorifies Him, for He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.} [2]

The First Who is not preceded by anything and the Last Who is not followed by anything:

﴿هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ ۗ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾ [الحديد: 3]

{He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden, and He is All-Knowing of everything.}

The Governor and the Disposer of all affairs:

﴿يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ...﴾ [السجدة: 5]

{He manages every matter from the heaven to the earth...}

The All-Knowing and the Omnipotent:

﴿... إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا﴾ [فاطر: 44]

{He is indeed All-Knowing, Most Capable.}

He is not embodied in the form of any of His creatures:

{...There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.}

He has no partner and no progeny:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾

[الإخلاص: 4-1]

{Say: “He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is He begotten, and there is none comparable to Him.”}

The All-Wise:

﴿... وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾﴾ [النساء: 111]

{...And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.}

The Just: {...And your Lord does not wrong anyone.}

Who created the Creator?

This question is the result of a misconception about the Creator and comparing Him to the creation. Such misconception is refuted by mind and logic, for instance:

Can man answer the simple question: What is the smell of the color red? There is no answer to such a question, of course, because the red color is not classified among things that could be smelled.

The company that manufactures a commodity like the television or the fridge, for instance, sets rules and criteria for using the device and writes such instructions in a manual that explains the usage method and attaches it to the device. The consumer must follow such instructions if he wants to benefit from the device; however, the manufacturing company does not yield to these rules.

We understand from the previous examples that every effect must have a cause, but God is simply not effected and is not classified among things that could be created. God is the First before everything; thus, He is the main (original) cause. Despite the fact that the cause-and-effect law is one of Allah's immutable universal rules, yet Allah Almighty does whatever He wills and He possesses absolute power.

What are the proofs of the Creator's existence?

Belief in the Creator is built upon the fact that things do not appear without a cause, not to mention the fact that the huge material populated universe and the creatures in it possess an intangible awareness and comply with the immaterial mathematical rules, and to explain the existence of a material and limited universe, we need an independent source that is both immaterial and eternal.

A simple set of coincidences could have never brought the universe into existence because random coincidence can never be the main cause of something; rather, it is a secondary result that depends on the availability of other factors (the existence of time, place, matter, and energy) that could lead to the existence of something by coincidence. So, the word "coincidence" could not be used to explain anything because it is nothing at all.

For instance, if someone entered his room and found the glass of the window broken, he would then ask his family about the one who broke it. They would answer saying: It was broken by coincidence. The answer here is wrong because he did not ask about how the window was broken; rather, he asked about the one who broke the window. Thus, coincidence is a description of the act but not the doer of the act. The right answer in this case is to say that so-and-so broke it, then, they could clarify that the

one who broke it did that by accident or deliberately. The same applies exactly to the universe and creatures.

So, if we ask who brought the universe and creatures into existence, and some answer by saying that they were brought into existence by coincidence, then, this would be the wrong answer because the question posed was not how the universe was brought into existence; rather, we asked about who brought it into existence. Therefore, coincidence is not a doer and not a creator of the universe.

Then, comes the question: Did the Creator of the universe create it by coincidence or deliberately? The answer is, of course, derived from the act and its consequences.

Back to the example of the window, if we assume that someone entered their room and found the glass of the window broken and asked their family about the one who broke it and they answered: So-and-so broke it by coincidence, the answer here would be acceptable and logical because breaking a window is a random thing that can happen by coincidence. However, if that same person entered a room the next day and found the glass of the window repaired and as good as before and asked their family about the one who fixed it and they answered: So-and-so fixed it by coincidence, the answer here would not be acceptable; rather, it would be logically impossible because the act, which is fixing the glass, is not a random act. It is an organized act that is controlled by rules. First, the broken glass should be removed and the window frame cleaned. Then, new glass with accurate measurements that fit the frame should be cut. Then, the glass needs to be glued to the frame and the frame should be fixed in its place. All such acts cannot happen by accident; rather, they must take place intentionally. The logic rule states: The random act that lacks order may happen by accident, but the organized and coherent act

and the act that results from order cannot happen by accident; rather, it happens intentionally.

By looking at the universe and the creatures, we realize that they have been created according to a perfect order. Moreover, they operate and submit to both perfect and accurate laws. Therefore, it's logically impossible that the universe and creatures have been created by coincidence; in reality they have been created intentionally. Thus, coincidence is completely eliminated from the question of creating the universe. [10]

Other proofs of the Creator's existence are:²

1. The Proof of Creation and Origination

It means that the emergence of the universe from non-existence indicates the existence of the Creating God.

﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ﴾ [آل عمران: 190]

{Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and earth and the alternation of the night and day are signs for people of understanding.} [11]

2. The Proof of Inevitability

If we assume that everything has a source and this source has a source, and this sequence continues perpetually, then, logically we will reach a beginning or an end. We must inevitably reach a source that has no

² Yaqīn Channel for refuting atheism and secularism: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHASgETgqxl>

source, which we call "the main cause" which is different from the main event. For instance, if we assume that the Big Bang is the main event, then, the Creator is the main cause that led to this event.

3. The Proof of Perfection and Order

It means that the precision in making the universe and its laws indicates the existence of the Creating God.

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفْوُتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ﴾ [المك: 3]

{Who created seven heavens one above another; you will not see any imperfection in the creation of the Most Compassionate. Look again; can you see any flaw?} [12]

﴿إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾ [القمر: 49]

{Indeed, We have created everything according to a determined measure.}

4. The Proof of Providence

It means that the universe has been created to fit exactly man's emergence. This proof indicates the divine attributes of beauty and mercy.

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْأَنْهَارَ﴾ [إبراهيم: 32]

{It is Allah Who has created the heavens and earth and sent down rain from the sky, producing therewith fruits as provision for you. He has made the ships for your service to sail through the sea by His command, and has made for you the rivers.} [14]

5. The Proof of Subjugation and Planning

It is related to the divine attributes of majesty and power.

﴿وَالْأَنْعَمَ خَلَقَهَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا دِفْءٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرِيحُونَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَتَحْمِلُ أَثْقَالَكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ لَّمْ تَكُونُوا بَلِغِيهِ إِلَّا بِشِقِّ الْأَنْفُسِ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾﴾ [النحل: 5-8]

{And He has created the livestock for you as a source of warmth and other benefits, and from them you eat. There is beauty for you in them when you bring them home to rest and when you take them out to graze. And they carry your heavy loads to lands that you could not reach without great hardship. Indeed, your Lord is Most Gracious, Most Merciful. And [He created] the horses, mules and donkeys for you to ride and for adornment, and He creates other things that you do not know. } [15]

6. The Proof of Allocation

It means that what we see in the universe could have taken many various forms; however, Allah Almighty has chosen the best form.

(٦٨) تَشْرِبُونَ الْمَاءَ أَقْرَأَيْتُمْ

﴿أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ الْمَاءَ الَّذِي تَشْرَبُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ءَأَنْتُمْ أَنْزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ الْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنزِلُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ لَوْ نَشَاءُ جَعَلْنَاهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾﴾ [الواقعة: 68-70]

{Have you thought about the water that you drink? Is it you who brings it down from the clouds, or is it We Who bring it down? If We willed, We could make it salty; will you not then give thanks?} [16]

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا ﴿٤٥﴾﴾ [الفرقان: 45]

{Do you not see how your Lord extends the shade? If He had willed, He could have made it still. Then We made the sun an indication for it.}

The Qur'an mentions probabilities for explaining how the universe was created and brought to existence:

﴿أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَلْ لَّا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمُ الْمُصَيِّطُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ [الطور: 35-37]

{Were they created by none, or were they the creators [of themselves]? Or did they create the heavens and earth? Rather, they are not certain in faith.Or do they possess the treasures of your Lord, or do they have full control [of everything]?}

Were they created by none:

This contradicts many natural laws that we see around us. A simple example is like saying that the Egyptian pyramids weren't built by anyone that alone would be sufficient to rebut such a probability.

Or were they the creators:

Creating Oneself: Did the universe create itself? The term "creature" refers to something that did not exist and then came into existence. Self-creation is a logical and practical impossibility due to the fact that self-creation means that something existed and did not exist at the same time, which is impossible. Saying that man created himself means that he existed before existing.

Even when some of the skeptical speak and stress the probability of self-creation in unicellular organisms, it first must be assumed that the first cell already existed to start such a discussion. Even with that assumption in mind, this is not self-creation; rather, it is a reproduction method (non-sexual reproduction) where the offspring comes from one single living organism and inherits the genes of that parent only.

Many people, when asked about who brought them into existence, simply say: My parents are the cause of my existence in this life. Obviously, this answer is meant to cut things short and find a way out of this dilemma. Man, by nature, does not like to think profoundly and exert effort. He certainly knows that his parents will die and he will stay, then, his offspring will succeed him to give the same answer. He knows very well that he has nothing to do with creating his children. So, the true question here is: Who brought mankind to existence?

Or did they create the heavens and earth:

None has ever claimed creating the heavens and earth. Only the One in charge of everything has revealed this truth when He sent His messengers to mankind. The truth is that He is the Creator, Originator, and Owner of the heavens and earth and what is in t them, and He has neither a partner nor a child.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿قُلْ أَدْعُوا الَّذِينَ رَعَمْتُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِيهِمَا مِنْ شِرْكٍَ وَمَا لَهُ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ ظَهِيرٍ﴾ [سبأ: 22]

{Say, “Call upon those whom you claim [to be gods] besides Allah. They do not have even an atom’s weight of authority in the heavens or on earth, nor do they have any share in either of them, nor is any of them a helper to Allah.”} [20]

We can set an example here, when a bag is found in a public place and no one claims ownership except a single person who describes the bag and what is inside it to prove that it is theirs. In this case, they are entitled to have the bag until someone else claims it to be theirs, and these are law in which humanity govern themselves

The Existence of a Creator

All this leads us to the inevitable answer, which is the existence of a creator. It is strange how man always tries to assume many probabilities far from this one, as if the probability of this one is something unreal and unlikely and could never be believed or verified. However, if we adopt a truthful and fair stance using a scientific and sagacious approach, we'll definitely reach the fact that the Creating God can never be encompassed, since He is the Creator of the whole universe, therefore, His essence must be beyond the limits of the human perception. It is logical to assume that it is not easy to verify the existence of this unseen power, which must reveal itself in a way it believes to be appropriate for human perception. Man must reach the conviction that this unseen power is real and exists and there is no way out except through certainty in this last and remaining probability to explain the secret behind this existence.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿فَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنِّي لَكُم مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾ [الذاريات: 50]

{So flee to Allah. Indeed, I am a clear warner to you from Him.} [21]

It is a must to believe in the existence of this creating and originating God if we are seeking perpetual goodness, bliss, and eternity.

What is the tangible proof of the Creator's existence?

Although we could see the rainbow and the mirage, yet they do not actually exist. Moreover, we believe in the existence of gravity without seeing it just because its existence was proven by the material science.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَرَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾ [الأنعام: 103]

{No vision can encompass Him, but He encompasses all vision, and He is the Most Subtle, the All-Aware.} [22]

As an example to make things clear only, man cannot describe something immaterial like an "idea". He cannot identify its weight in grams, its length in centimeters, its chemical structure, its color, its pressure, its form, and its image.

Perception is classified into four types, which are:

Sensual perception: like seeing an object using sight.

Imaginary perception: like comparing a physical image with something in one's memory and in one's previous experience.

Illusory perception: which is feeling how others feel, like someone feeling that his son is sad.

These three types are common between mankind and animals.

Mental perception, which is the kind of perception that is unique to man.

Atheists want to omit this kind of perception to put man on the same level with animals. Mental perception is the strongest kind of perception because the mind is what rectifies the sense. For instance, when one sees a mirage, as mentioned in the previous example, it is the mind's job to tell him that this is just an illusion and not water and it appears only because of the reflection of light on sand and it does not really exist. So, here one is deluded by his sense and guided by his mind. Atheists reject mental evidence and demand a material evidence, which they refer to as "scientific evidence". Is the mental and logical evidence not scientific as well? As a matter of fact, it is scientific evidence; however, it is not material evidence. Try to imagine the reaction of someone who lived on planet earth five hundred years ago to the mere idea of the existence of minute microbes that could not be seen with the bare eyes. [23]

Despite the fact that the mind can perceive the Creator's existence and some of His attributes; nevertheless, it has boundaries. It can perceive the wisdom behind some issues and fail to perceive it in others. No one, for example, can perceive the wisdom in the mind of a physicist like Einstein.³

"Bear in mind that Allah has the highest attributes, and the mere assumption that one has the ability to encompass the complete perception of Allah proves nothing but one's ignorance about Him. Your

³ Fadel Soliman <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3InWgcv18A>

car may take you to the beach but cannot take you inside the sea. If I ask you, for instance, about the sea water and how many liters it contains and you answered by giving any number, in this case you are ignorant. However, if you reply by saying that you do not know, then this indicates your knowledge. The only way to know Allah is through His signs in the universe and through His Qur’anic verses." [24]

The sources of knowledge in Islam are: the Qur’an, the Sunnah, scholarly consensus, and what is proven by the sound the mind, which is subservient to the Qur’an and Sunnah, and does not contradict the revelation. Allah has created the mind to find guidance in universal signs and material issues that affirm facts mentioned in revelation and do not contradict them.⁴

Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾ قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾ [العنكبوت: 19-20]

{Do they not see how Allah originates the creation then resurrects it? That is certainly easy for Allah. Say, “Travel through the land and see how He originated the creation, then Allah will repeat it a second time. Indeed, Allah is Most Capable of all things.”} [25]

﴿فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ ۖ مَا أَوْحَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾﴾ [النجم: 10]

{Then he revealed to His slave what he had to reveal.}

⁴ From the sayings of Shaykh Muhammad Rātib an-Nābulsi.

The most beautiful thing about knowledge is that it is limitless, and the more we delve in sciences the more sciences we shall discover and we will never be able to encompass all knowledge. The smartest person is the one who tries to understand everything, but the most stupid person is the one who thinks he can understand everything.

Allah Almighty said:

{Say, "If the ocean were ink for [writing] the Words of my Lord, the ocean would surely run dry before the Words of my Lord are finished, even if We brought its like to resupply it."} [27]

Why is the Creator not embodied in the form of any of His creatures?

As an example to make things clear only, bearing in mind that Allah has the most highest of attributes, when man uses an electronic device and controls it from outside, he by no means is within the device.

If we assume that Allah can do this because He is capable of doing anything, we must also admit that the Creator, the One and Only God, and the Majestic never does what does not befit His majesty, for Allah is far Exalted above that.

For example, while bearing in mind that Allah has the highest of attributes, any priest or religious personality does not go out naked in the street despite his ability to do so because going out in public in that image does not befit his religious status.

Why does taking mediators in worshipping the Creator lead to eternity in Hellfire?

It is known, according to the human laws, that violating the rights of the king or the one in charge does not stand on an equal footing with other crimes. So, what about the King of all kings?! The right of Allah Almighty upon His servants is to be worshiped alone, as the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Allah's right upon His servants is that they should worship Him and associate no partners with Him...Do you know what is the servants' right upon Allah if they do so?" I said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He said: "The right of the servants upon Allah is that He should not punish them."

It is enough to imagine giving someone a gift and that person thanks and praises someone else for that gift. Bearing in mind that Allah has the highest attributes, this is how the slaves deal with their Creator; He has granted them limitless blessings, but they show gratitude to others and the Creator after all does not need them.

Why does the Creator refer to Himself in the plural form although He is the One and Only God?

When the Lord of the worlds uses the word "We" to refer to Himself in many of the Qur'anic verses, this indicates that He alone combines all the attributes of beauty and majesty. In the Arabic language, this also indicates power and greatness. Moreover, in the English language it is called the "royal we" where the plural pronoun is used to refer to someone who holds a high office like the king, the monarch, or the sultan. However, the Qur'an always stresses the fact that Allah is One when it comes to worship.

Why has the Creator granted mankind the will to choose between disbelief and belief?

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ...﴾ [الكهف: 29]

{Say, “The truth is from your Lord. Whoever wills may believe, and whoever wills may disbelieve...} [28]

The Creator could have made us forced on obeying and worshiping Him; however, compulsion does not achieve the goal behind creating man.

The divine wisdom is manifested in creating Adam and distinguishing him with knowledge.

﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾ [البقرة: 31]

{And He taught Adam the names of everything; then He presented them to the angels, and said, “Tell Me the names of these, if what you say is true?”} [29]

He granted him the ability to choose.

﴿وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ [البقرة: 35]

{We said, “O Adam, dwell in Paradise, you and your wife; and eat pleasantly from wherever you wish, but do not approach this tree, or else you will both become the wrongdoers.”} [30]

Moreover, He opened the door of repentance for him because the will to choose must inevitably lead to mistakes and sins.

﴿فَتَلَقَّى آدَامُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ [البقرة: 37]

{Then Adam received some words from his Lord, and He accepted his repentance. He is the Acceptor of repentance, the Most Merciful.} [31]

Allah Almighty wanted Adam to be a vicegerent on earth.

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَأِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۗ قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ [البقرة: 30]

{And [remember] when your Lord said to the angels, “I am going to appoint a vicegerent on earth.” They said, “Will You appoint on it someone who will spread corruption therein and shed blood, while we glorify You with Your praises and proclaim Your holiness?” He said, “I know that which you do not know.”} [32]

So, the will and the ability to choose are, in themselves, a blessing if used and directed in a sound and correct manner. However, they turn into a curse if used to achieve corrupt objectives.

The will and ability to choose must be surrounded with risks, trials, struggle, and self-striving. They definitely represent a higher rank and honor for man than subservience that leads to fake happiness.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولِي الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [النساء: 95]

{Not equal are those believers who stay behind – except those forced by necessity – and those who fight in the way of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has given a higher rank to those who fight with their wealth and their lives than those who stay behind. To each Allah has promised a fine reward, but Allah has favored those who fight over those who stay behind with a great reward.} [33]

What would be the benefit derived from reward and punishment if there has been no free will for which one deserves recompense?

Despite all this, it should be known that man's actual choices in this life are limited and Allah Almighty will hold us accountable only for what we have chosen freely. We have not chosen, for example, the circumstances and the environment we grew in, nor did we choose our parents, besides the fact that we cannot control the way we look or the color of our skin.

Why did Allah create mankind although He does not need them?

When one finds himself very rich and extremely generous, he invites his friends and loved ones for food and drink.

Such attributes of ours are nothing but an insignificant part of what Allah has, as Allah, the Creator, possesses the attributes of majesty and beauty. He is the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, the Giver, and the Generous. He created us to worship Him, to have mercy upon us, to make us happy and to give us, if we worship Him with sincere devotion

and obey His commands. All the beautiful human attributes are derived from His attributes.

He created us and granted us the ability to choose, so, we either choose the path of obedience and worship or deny His existence and choose the path of rebellion and sins.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾﴾ [الذاريات: 56-58]

{I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me. I seek no provision from them, nor do I want them to feed Me. Indeed, it is Allah Who is the All-Provider, Lord of Power, the Mighty.} [34]

As for the fact that Allah does not need any of His creatures, it is a proven issue logically and textually.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿...إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٦﴾﴾ [العنكبوت: 6]

{...Indeed, Allah is in no need of the worlds.} [35]

Logically, it is established that the Creator of perfection possesses the attributes of absolute perfection, which entails the negation of need for others since being in need for others is an attribute of deficiency and that is something that Allah Almighty is far exalted above.

He has distinguished the jinn and mankind from other creatures by granting them the free will. What makes man distinct is addressing the Lord of the worlds directly and worshipping Him sincerely out of his free

will. This way, he fulfills the Creator's wisdom behind putting man on top of the creatures.

Knowing the Lord of the worlds can be attained by realizing His beautiful names and sublime attributes, which are divided into two main groups:

. Names indicating His beauty: They include every attribute that is related to mercy, pardon, and kindness like Ar-Rahmān (the Most Compassionate), Ar-Rahīm (the Most Merciful), Ar-Razzāq (the All-Provider), Al-Wahhāb (the Bestower), Al-Barr (the Most Kind), Ar-Ra'ūf (the All-Kind), etc.

. Names indicating His majesty: They include every attribute that is related to power, ability, greatness, and awe like Al-'Azīz (the All-Mighty), Al-Jabbār (the Compeller), Al-Qahhār (the Superb Vanquisher), Al-Qābid (the Constrictor), Al-Khāfid (the Abaser), etc.

Our knowledge of the attributes of Allah Almighty leads us to worship Him in a way that befits His majesty, His glorification, and His exaltation above whatever does not befit Him seeking His mercy and avoiding His wrath and punishment. Worshiping Allah is by obeying His commands and avoiding His prohibitions and by reforming and populating the earth. Accordingly, the concept of this worldly life revolves around its being an exam and a test for mankind to be distinguished, thus, Allah raises the degrees of the pious and they become worthy of being the vicegerents on earth and the heirs of Paradise in the Hereafter, while He disgraces the corrupt ones in this worldly life and they end up in Hellfire.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لِّهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴿٧﴾﴾ [الكهف: 7]

{We have made all that is on earth as an adornment for it, so that We may test them as to which of them is best in deeds.} [36]

So, the issue of why Allah has created mankind has two aspects, which are:

. An aspect that is related to man, which is clarified by clear texts in the Qur'an, and that is worshipping Allah Almighty to attain Paradise.

. An aspect that is related to the Almighty Creator, which is the wisdom behind the creation, and we should know that wisdom belongs to Him alone and it does not concern any of His creatures. We should also know that our knowledge is limited and deficient whereas His knowledge is perfect and absolute. As a matter of fact, the creation of mankind, death, resurrection, and the Hereafter represents nothing but a very insignificant part of the creation. It is up to Allah Almighty and it is not the concern of anyone other than Him from the angels, mankind, or anyone else.

The angels asked their Lord this question when He created Adam, and He gave them a clear final answer by saying:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰئِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۗ قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ [البقرة: 30]

{And [remember] when your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to appoint a vicegerent on earth." They said, "Will You appoint on it someone who will spread corruption therein and shed blood, while we glorify You with Your praises and proclaim Your holiness?" He said, "I know that which you do not know."} [37]

Answering the angels by telling them that Allah Almighty knows that which they do not know clarifies several points, which are:. The wisdom behind creating mankind belongs to Allah alone and the whole thing is up to Allah and the creatures have nothing to do with it as He{Does whatever He wills.}and He {Cannot be questioned for what He does, but they will be questioned.}. The reason for creating mankind is part of Allah's knowledge, which is unknown to the angels, and since it is related to Allah's absolute knowledge, therefore, He knows best the wisdom that stands behind it and none of His creatures is aware of it except by His permission.

Why has the Creator not given mankind the chance to choose whether to exist in life or not?

If Allah wanted to give His creation the chance to choose whether to exist in life or not, then, they had to exist in the first place. How could mankind have a say while being non-existent? It is a matter of existence and non-existence. Actually, man's attachment to life and his fear for it are the greatest evidence on how satisfied he is with such a blessing.

The blessing of life is a test for mankind to distinguish the kind person who is content with his Lord from the mean person who is displeased with Him. So, the wisdom of the Lord of the worlds behind the creation is to extract those who are content with Him to be rewarded with His Paradise in the Hereafter.

This question shows how the misconception could obliterate the mind's logical thinking when taking control of it, and it is one of the proofs of the Qur'an's miraculousness,

as Allah Almighty said:

﴿سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كُلَّ آيَةٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا وَإِنْ يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الرُّشْدِ لَا يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا وَإِنْ يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الْغَيِّ يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ﴾ [الأعراف: 146]

{I will turn away from My signs those who are arrogant in the land without any right. Even if they see every sign, they will still not believe in it; if they see the way of guidance, they will not follow it, but if they see the way of misguidance, they will follow it as their way. That is because they have rejected Our signs and were heedless of them.} [40]

It is not appropriate to consider knowing Allah's wisdom from the creation as one of our rights that we should demand, this way, concealing such a wisdom from us does not become an act of oppression.

When Allah grants us the opportunity to live eternally in an everlasting bliss in Paradise, which has what no ear has ever heard, no eye has ever seen, and no human mind has ever imagined, what oppression lies here?

He grants us the free will to decide for ourselves, so we choose it or we choose torment.

Allah informs us of what awaits us and provides us with a crystal clear map of the way to reach such a bliss and avoid the torment.

Allah encourages us in various ways to follow the path to Paradise and warns us repeatedly against following the path to Hellfire.

He informs us of the stories of the dwellers of Paradise and how they succeeded in winning it, and the stories of the dwellers of Hellfire and how they incurred its torment so that we might learn from such stories.

He narrates for us the conversations between the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hellfire that will take place to help us understand the lesson well.

Allah gives us ten rewards for the one single good deed, and counts the evil deed as one and tells us so in order to hasten to good deeds.

Allah informs us that if we do something good after committing an evil deed, the former will erase the latter, i.e., we shall win ten rewards and will have our evil deed omitted.

He also tells us that repentance erases what precedes it, so the one who repents of a sin is like the one who is sinless.

Moreover, Allah makes the one who guides to good like the one who does it.

He makes it very easy for us to win rewards, as we can gain great rewards and get rid of our sins effortlessly by asking for His forgiveness, by exalting Him, and by reading the Adhkār (regular supplications).

He grants us ten rewards for every letter that we recite of the Qur'an.

Allah rewards us for the mere intention of doing something good, even if we could not do it, and He does not hold us accountable for the evil intention as long as it is not put into action.

Allah promises to guide us more, grant us success, and make the ways of goodness easy for us if we hasten to goodness.

What oppression lies in this?

As a matter of fact, Allah does not deal with us according to His justice alone; rather, He deals with us according to His mercy, generosity, and benevolence.

The Religion that Allah Approves of for His Slaves

What is religion?

Religion is a way of life that regulates man's relation with his Creator and with those around him, and it is the path that leads to the Hereafter.

What is the need for religion?

The need for religion is more essential than the need for food and drink. Man is religious by nature, so if he is not guided to the true religion, he will invent a religion for himself as what happened in the pagan religions that were invented by people. Man needs security in this life as well as in the Hereafter and after his death,

and the true religion is what guarantees its followers complete security in both abodes. For example,

if we are walking along a road and we do not know its end, we have two options: either to follow the instructions written on the signboards that are on the way, or to try guessing which could lead us to be lost and destroyed.

Moreover, if we wanted to buy a television and try to make it operate without referring to the manual, it will be damaged. The television that is produced by the same factory reaches us here, for instance, with the same manual that is sent to another country; hence, we should use it in the same manner.

Another example, when someone wants to contact another person, that second person must inform him of the possible method to contact

him by asking him to call him on the phone, for instance, instead of contacting him through the email. The first person must use the exact phone number that the other gave him and cannot use any other number.

The previous examples show us that mankind cannot worship Allah by following their personal desires because by doing this they will harm themselves before causing harm to others. Some nations dance and sing in the places of worship to communicate with the Lord of the worlds, while others clap their hands to awaken the god according to their beliefs. Others worship Allah by taking a mediator and think that Allah is embodied in the form of a human or a rock. Allah, thus, wants to protect us from ourselves when we worship what could never bring us benefit or harm; rather, it could cause our destruction in the Hereafter. Associating others with Allah in worship is considered the gravest major sin and eternal punishment in Hellfire is set for such a sin. Allah Almighty, out of His greatness, has created a system, which is called "religion", for all of us to comply with so it could regulate our relation with Him and with those around us.

What are the qualities of the true religion?

First of all, the true religion must be compatible with man's initial natural disposition that needs a direct relationship with its Creator without the interference of mediators, which represents man's virtues and good qualities.

It also has to be a religion that is easy and simple, understood and not complicated, and appropriate for every time and place.

It must be a consistent religion for all generations, countries, and all types of people along with various laws that fit man's need in all times. It must not accept additions or omissions depending on personal desires as

in the case of customs and traditions that have been established by people.

It must include clear beliefs and must not need a mediator. It must not depend on emotions; rather, it must depend on sound and proven evidence.

It must cover all issues of life and all time and place, and must be fit for this worldly life and for the Hereafter, and it must build the soul without forgetting the body.

It must protect people's lives, honor, and properties and must respect their rights and minds.

Thus, whoever does not follow such a methodology that conforms with his natural disposition will live a confused and an unstable life, and will feel constriction in his chest and breath, let alone the torment in the Hereafter.

What is the importance of commitment to morals under the umbrella of religion?

When humanity perishes, none will remain except the Ever-Living Who never dies. Whoever says that the commitment to morals under the umbrella of religion is unimportant is like one who studies for twelve years and at the end says that he does not want the certificate.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنَّ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنْثُورًا﴾ [الفرقان: 23]

{We will turn to whatever deeds they did and turn them into scattered dust.} [41]

Populating the earth and good morals are not the objectives of religion; rather, they are a means. The objective of religion is to acquaint man with his Lord, then with the source of his existence, his way, and his destiny. A good end and destiny cannot be attained except through knowing the Lord of the worlds by worshiping Him and winning His pleasure. The way to achieve this is by populating the earth and adopting good morals on condition that one's deeds are meant to seek Allah's pleasure.

Let us assume that someone has subscribed to a social insurance agency to get a pension; however, the company made a statement that it will not be able to pay pensions and will shut down soon and that person learns about it, will he continue to deal with it?

Whenever man realizes the inevitable fact that humanity will perish and that it is incapable of rewarding him at the end, and that everything he has offered for the sake of humanity will turn into scattered dust, he will feel terribly disappointed. The believer is the one who works, exerts effort, treats people kindly, and helps humanity for the sake of Allah and, consequently, attains happiness in this world and in the Hereafter.

It is meaningless if the employee maintains his relationship with his colleagues and respects them while neglecting his relationship with his employer. Therefore, to attain goodness in our life and win others' respect our relationship with our Creator must be the best and strongest one.

In addition, there is a question that we must ask: What drives man to adopt morals and values and respect the laws or respect other people? What is the criterion that disciplines man and forces him to do what is good and keep away from evil? If people's answer is that man does so by the force of law, we should reply by saying that law is not present in every

time and place and it is not sufficient to solve all conflicts on the local and international levels. Moreover, most of people's deeds are done away from law and from the eyes of people.

The need for religion is sufficiently proven by the existence of this great number of religions which the majority of nations resort to for organizing their life and disciplining the attitudes of its people on the basis of religious laws. As we know, the only criterion that could discipline man in the absence of law is his religious beliefs, since the law cannot be with man in all times and and places.

The only thing that could act as a deterrent and restraint for man is his inner belief in the existence of a watcher and a reckoner. This belief is deeply engraved in one's heart and comes clearly to the surface when man is about to do something wrong. At this moment, his good and evil urges are in conflict and he tries to conceal from people any disgraceful act, or any act that is condemned by the sound natural disposition. All this proves the fact that the concept of religion and belief exists in the depths of the soul of a human.

Religion is there to fill the vacancy that man-made laws could never fill or force the minds and hearts to abide by regardless of time and place.

The motive behind doing goodness differs from one person to another and everyone has his own motives and personal interests that drive him to abide by certain morals and values. For example:

The punishment: It could be what deters man from harming people.

The reward: It could be what drives man to do good.

Self-satisfaction: it could be what disciplines man and helps him control his desires and yearnings, as man has a mood and personal desires, and what appeals to him today might not appeal to him tomorrow.

The religious restraint: It is knowing Allah and fearing Him and being aware of His existence wherever one goes, and it is a strong and efficient motive. [42]

Religion has a great impact on stimulating people's feelings and emotions whether negatively or positively. This proves that people's natural disposition is originally built upon knowing Allah and it could be used often, whether intentionally or unintentionally, as a motive that drives man. This indicates the significance of religion in man's awareness since it is related to his Creator.⁵

Does referring to religion deactivate the mind and logic?

The mind's role is to judge things and approve them; however, the mind's inability to reach the purpose behind man's existence, for instance, does not cancel its role; rather, it gives religion the chance to inform it of what it has failed to realize. The religion informs the mind of its Creator, the source of its existence, and the purpose behind its existence, then the mind carries out the process of understanding, judging, and affirming such information. Thus, acknowledging the Creator's existence does not cause one's mind or logic to switch off.

Why is it not correct for mankind to replace religion with the experimental science?

Many people, in our present time, believe that light exists outside the boundaries of time, yet they cannot accept the fact that the Creator does

⁵ Atheism a giant leap of faith Dr. Raida Jarrar.

not submit to the rules of time and place, i.e., Allah Almighty is before everything and after everything and none of His creatures can encompass Him.

Many believe that when the connected particles are separated they keep communicating with each other at the same time, yet they cannot accept the idea that the Creator is present with His servants with His knowledge wherever they go. Man believes that he possesses a mind without seeing it, yet he refuses to believe in Allah without seeing Him.

Many refuse to believe in Paradise and Hellfire, yet they accept the existence of other worlds that they cannot see. The material science informs man that he should believe in things that do not exist in the first place like the mirage, and he actually believes in it; however, at the time of death, the physics and chemistry will be of no avail to mankind as they have promised them with nothing but non-existence.

Man cannot deny the author's existence for merely knowing the book, as they are not alternatives. Science has discovered the laws of the universe, yet it did not set such laws, it is the Creator Who has set them.

Some of the believers hold the highest degrees in physics and chemistry; however, they are aware that behind such universal laws there stands a great Creator. So, the material science, in which the materialists believe, has discovered the laws that were created by Allah but it has not created such laws. Scientists can find nothing to study without such laws that have been created by Allah. Meanwhile, faith benefits the believer in this worldly life and in the Hereafter because knowing and learning about the universal laws increase their belief in their Creator.

When catching severe flu or fever, one may not be able to get himself a cup of water, so, how could he dispense with his relationship with his Creator?

Science constantly changes, and having complete faith in science only is a problem in itself because emerging new discoveries annuls previous theories. Some of what we consider as science is still theoretical. Even if we assume that all the science that has been discovered is established and accurate, there still remains a problem, as in the present time, science attributes all the glory to the discoverer and neglects the Maker. For example, let us assume that someone enters a room and discovers an extremely beautiful painting that is perfectly drawn, then, he comes out to tell people about that discovery. Everyone comes to admire the man who discovered the painting and forgets to ask the most important question: "Who draw it?" This is what people do, as they admire so much the scientific discoveries of the laws of nature and space and forget about the creativity of the One Who created such laws.

The material science can help man make a rocket; however, it cannot help him in judging the beauty of an artistic painting for instance, or in estimating the value of things, or in acquainting us with good and evil. The material science informs us that the bullet kills, but it does not inform us that it is wrong to use it in killing others.

Albert Einstein, the famous physicist, said: "Science can never be the source of morals. There is no doubt that there are moral bases for science; however, we cannot say that there are scientific bases for morals. I failed and all the endeavors to subjugate morals to the laws and equations of science shall fail as well."

Immanuel Kant, the famous German philosopher, said: "The moral evidence on God's existence is established in accordance with the requirements of justice because the good man must be rewarded, and the evil must be punished. This will not happen unless there exists a superior source that holds man accountable for his deeds. The evidence is also established in accordance with the requirements of the possibility of

combining between virtue and happiness, since they cannot be combined except in the presence of what is beyond nature, Who knows everything and is capable of everything. This superior source who exists beyond nature represents the God."

Is religion the opium of the people?

As a matter of fact, religion is commitment and responsibility. It makes the conscience alert and urges the believer to hold himself accountable for all his deeds, the big and small. The believer is responsible for himself, his family, his neighbor, and even for the passerby. He utilizes the available means and relies upon Allah, and I do not think that such are the qualities of the opium addicts. [43]

The real opium of the people is atheism not faith, since atheism calls its followers to materialism and to marginalizing their relationship with their Creator by rejecting religion and abandoning responsibilities and duties, and by urging them to enjoy the instant moment despite the consequences. Hence, they do whatever they like in the absence of the worldly punishment, believing that there exists no divine watcher or reckoner, and no resurrection or reckoning. Is this not the real description of addicts?!⁶

How is it possible to distinguish the right religion?

It is possible to distinguish the right religion from others through three main points, which are: [44]

⁶ Opium is a kind of drug extracted from the poppy plant and that is used in making heroin.

- . The attributes of the Creator or God in this religion.⁷
- . The qualities of the messenger or the prophet.
- . The content of the message.

The heavenly message or the religion must contain a description and an explanation of the attributes of beauty and majesty of the Creator, and an introduction of His essence, and the proofs of His existence.

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾
[الإخلاص: 4-1]

{Say: "He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is He begotten, [45]. and there is none comparable to Him."} [45]

﴿هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلِيمٌ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّبُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ [الحشر: 22-24]

{He is Allah; none has the right to be worshiped except Him, Knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. He is Allah; none has the right to be worshiped except Him, the Sovereign, the Most Holy, the Most Perfect, the Granter of Security, the Watcher over all, the All-Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Glory be to Allah far above what they associate with Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the

⁷ Quoted from "Khurāfat al-Ilhād" by Dr. 'Amr Sharīf, the edition of 2014.

Maker, the Fashioner. He has the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and earth glorifies Him, for He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.}

Concerning the concept and the qualities of the messenger, the religion or the heavenly message must:

1. Explain the manner of communication between the Creator and the messenger.

﴿وَأَنَا اخْتَرْتُكَ فَاسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوحَىٰ﴾ [طه: 13]

{I have chosen you, so listen to what is being revealed.} [47]

2. Clarify the fact that the prophets and messengers are responsible for conveying the message from Allah.

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الرُّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ...﴾ [المائدة: 67]

{O Messenger, convey what has been sent down to you from your Lord...} [48]

3. Clarify the fact that the messengers were not sent to call people to worship them but to worship Allah alone.

﴿مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّنَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ﴾ [آل عمران: 79]

{It is not for a human being whom Allah has given the Scripture, wisdom, and prophethood to say to the people, “Be my worshipers instead of Allah.” Rather, he would say, “Be devoted servants of your Lord

because of your teaching of the Scripture and because of your study thereof.”} [49]

4. Confirm the fact that the prophets and messengers represent the highest peak in the limited human perfection.

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾ [القلم: 4]

{Indeed, you are of a great moral character.} [50]

5. Confirm the fact that the messengers represent the human role model for people.

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾ [الأحزاب: 21]

{Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for those who look forward to Allah and the Last Day, and remember Allah much.} [51]

It is impossible to accept a religion whose texts tell us that its messengers are adulterers, murderers or killers, and traitors, or a religion whose texts are congested with treason in its worst levels.

As for the message content, it must contain:

1. A definition of the creating God.

The right religion does not describe God with attributes that do not befit His majesty or that undermine Him, by saying that the God is embodied in the form of a rock or an animal, or that He begets or is begotten, or that He has a peer from among His creatures.

﴿... لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾ [الشورى: 11]

{...There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.} [52]

﴿اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ﴾ [البقرة: 255]

{Allah: none has the right to be worshiped except Him, the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth. Who is there that can intercede with Him except with His permission? He knows what was before them and what will be after them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge, except what He wills. His Kursī [footstool] extends over the heavens and earth, and safeguarding of both does not weary Him, for He is the Most High, the Most Great.}

2. A clarification of the objective and the goal behind existence.

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ [الذاريات: 56]

{I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.} [54]

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ ۚ أَحَدًا﴾ [الكهف: 110]

{Say, “I am only a man like you; it has been revealed to me that your God is One God. So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and associate none in the worship of his Lord.”}

3. Religious concepts that are within the limits of the human capabilities.

﴿... يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ ...﴾ [البقرة: 185]

{...Allah wants ease for you and does not want hardship for you...} [56]

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ۗ﴾ [البقرة: 286]

{Allah does not burden any soul greater than it can bear. For it is what it has earned, and against it is what it has incurred...}

﴿يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُم ۖ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنسَانُ ضَعِيفًا﴾ [النساء: 28]

{Allah wants to lighten your burdens, for man was created weak.}

4. Logical evidence on the soundness of the concepts and axioms that it presents.

The message must offer clear and sufficient logical proofs of the soundness of what it presents.

Not only has the Noble Qur’an offered logical evidence, but it has also challenged the polytheists and the atheists to offer proofs of the soundness of their claims.

﴿وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصْرِيًّا تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١١١﴾﴾ [البقرة: 111]

{And they say, “None will enter Paradise except a Jew or a Christian.” That is their wishful thinking. Say, “Produce your proof, if you are truthful.”} [59]

﴿وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾ [المؤمنون: 117]

{Whoever invokes another god besides Allah, for which he has no proof, his reckoning will be with his Lord. Indeed, the disbelievers will never succeed.}

﴿قُلْ أَنْظَرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُعْنِي الْأَيُّتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَن قَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٦﴾﴾ [يونس: 101]

{Say, “Look at what is in the heavens and earth.” But the signs and warnings are of no avail to those who do not believe.}

5. No contradiction between the religious contents presented in the message.

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾﴾ [النساء: 82]

{Do they not then ponder on the Qur’an? If it had been from anyone other than Allah, they would have surely found in it many discrepancies.} [62]

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۗ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۗ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَأَمَّنَّا بِهِ ۗ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٧﴾﴾ [آل عمران: 7]

{It is He Who has sent down to you the Book. In it are definite verses, which are the foundation of the Book; while others are ambiguous. Those with deviant hearts follow the ambiguous verses, seeking discord and seeking their [false] interpretation. But no one knows their [true] interpretation except Allah. And those who are well-grounded in knowledge say, “We believe in it. It is all from our Lord.” None will take heed except people of understanding.}

6. No contradiction between the religious text and man's natural moral law.

﴿فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ [الروم: 30]

{Adhere sincerely to the true religion in all uprightness. This is the natural disposition with which Allah has created mankind. There is no change in Allah’s creation. This is the straight religion, but most people do not know.} [64]

﴿يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾﴾ [النساء: 26-27]

{Allah wants to make things clear to you and guide you to the [righteous] ways of those before you, and accept your repentance; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. Allah wants to accept your repentance, but those who follow their lusts want you to deviate a massive deviation.}

7. No contradiction between the religious concepts and the concepts of the material science.

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ [الأنبياء: 30]

{Are the disbelievers not aware that the heavens and earth were joined together and then We split them apart? We created from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?} [66]

8. It must not be isolated from the reality of man's life and it must keep abreast of the civilizational progress.

﴿قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾﴾ [الأعراف: 32]

{Say, "Who has forbidden the adornments and lawful provisions that Allah has brought forth for His slaves?" Say, "They are for the believers in the life of this world, and they will be exclusively for them on the Day of

Resurrection. This is how We make the verses clear for people who have knowledge.”} [67]

9. It must be fit for every time and place.

﴿... الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا...﴾ [المائدة: 3]

{...Today I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen Islam as your religion...} [68]

10. The message must be universal.

{Say [O Prophet], “O people, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all. To Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and earth; none has the right to be worshiped except Him; He gives life and causes death.” So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him, so that you may be guided.} [69]

What is the difference between the religion of Allah and people's traditions?

There is something called the sound Fitrah (natural disposition) or the sound logic. So, whatever conforms to logic and to the sound natural disposition and the sound mind is from Allah, and whatever is complicated is from human beings.

For example,

If we were told by a cleric, whether a Muslim, Christian, Hindu, or of any other religion, that the universe has one Creator alone, Who has no partner and no child, and Who does not come to earth in the form of a man, an animal, a rock, or an idol, and that we must worship Him alone

and resort to Him alone during calamities, then verily, this is the religion of Allah. However, if a cleric, be he a Muslim, Christian, Hindu, etc., tells us that Allah is embodied in any form that is known to mankind and that we must worship Allah and resort to Him through some person, prophet, priest, or saint, then this is from human beings.

The religion of Allah is clear and logical and free from mysteries. So, if a cleric wants to convince someone that Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is a god and we must worship him, he will have to exert a great effort to convince him and he will never be convinced because he might ask: How could Prophet Muhammad be god despite the fact that he used to eat and drink like the rest of us? The cleric may even end up saying to him: You are not convinced because this is a mystery and an ambiguous concept, but you shall understand it when you meet Allah. This is what many do today in justifying their worship of Jesus, Buddha and others. Such an example proves that the right religion of Allah must be free from riddles, which come only from human beings.

Moreover, the religion of Allah is free, i.e., everyone has the freedom to pray and worship Allah in His houses without having to pay fees to get a membership and be able to practice worship there. However, if people are forced to register and pay money in any place of worship to practice worship, then this is from human beings. It must be noted that if a cleric tells people that they have to give out charity to help people directly, then this is from the religion of Allah.

People are equal in the religion of Allah. There is no difference between an Arab and a non-Arab, a white and a black except in terms of piety. So, if some believe that there is a certain mosque, church, or temple for white people only, whereas black people have a separate place, then this is from human beings.

Honoring woman and holding her in high esteem, for instance, is a command from Allah; yet, suppressing women is done by people. Thus, if there is a suppressed Muslim woman in a certain country, for example, you shall find suppressed Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian women in the same country, as this is the culture of nations that has nothing to do with the right religion of Allah.

The right religion of Allah is in a constant conformity and harmony with the natural disposition. For example, anyone who smokes cigarettes or consumes alcohol will always ask his children to keep away from smoking and consuming alcohol because deep down he knows how perilous they are for health and society. So, when the religion prohibits intoxicants, for instance, this is indeed one of the commands of Allah. However, the prohibition of milk makes no sense because everyone knows how useful it is for health, that is why it was not prohibited by the religion. Allah, out of His mercy and kindness, has permitted us to eat what is good and prohibited us from eating what is evil.

The head-cover for woman and the modest clothes for both men and women are, for instance, from the commands of Allah; however, the details concerning the colors and designs are the choice of people. The atheist Chinese woman and the Christian Swiss female farmer wear a head-cover based on the fact that dressing modestly is part of the natural disposition.

Terrorism, for example, is widespread in various forms around the world among sects from all religions. There are Christian sects in Africa and all around the world that kill and practice the worst forms of suppression and violence under the name of religion and Allah. They represent 4% of the Christians in the world. While those who practice terrorism under the name of Islam represent only 0.01% of the Muslims in

the world. Not only so, but terrorism is widespread as well among the Buddhist and Hindu sects and other sects from other religions.

This is the way we can distinguish between the truth and falsehood before reading any religious book.

What makes Islam the true religion?

The teachings of Islam are flexible and inclusive of all aspects of life because it is a religion that is related to the human natural disposition that Allah created. This religion is compatible with the norms of this natural disposition, which are:

. Having belief in the One and Only God, Who is the Creator, Who has no partner or child. He is not embodied in the form of a man, animal, idol, or a stone, and He is not a trio.. Worshiping this Creator alone without taking mediators.He is the Creator of the universe and everything within it. Nothing is like Him, and people must worship the Creator alone through communicating with Him directly when repenting of a certain sin or when asking for help, and not through a priest, saint, or any other mediator.. The Lord of the worlds is Most Merciful to His creatures more than the mother is to her children, as He forgives them whenever they return and repent to Him.. It is the Creator's right to be worshiped alone, and it is man's right to be directly connected to his Lord.

.The creed of Islam is substantiated, clear, simple, and far away from blind belief.Islam does not only address the heart and emotions and does not depend on them as a foundation for belief; rather, it confirms its principles through making convincing and irrefutable arguments, with clear evidence, and correct justifications that are logically and find their way to the hearts as well, and all this through the following:

. Sending messengers to answer the natural questions that people have in mind about the purpose behind existence, the source of existence, and the destiny after death, and offering proofs from the universe, self, and history of the existence and oneness of Allah and His perfection. And presenting evidence on resurrection by creating man and creating the heavens and earth, and reviving earth after its death, and proving His wisdom and justice by rewarding the good and punishing the evil.

The name of "Islam" reflects man's relationship with the Lord of the worlds. It does not represent the name of a specific person or place unlike other religions. For example, Judaism was named after Judah, son of Jacob (peace be upon him), Christianity was named after the Messiah, Hinduism was named after the region where it emerged, etc.

Pillars of Imān (Faith)

What are the pillars of faith without which the Muslim's faith is invalid?

The Pillars of faith are:

Belief in Allah: "It is the firm belief that Allah is the Lord and Sovereign of everything, the only Creator, the One worthy of worship and submission, the One Who possesses the attributes of perfection, and the One Who is Exalted above any deficiency, along with being committed to this and acting upon it." [70]

Belief in the Angels: It is the belief in their existence and in the fact that they are creatures from light who obey Allah Almighty and never disobey Him.⁸

Belief in the Divine Books: It includes every book that was sent down by Allah Almighty on every messenger, like the Gospel that was sent down on 'Isa (Jesus), the Torah that was sent down on Mūsa (Moses), the Psalms that was sent down on Dāwūd (David), the Scriptures of Ibrahīm (Abraham) and Moses, [71] and the Qur'an that was sent down on Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon them all).

Belief in the prophets and messengers.⁹

⁸ "Siyāḅ al-'Aqīdah al-Imān Billāh" by 'Abdul-'Azīz ar-Rājihi (p.9).

⁹ The original copies of these books contain the message of Tawhīd (monotheism), which means belief in and worship of the Creator alone;

Belief in the Last Day: It is the belief in the Day of Judgment when Allah resurrects people for reckoning and recompense.

Belief in Divine Decree and Predestination: It is the belief in the plan of Allah for the creatures according to His prior knowledge and in compliance with His wisdom.

The level of Ihsān (perfection) comes after Imān (faith) and it is the highest level in the religion. The meaning of Ihsān is manifest in the words of the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) as he said: "Ihsān means to worship Allah as if you see Him, for, although you do not see Him, He surely sees you." [72]

Ihsān means perfecting all acts and deeds and exerting the utmost efforts for the sake of Allah Almighty without expecting a material return or human praise or gratitude. It also means performing deeds in a manner that conforms to the Sunnah of the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and that is sincerely offered for the sake of Allah Almighty with the intention of getting close to Him. Those who adopt Ihsān in the societies are the successful role models who benefit others by encouraging them to follow in their footsteps in carrying out religious and worldly good deeds, seeking the reward from Allah. This is the category through whom Allah fulfills the development and prosperity of the human life and the construction and progress of countries.¹⁰

however, they were distorted and were abrogated after the revelation of the Qur'an and the Sharia of Islam.

¹⁰ The Hadīth of Jibrīl (Gabriel). [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (4777) and Muslim with a similar narration (9)]

Is belief in the previous messengers essential in the Muslim's creed?

Belief in all the messengers sent by Allah to mankind, without making distinction between them, is one of the pillars of the Muslim's creed without which his faith is invalid. Moreover, the denial of any messenger or prophet contradicts the basic principles of the religion. All prophets of Allah brought glad tidings of the advent of the last Prophet, Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). Furthermore, many of the prophets and messengers sent by Allah to various nations were mentioned in the Noble Qur'an like Nūh (Noah), Abraham, Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Is-hāq (Isaac), Ya'qūb (Jacob), Yūsuf (Joseph), Moses, David, Sulaymān (Solomon), and Jesus, and there are others who were not mentioned. So, the probability that some of the religious characters in Hinduism and Buddhism, like Rama, Krishna, and Gautama Buddha, could be from the prophets who were sent by Allah is not totally far-fetched. However, there is no supporting evidence from the Noble Qur'an on that; thus, the Muslim must not believe in it. Differences between creeds appeared only when people started sanctifying and worshiping their prophets instead of Allah.

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَّن قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن لَّمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فُضِيَ بِالْحَقِّ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ﴾ [غافر: 78]

{We have sent messengers before you; of them are some whose stories We have told you, and some We have not. It was not for a messenger to bring a sign except with Allah's permission. But when the

decree of Allah comes, judgment will be passed with justice, thereupon the people of falsehood will be in utter loss.} [73]

﴿عَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْ رُّسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ﴾ [البقرة: 285]

{The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, as do the believers. All of them believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, and His messengers, [saying], “We make no distinction between any of His messengers.” And they say, “We hear and obey. Grant us Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination.”}

{Say [O believers], “We believe in Allah and what has been sent down to us; and what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the descendants [of Jacob]; and what was given to Moses and Jesus; and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted.”}

What is the difference between the angel, the jinn, and the devil?

As for the angels, they are great creatures of Allah. They were created from light and have a natural disposition to goodness. They obey the commands of Allah Almighty, exalt Him, and worship Him without ever getting bored or tired.

﴿يُسَبِّحُونَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ﴾ [الأنبياء: 20]

{They glorify Him day and night tirelessly.} [76]

﴿... لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾﴾ [التحریم: 6]

{...who never disobey whatever Allah commands and do whatever they are commanded.}

Having faith in the angels is something common between the Muslims, Jews, and Christians. Jibrīl (Gabriel) is one of the angels whom Allah has taken as a mediator between Him and His messengers, so he used to descend with the revelation to them. There is also Mikā'il (Michael) who is in charge of the rain and plants, Isrāfil whose mission is to blow the trumpet on the Day of Judgment, and others.

As for the jinn, they belong to the world of the unseen. They live with us on earth and are commanded to obey Allah and prohibited from disobeying Him, just like the human beings; however, we cannot see them. They were created from fire, whereas man was created from clay. Allah mentioned stories that clarify the strength and ability of the jinn, including their ability to make an influence through whispering or inspiration without physical interference. However, they do not know the unseen and cannot harm the believer who have strong faith.

﴿...الشَّيْطَانِ لِيُوْحُونَ إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَآئِهِمْ لِيُجَدِّلُوكُمْ...﴾ [الأنعام: 121]

{...But the devils whisper to their [human] friends to argue with you...}
[78]

As for the devil, he is every arrogant and obstinate human or jinni.

What is the evidence on resurrection after death?

All proofs from the universe and phenomena indicate the fact that there is a constant process of reconstruction and recreation in life. There

are many examples of this including the revival of earth after its death with rain.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَيُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَكَذَلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ﴾ [الروم: 19]

{He brings the living out of the dead and the dead out of the living, and gives life to the earth after its death. This is how you will be brought forth.} [79]

Another evidence on resurrection is the perfect system of the universe that is flawless, even the extremely minute electron cannot move from one orbit to another inside the atom unless it gives or takes an amount of energy that is equal to its movement. So, how could you believe that in such a system the murderer or the oppressor could escape without being reckoned or punished by the Lord of the worlds?!

Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ﴾ [المؤمنون: 115-116] فَتَعَلَى اللَّهِ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ ﴿١١٦﴾ [المؤمنون: 115-116]

{Did you think that We created you with no purpose, and that you would not be brought back to Us? Exalted is Allah, the True Sovereign! None has the right to be worshiped except Him, the Lord of the Honorable Throne.} [80]

﴿أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَوَاءً مَحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَخَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَلِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾ [الجاثية: 21-22]

{Do those who commit evil deeds think that We will make them equal to those who believe and do righteous deeds, in this life and after their death? How poorly they judge! Allah created the heavens and earth for a true purpose, and so that every soul may be recompensed for what it has earned, and they will not be wronged.}

Do you not notice that we lose many of our relatives and friends in this life and we know that we shall die like them one day; yet deep down we feel that we shall live forever. If man's body had been made up of matter within the framework of a material life and material laws without a soul to be resurrected and reckoned, this natural feeling of freedom would have been meaningless, as the soul rises above time and goes beyond death.

How does Allah bring the dead to life?

Allah brings the dead to life just as He created them the first time.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَنُقِرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشَدَّكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يَتَّقَىٰ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْدَلِ الْعُمَرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَأَثْبَتَّتْ مِن كُلِّ رَوْحٍ بِهِجٍ ﴿٥﴾ [الحج: 5]

{O people, if you are in doubt concerning the Resurrection, then We surely created you from dust, then from a drop of sperm, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh – formed or unformed – so that We may make it clear to you [Our power]. We settle in the wombs whatever We will for an appointed term. Then We bring you out as infants, then [We nurture you] so that you may reach your maturity. Then some of you die, while others are left to reach the decrepit old age so that they may know nothing after having knowledge. You see the land lifeless, then as soon as We send down rain on it, it stirs and swells to life and brings forth every type of pleasant plant.} [82]

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظْمَ وَهِيَ الرَّمِيمُ ﴿٧٨﴾ قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٩﴾ [يس: 77-79]

{Does man not see that We have created him from a sperm drop, then he becomes a clear adversary, producing arguments against Us while forgetting his own creation. He says, “Who can give life to the bones after they have crumbled to dust?” Say, “The One Who created them in the first place will give life to them, for He has full knowledge of every created being.}

{See then the effects of Allah's mercy, how He revives the earth after its death. Indeed, it is He Who will raise the dead, and He is Most Capable of all things.}

How does Allah bring His servants to account at the same time?

Allah will bring His servants to account at the same time just as He provides for them at the same time.

Allah Almighty said:

{Your creation and resurrection is only like that of a single soul. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All Seeing.} [85]

Why does the Muslim not believe in reincarnation?

Everything in the universe falls under the control of the Creator. He alone possesses comprehensive and absolute knowledge, and the ability and strength to subjugate everything to His will. The sun, the planets, the galaxies all function thoroughly since the beginning of the creation, and these same thoroughness and ability apply to the creation of mankind. The harmony between the human bodies and their souls proves that it is impossible to make such souls inhabit animals' bodies or roam among the plants and insects, and reincarnation is even impossible among human beings. Allah Almighty has distinguished man with the mind and knowledge and has made him a vicegerent on earth. He preferred him and honored him and granted him a higher status than many of His creatures. And out of the Creator's wisdom and justice, there will be the Day of Judgment when Allah alone shall resurrect the creatures and bring them to account. They will end up either in Paradise or in Hellfire, and all the good and evil deeds will be weighed on that Day.

Allah Almighty said:

{So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it,. and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.} [86]

Why does Allah hold people accountable for deeds that are already written in His eternal knowledge, represented in the divine decree and predestination?

When someone, for instance, wants to buy something from the store and decides to send his first son to buy him that thing because he knows in advance that this boy is wise and will go straight to buy him what he wants exactly. The father also knows that his other son will get distracted by playing with his friends and lose the money. Actually, this is only an assumption upon which the father built his judgment.

Being aware of the destinies does not contradict our free will because Allah is aware of our deeds based on His complete knowledge of our intentions and choices, bearing in mind that Allah has the highest attributes, and He knows the nature of mankind. Allah is the One Who created us and knows what lies in our hearts, the good or evil desires, and knows our intentions and deeds. Writing down such knowledge does not contradict our free will, knowing that Allah's knowledge is absolute while people's expectations could be right or wrong.

It is possible for man to act in a way that displeases Allah; however, his act will not contradict Allah's will. Allah has granted His servants the will to choose, yet even if their acts are sinful, they still remain within the boundaries of Allah's will and can never go against it because the Almighty Lord has not given anyone the ability to transcend His will.

We cannot force our hearts to accept something that we do not want. We can force someone to stay with us under threat; however, we can never force that person to love us. Allah has protected our hearts from all forms of compulsion, and this is why He holds us accountable and rewards us based on our intentions and what our hearts bear.

The Purpose of Life

What is the main purpose of life?

The main purpose of life is not to enjoy a transient feeling of happiness; rather, it is to attain inner and profound peace by knowing and worshipping Allah.

Fulfilling this divine purpose will lead to eternal bliss and true happiness. Therefore, if this becomes our main target, it will be easier for us to confront any problem or trouble for the sake of reaching this target.

Let us imagine a person who has never experienced any suffering or pain. Owing to his luxurious life, he will forget Allah and will, thus, fail in carrying out the mission that he has been created for. Then, compare this person to another whose hard and painful experiences have led him to Allah and to accomplishing his mission in life. According to the Islamic teachings, the one whose sufferings have led him to Allah is better than the one who has never suffered and whose pleasures led him far away from Him.

In this life, everyone works on achieving a certain goal or purpose, which is mostly based on his beliefs. The thing that we can find in religion, but cannot find in science, is the cause or justification for which man strives.

The religion clarifies the cause behind creating man and life, whereas science is a means and it possesses no definition for the intention or purpose.

The thing that man fears most when approaching religion is being deprived of the worldly pleasures. It is commonly believed that religion necessarily means isolation, and that everything is prohibited except what the religion permits.

This is the mistake that was committed by many and that caused them to have an aversion to religion. However, the Islamic religion came to correct this concept showing that permissibility is the basic rule while the prohibitions and limits are only few and incontrovertible.

It throws light on the fact that religion invites man to coexist with other individuals in the society and calls for achieving balance between the requirements of the soul, body, and others' rights.

One of the biggest challenges that confront the irreligious communities is how to deal with evil and with man's bad acts, as they could find nothing but imposing the most severe punishments to deter the deviants.

{Who created death and life to test you as to which of you is best in deeds, and He is the All-Mighty, the Most Forgiving...} [87]

What is the value of the worldly life?

An exam is meant to distinguish between students and classify them into levels and degrees before starting their new practical life. Despite the shortness of the exam, it decides the student's future towards this new life that he is approaching. The same applies to life, despite its shortness, it is an abode of affliction and trial for mankind to be classified into various degrees and levels when heading towards the Hereafter. Man

leaves this worldly life only with his deeds and not with material things, thus, he must understand that he has to work in this life for the sake of the Hereafter and seek the reward there.

How can man achieve happiness?

Man could achieve happiness by submitting to Allah and obeying Him and by being content with His decree and predestination.

Many claim that everything does not have an essential meaning and, consequently, we are free to find a meaning to ourselves for the sake of attaining a satisfactory life. The denial of the purpose behind our existence is, in fact, a self-deceit. It is as if we are telling ourselves: "Let us assume or pretend that we have a goal in this life", like the children who pretend while playing that they are doctors, nurses, or parents. We can never achieve happiness unless we know our purpose in life.

If a person was placed in a luxurious train against his will and he found himself riding in the first class, a fancy and comfortable experience and something extremely luxurious, will he be happy during this journey without getting answers for questions that are on his mind like: How did I ride this train? What is the purpose behind this journey? Where is it heading? How could he be happy if such questions remain unanswered? Even if he starts enjoying all the luxuries that are at his disposal, he will never achieve true and genuine happiness. Could a delicious meal in this journey be sufficient to make him forget these questions? This kind of happiness is fake and temporary and can only be achieved by deliberately neglecting the process of finding an answer to such vital questions. It is something like the fake ecstasy resulting from the consumption of intoxicants that leads one to his doom. Therefore, true happiness could only be attained when man finds answers to these existential questions.

Tolerance of the Right Religion

Is embracing Islam available for all people?

Yes, Islam is available for all people. Every child is born with a sound natural disposition, worshiping Allah without a mediator (being a Muslim). So he, without the interference of family, school, or any religious authority, worships Allah directly until the age of puberty, when he becomes competent for religious duties and is held accountable for his deeds. At this time, he either takes Jesus as a mediator between himself and Allah and becomes a Christian, takes Buddha as a mediator and becomes a buddhist, or Krishna and becomes a Hindu, or takes Muhammad as a mediator and, thus, deviates totally from Islam, or remains on the religion of Fitrah (sound natural disposition) worshiping Allah alone. The one who follows the message of Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) that he conveyed from his Lord is following the right religion that conforms to the sound Fitrah, and anything else is considered deviation even taking Muhammad as a mediator between oneself and Allah.

"Every newborn is born with sound natural disposition, then his parents either turn him into a Jew, a Christian, or a Zoroastrian." [88]

What is the stance of Islam on the interfaith dialogue?

The right religion that came from the Creator is only one religion. It is built upon belief in the One and Only Creator and worshiping Him alone. Anything else other than this is invented by people. It will be sufficient to visit India, for instance, and say in public: "The Creating God is One", and everybody will reply in unison: "Yes, the Creator is One." This is actually what is written in their books.[89] However, they differ and fight, and may

even slaughter one another, because of an essential point, which is: the form and shape in which Allah comes to earth. For example, the Indian Christian says: "Allah is one, but He is embodied in three hypostases (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit)". Moreover, some of the Indian Hindus say: "Allah comes in the form of an animal, a human being, or an idol."

If people think profoundly, they will discover that all problems and differences between the religious sects and the religions themselves are due to the mediators whom the people take between themselves and their Creator. For example, the Catholic and Protestant sects and other sects, and the Hindu sects, they all differ on the way of communicating with the Creator not on the concept of the Creator's existence. So, if they had all worshiped Allah directly, they would have been united.¹¹

¹¹ In Hinduism: (Chāndogya Upanishad 6:1-2). "He is only one God and there is no second god besides Him." (Vedas Śvetāśvatara Upanishad: 4:19, 4:20, 9:6). "The God, there is no fathers and no master." "It is not possible to see Him, no one can see Him with the eye." "He has no like." (Yajurveda 9:40). "Those who worship the elements of nature (air, water, fire, etc.) delve into darkness. They drown in darkness. Those who worship the Sāmbūti (things that are handmade like the idol, rock, etc)..."
(Christianity): (Gospel of Matthew 10:4). "Then Jesus said to him: 'Go away devil, because it is written: You prostrate to your God and you worship Him alone.'" (Book of Exodus 5-3: 20). "You should have no other gods before Me. Do not make a statue or an image of what is in the heaven above, what is in the earth below, and what is in water from underneath the earth. Do not prostrate to them and do not worship them because I am the Lord, your God, a jealous God. I miss the parents'

During the time of Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) (peace be upon him), for instance, whoever worshiped the Creator alone was adopting the religion of Islam, which is the true religion, yet whoever took a priest or saint as a mediator between himself and the Creator was adopting falsehood. The followers of Abraham (peace be upon him), thus, had to worship Allah alone and to bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Abraham is the messenger of Allah. Then, Allah sent Mūsa (Moses) (peace be upon him) to affirm Abraham's message. Abraham's followers had to accept the new prophet and to bear witness that Moses as well as Abraham are the messengers of Allah. So, whoever worshipped the calf then, for instance, was adopting falsehood.

When ʿĪsa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) came to affirm Moses' message, the latter's followers had to believe and follow the Messiah and to bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that the Messiah, Moses, and Abraham are the messengers of Allah. So, those who believed in Trinity and worshipped the Messiah and his mother Mary, the woman of truth, were adopting falsehood.

Finally, when Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) was sent to affirm the message of the previous prophets, the followers of the Messiah and Moses had to accept the new Prophet and bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad, the Messiah, Moses, and Abraham are the messengers of Allah. So, whoever worships Muhammad, makes Tawassul (ask Allah by means of intermediary) by him, or seeks aid from him is indeed adopting falsehood.

mistakes in the children in the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me."

Islam affirms the basic principles of the divine religions that preceded it and continued till its time and that were brought by the messengers and were appropriate for their time. With the change in need, a new religious phase emerged sharing the same origin but with a different Sharia, adopting graduation in fulfilling the needs, and with the late religion agreeing with the early religions in the origin of Tawhīd (monotheism). By adopting the dialogue method, the believer becomes aware of the fact that the source of the Creator's message is one.

Therefore, the interfaith dialogue must proceed from that essential concept of affirming the one right religion and considering all the rest as false.

Dialogue has existential and faith-related principles and foundations that man is required to respect and proceed from in order to communicate with others. This is because the purpose behind this dialogue is to get rid of fanaticism and personal whims, which are projections of blind fanatical affiliations that stand as an obstacle between man and the truth of the pure Tawhīd, and that lead to conflict and destruction as witnessed in our current reality.

Does Islam advocate tolerance?

The Islamic religion is built upon preaching, tolerance, and debating in a kind manner.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾﴾ [النحل: 125]

{Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and reason with them in the best manner. Your Lord knows best who has strayed from His way and knows best those who are rightly guided.} [90]

Since the Noble Qur'an is the last heavenly book and Muhammad is the last Prophet, therefore, the last Sharia of Islam opens the door for everyone to engage in dialogue and discuss the foundations and principles of the religion. "There is no compulsion in religion" is a guaranteed principle in Islam. None should be compelled to adopt the sound Fitrah-based Islamic creed provided that one respects others' inviolabilities and fulfills his duties towards the country in return for allowing him to maintain his religion and providing him with security and protection.

An example of this is 'Umar's Assurance of Safety Pact that was written by the Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him) to the people of Aelia (Jerusalem) when the Muslims conquered it in 638 AD, where he granted them security regarding their churches and properties. This pact is considered one of the most important documents in the history of Jerusalem.

"In the Name of Allah, from 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb to the people of Aelia, they are safe regarding their lives, children, property, and churches, which should not be demolished or inhabited." [91]

While Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him) was dictating this pact, the time of prayer became due. So, Patriarch Sophronius invited him to pray where he was, in Al-Qiyāmah Church. However, the Caliph refused and said to him: "I am afraid if I do so,

Muslims may make this an excuse one day for taking over the church from you, saying: The Commander of the Believers prayed here."¹²

It is true that Islam honors and fulfills the pacts and covenants with non-Muslims, but at the same time, it adopts an extremely firm attitude towards traitors and those who break pacts and covenants, and it prohibits Muslims from taking those deceitful people as allies.¹³

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُورًا وَلَعِبًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكَفَّارَ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾﴾ [المائدة: 57]

{O you who believe, do not take as allies those who were given the Scripture before you and the disbelievers who ridicule your religion and make fun of it. And fear Allah if you are believers.} [93]

The Noble Qur'an clearly and openly states in more than one place that those who fight against the Muslims and drive them out of their homes must not be taken as allies

¹² "Ibn al-Bitrīq: At-Tārīkh al-Majmū' 'ala at-Tahqīq wa at-Tasdīq" (2/147).

¹³ "Tārīkh at-Tabari" and Mujīr ad-Dīn al-'Ulaymi al-Maqdisi.

﴿لَا يَنْهَكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقْتَلُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾ ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُواكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُواكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ تَوَلَّوهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ [الممتحنة: 8-9]

{Allah does not forbid you from being kind and just to those who did not fight against you nor did they drive you out of your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who are just. Allah only forbids you from taking as allies those who fought against you on account of your religion, and drove you out of your homes or helped others in driving you out. Whoever takes them as allies, it is they who are the wrongdoers.} [94]

The Noble Qur'an praises the monotheists from among the people of the Messiah and Moses (peace be upon them) during their time.

﴿لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۗ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ﴾ ﴿١١٣﴾ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ [آل عمران: 113-114]

{Yet all are not alike: there are some among the People of the Book who are upright: they recite the verses of Allah during the night and they prostrate. They believe in Allah and the Last Day; enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong; and hasten in doing good deeds. They are among the righteous.} [95]

﴿وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ
لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُوتِيَتْكُمْ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ
الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩٩﴾﴾ [آل عمران: 199]

{There are some among the People of the Book who believe in Allah and what has been sent down to you and what was sent down to them; humbling themselves before Allah. They do not sell Allah's verses for a small price. It is they who will have their reward with their Lord. Indeed, Allah is swift in reckoning.}

﴿اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ
الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُمْ مِنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٥٧﴾﴾
[البقرة: 257]

{The believers and those who were Jews, Christians, and the Sabians [before Muhammad] – whoever believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteous deed, they will have their reward with their Lord, and they will have no fear, nor will they grieve.}

What is the stance of Islam on the concept of enlightenment?

The Islamic concept of enlightenment is built on a solid foundation of faith and knowledge, which combines between the enlightenment of the mind and that of the heart through faith in Allah first, then, through knowledge, which is inseparable from faith.

The European concept of enlightenment has been transferred to the Islamic communities like other western concepts. From the Islamic perspective, enlightenment does not depend merely on the mind that is

not guided by the light of faith. However, at the same time one's faith is of no benefit to him if he does not use his mind, which is a blessing that Allah has bestowed on him, in thinking, contemplating, and managing his affairs in a way that fulfills public welfare that benefits people and lasts on earth.

During the dark Middle Ages, Muslims were the ones who brought the light of civilization and culture back after it had faded in all of the western and eastern countries as far as Constantinople.

The enlightenment movement in Europe was a normal reaction to the tyranny that was practiced by the ecclesiastical authorities against the mind and the human will. However, the Islamic civilization did not undergo such circumstances.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَآؤُهُمُ
الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٥٧﴾﴾
[البقرة: 257]

{Allah is the Protector of those who believe; He brings them out of the depths of darkness into the light. As for those who disbelieve, their protectors are false gods; they bring them out from the light into the depths of darkness. They are the people of the Fire; they will abide therein forever.} [98]

By reflecting on these Qur'anic verses, it becomes clear that man gets out of the depths of darkness by the divine will, which is the divine guidance of man that takes place only by the permission of Allah. This is because a person whom Allah Almighty brings out of the darkness of

ignorance, polytheism, and superstition to the light of faith, science, and true knowledge is a person with an enlightened mind, insight, and heart.

Moreover, Allah Almighty has referred to the Noble Qur'an as light, saying:

﴿... قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾﴾ [المائدة: 15]

{...There has surely come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book.}
[99]

Allah Almighty revealed the Qur'an to His Messenger Muhammad, and revealed the Torah and the Gospel (the undistorted versions) to Moses and the Messiah to bring people out of the depths of darkness into light. Thus, Allah made guidance connected with light.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ...﴾ [المائدة: 44]

{We sent down the Torah which contains guidance and light...} [100]

﴿... وَعَاتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَهُدًى
وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾﴾ [المائدة: 46]

{...and We gave him the Gospel that contained guidance and light, confirming what came before it in the Torah; a guidance and admonition for the righteous.}

There is no guidance without light that is provided by Allah, and there is no light that illuminates man's heart and life except with a permission from Allah.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...﴾ [النور: 35]

{Allah is the Light of the heavens and earth...} [102]

It is important to note that in the Qur'an, the word "light" comes in the singular form in all cases, whereas, the word "darkness" always comes in the plural form and this indicates extreme accuracy in describing such conditions.

The Stance of Islam on the Theories of the Origin of Existence

What is the stance of Islam on the Natural Selection Theory?

Some of Darwin's followers, who used to consider the natural selection (a physical and irrational process) a unique creative power that solves all the complicated developmental problems without resorting to any true experimental basis, later on discovered the complicated design of the structure and function of the bacterial cells. So, they started using expressions like "intelligent bacteria", "microbic intelligence", "decision making", and "bacteria for solving problems". Consequently, the bacteria became their new deity. [104]

The Almighty Creator clarified in His Book and through His Messenger that such acts, which are attributed to bacterial intelligence, occur according to the wisdom and will of the Lord of the worlds.¹⁴

Allah Almighty said:

﴿اللَّهُ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ﴾ [الزمر: 62]

{Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Maintainer of everything.} [105]

¹⁴ "Atheism a Giant Leap of Faith" by Dr. Raida Jarrar.

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَلُّوتٍ فَأَرْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ
هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ﴾ [المك: 3]

{Who created seven heavens one above another; you will not see any imperfection in the creation of the Most Compassionate. Look again; can you see any flaw?}

Allah Almighty also said:

﴿إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾ [القمر: 49]

{Indeed, We have created everything according to a determined measure.} [107]

Atheists attribute terms like design, meticulous accuracy, coded language, intelligence, intention, complicated systems, coherent laws, etc, to randomness and coincidence despite the fact that they have never acknowledged this. Scientists refer to the Creator by other names like "mother nature", "the universe laws", "natural selection" (Darwin's theory), etc. in an unsuccessful attempt to escape from the logic of religion and from the belief in the existence of a Creator.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِن هِيَ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمِيَّتُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَعَابَاؤُكُمْ مَّا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَانٍ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ
إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِّن رَّبِّهِمُ الْهُدَىٰ﴾ [النجم: 23]

{These [idols] are no more than names you and your forefathers have made up, for which Allah has not sent down any authority. They follow nothing but conjecture and what their souls desire, although there has come to them guidance from their Lord.} [108]

Using any name other than "Allah" negates some of His absolute attributes and incites more questions. For example,

In order to avoid mentioning Allah, the creation of universal laws and complicated and coherent systems are attributed to random nature, and man's vision and intelligence are attributed to a blind and thoughtless origin.

Why does the Muslim not accept the idea that apes are the origin of man?

Islam absolutely rejects this idea. The Qur'an makes it clear that Allah has distinguished Adam from all other creatures by creating him independent as a sign of honoring mankind and to achieve Allah's wisdom in making him a vicegerent on earth.

Darwin's followers deem the one who believe in the Creator of the universe as a retarded person for believing in something that he has not seen, despite the fact that the believer believes in what elevates him and grants him a higher status, whereas they believe in what degrades them and brings them to a lower status. Regardless of that, why have the rest of apes remained without developing into human beings?

A theory is a group of hypotheses that come through witnessing or reflecting on a certain phenomenon. Proving such hypotheses requires conducting successful experiments or direct observation that substantiates them. Thus, if one of the hypotheses that belong to the theory cannot be proven through experiments or direct observation, then, the whole theory will be reconsidered.

If we cite an example of development that took place more than 60000 years ago, then the theory will be meaningless. If we cannot see or observe such a development, then we can, by no means, accept this

argument. It has been recently observed that the beaks of some birds have changed in shape; however, they remained birds, whereas based on this theory, the birds must develop into another type of creatures.

As a matter of fact, the idea that man is originally a monkey or has developed from a monkey has never been from Darwin's ideas. However, he said that both man and monkey share one common unknown origin, which he called "the missing loop", that underwent a special development and turned into a human being. Apart from the fact that Muslims totally refuse to accept Darwin's statement; however, he did not say, as some people think, that the monkey is man's grandfather. It was proven that Darwin himself, the founder of this theory, had many doubts and he wrote many letters to his colleagues expressing his doubts and regret.[109]

Moreover, it was proven that Darwin believed in the existence of a god.¹⁵ However, the idea that man developed from an animal was added later to his theory by his followers, who were atheists. Muslims are, undoubtedly, certain that Allah has honored Adam and made him a vicegerent on earth, and it does not befit the status of such a vicegerent to be originally an animal or the like.

What is the stance of Islam on the Evolution Theory?

Science provides convincing proofs of the concept of evolution from one common origin, which is mentioned in the Noble Qur'an.

Allah Almighty said:

¹⁵ Chapter 7: Oller and Omdahl, "The Creation Hypothesis" by J.P. Moreland.

﴿... وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ [الأنبياء: 30]

{We created from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?}
[111]

Allah Almighty has created the living beings and made them intelligent and naturally disposed to adapt with the surrounding environment. It is possible for them to evolve in terms of size, shape, or height. For example, the sheep in the cold countries have a certain shape and have a skin to protect them from cold, and their wool increases or decreases depending on the temperature. Whereas, in other countries they are different. Thus, the shapes and types vary according to the variation in the environment. This even applies to human beings, who vary in terms of color, qualities, language, and appearance. No human being identically resembles another; however, they all remain human beings and do not change into another type of animals. Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَالْوَلَوْنِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾ [الروم: 22]

{And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and earth, and the diversity of your tongues and colors. Indeed, there are signs in this for those who have knowledge.} [112]

﴿وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِّن مَّاءٍ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ بَطْنِهِۦ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ أَرْبَعٍ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

[النور: 45]

{Allah created every living creature from water. Some of them move on their bellies, and some walk on two legs and some walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Allah is Most Capable of all things.}

The Theory of Evolution, which attempts to deny the Creator's existence, suggests the idea of the common origin from which all the living beings, animals and plants emerged. It holds that such living beings evolved from one origin, which is a unicellular organism, and that the formation of the first cell was the result of the combination of the amino acids in water, which in turn formed the primary structure of the DNA that carries the creature's genetic traits. Through the combination of these amino acids, the primary structure of the first cell was formed. As a result of various environmental and external factors, these cells multiplied and formed the first sperm, which developed into a clot then into a lump of flesh.

As we observe here, these phases are very much like the phases of man's creation in the mother's womb; however, the living beings stop growing and start being shaped according to the genetic traits that are carried by the DNA acid. For example, when the frogs' growth process is complete, they remain frogs, and the same applies to every living being as it completes its growth according to its genetic traits.

Even if we consider the genetic spurts and their effect on the genetic traits in the emergence of new living organisms, this does not refute the Creator's omnipotence and will. However, the atheists claim that all this happens randomly, whereas the theory itself confirms the fact that such

development phases cannot possibly occur and proceed except through the intention and planning of someone who is all-aware and all-knowing. Consequently, it is possible to adopt the concept of the directed evolution, or the theistic evolution, that advocates the biological evolution and rejects the idea of randomness, and that there must be someone knowledgeable, wise, and capable behind the evolution. In other words, we may accept the notion of evolution, but we absolutely reject Darwinism. Stephen Gould, the well-known paleontologist and biologist, said: "Either half my colleagues are enormously stupid or else Darwinism is fully compatible with religious belief."

How did the Qur'an rectify the concept of evolution?

The Noble Qur'an has rectified the concept of evolution through narrating the story of Adam's creation.

Man was not even something mentioned:

﴿هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا﴾ [الإنسان: 1]

{Was there not a period of time when man was not a thing [even] mentioned?} [114]

The creation of Adam started from clay:

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِن سُلَالَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ﴾ [المؤمنون: 12]

{We created man from an extract of clay.} [115]

﴿الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنْسَانِ مِن طِينٍ﴾ [السجدة: 7]

{Who perfected everything He created, and initiated the creation of man from clay.}

﴿إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ ءَادَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾ [آل عمران: 59]

{The similitude of Jesus before Allah is like that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, “Be,” and he was.}

Honoring Adam, the father of mankind:

﴿قَالَ يَٰإِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإَيْدِي ۖ أَسْتَكْبَرْتَ ۖ أََمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ﴾ [ص: 75]

{[Allah] said, “O Iblīs, what prevented you from prostrating to whom I created with My two Hands? Did you just become proud or have you always been arrogant?”} [118]

Honoring Adam, the father of mankind, was not only by creating him independently from clay, it was also by creating him directly by the Hands of the Lord of the worlds, as mentioned in the noble verse, and by Allah's command to the angels to prostrate before Adam as an act of obedience to Him.

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ [البقرة: 34]

{And when We said to the angels, “Prostrate before Adam,” and they prostrated except Iblīs; he refused and was arrogant, and was one of the disbelievers.} [119]

The creation of Adam's progeny:

﴿ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِّن مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ﴾ [السجدة: 8]

{Then He made his progeny from the extract of a worthless fluid.} [120]

﴿ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ﴾ [١٣] ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ﴾ [المؤمنون: 14-13]

{Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a safe place, then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, then We made the clinging clot into a lump, then We made the lump into bones, and We clothed the bones with flesh, and then We developed it into another creation. So Blessed is Allah, the Best of Creators.}

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا﴾ [الفرقان:

[54]

{It is He Who created human beings from water, then made between them bonds of kinship and marriage, for your Lord is Most Capable.}

Honoring Adam's progeny:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَهُمْ فِي الْوَبْرِ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا﴾ [الإسراء: 70]

{We have honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, provided for them good things and favored them above many of those whom We have created.} [123]

We observe here the resemblance between the emergence phases of Adam's progeny (worthless fluid, sperm-drop, clot, lump...) and what was

stated in the Evolution Theory concerning the emergence of the living beings and how they multiply.

﴿فَاطِرُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُّكُمْ فِيهِ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾ [الشورى: 11]

{the Originator of the heavens and earth. He has given you spouses of your own kind, and pairs of livestock; by which He causes you to multiply. There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.} [124]

Allah has made the start of Adam's progeny from worthless fluid to indicate the oneness of the creation source and the oneness of the Creator. He made Adam distinct from all other creatures by creating him independently to honor man and achieve the Creator's wisdom in making him a vicegerent on earth. Creating Adam from no father or mother is, as well, an indication of absolute omnipotence. Allah also set another example by creating Jesus (peace be upon him) from no father to be another miracle of absolute omnipotence and to be a sign for people.

﴿إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ﴾ [آل عمران: 59]

{The similitude of Jesus before Allah is like that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, "Be," and he was.} [125]

What many try to deny through the Evolution Theory is, in fact, an evidence against them.

Why does Islam restrict the theories of the origin of existence in the inevitability of the existence of one valid truth?

The existence of diverse theories and convictions among mankind does not negate the fact that there is only one valid truth. For example, regardless of the number of concepts and notions that people may have about the transportation means someone uses who owns a black car, this does not negate the fact that he owns a black car. Even if the whole world believes that this person's car is red, such a belief does not make it red. There is only one truth here and that is: the car is black.

So, the diversity of concepts and notions about something does not negate the fact that this thing has one established truth.

Bearing in mind that Allah has the highest attributes, no matter how diverse people's concepts and notions are about the origin of existence, this does not negate the existence of one truth, and that is: the existence of the One and Only Creating God Who has no form known to mankind and Who has no partner and no child. Thus, if the whole world thinks that the Creator is embodied in the form of an animal or a human being, for instance, this does not make Him so, as He is far exalted above that.

Does the Muslim accept the theories of the relativity of morals, history, and others?

It is illogical to leave the decision up to a person, who is driven by his personal desires, to decide whether rape is something evil or not; rather, it is evident that rape in itself is a transgression against man's rights and a violation of his value and freedom, which indicates that rape is evil. The same applies to homosexuality, which violates the normal universal laws

and the intimate relations out of wedlock. As a matter of fact, what is right is right even if the whole world agrees that it is wrong, and what is wrong is clear like the sun even if all mankind approve of it.

The same applies to the history as well, even if we assume that each era must write the history from its own perspective because the estimation of each era to what is important and significant varies from one era to another, this still does not make history relative because it does not negate the fact that events have one truth, whether we like it or not. History that is recorded by mankind, which is liable to distortion and inaccuracy and which is based on personal whims, is not like history that is recorded by the Lord of the worlds, which is extremely precise concerning the past, present, and the future.

What is the evidence on the existence of one absolute truth for the origin of existence and morals?

The statement that there is no absolute truth, which is adopted by many, represents in itself a belief concerning what is right and wrong, and those who adopt it are trying to impose it on others. They adopt a certain standard of behavior and try to compel all people to stick to it. This way, they infringe the same rule that they claim to be adhering to, a situation that reveals self-contradiction.

Evidence on the existence of one absolute truth is as follows:

. The conscience (the inner deterrent): It is the number of instructive and moral principles that restrict the human behavior. It indicates the fact that the world follows a certain course and that there exist right and wrong. Such moral principles are social obligations that are not debatable and that cannot be put to a referendum. They are social facts that the society cannot dispense with in terms of their content and meaning. For

example, disrespecting parents and stealing are always regarded as an abominable behavior, and cannot be interpreted as truthfulness or respect. This generally applies to all cultures in all eras.

. Science: It means realizing things the way they truly are. It is knowledge and certainty. Hence, science essentially depends on the belief in the existence of objective facts in the universe that could be discovered and proven. Or else, what could be studied if there do not exist established facts? And how can one know whether or not the scientific conclusions are true? Actually, the scientific rules themselves are based on the existence of absolute facts.

. Religion: All religions around the world provide a concept, meaning, and definition of life due to man's dire need for getting answers to the most profound questions. Through religion, man searches for his source and his destiny, and seeks to find inner peace that cannot be attained except by finding such answers. The existence of religion itself is a proof that man is not just an evolved animal. It is a proof that there is a sublime objective behind life. It is also a proof of the existence of a creator who created us for a purpose and who instilled in man's heart a desire to know him. In fact, the existence of the Creator is the criterion of the absolute truth.

. Logic: All human beings have limited knowledge and minds, thus, it is logically impossible to issue statements of absolute negation. So logically, man cannot say: "There is no God", because saying such a statement requires possessing absolute knowledge about the whole universe, from the beginning till the end. Since this is impossible, therefore, the utmost that man can do is to say: "According to my limited knowledge, I do not believe in the existence of Allah."

. Harmony: Denial of the absolute truth leads to:

- Contradiction with our certainty concerning the soundness of what lies in the conscience and life experiments and with reality.

- Non-existence of the right and wrong in anything. So, if I regard the fact of ignoring the traffic rules, for instance, as something right, I will put others' lives to risk. Consequently, there will be a collision between the standards of the right and wrong among people and it will be impossible to be certain about anything.

- Man will be absolutely free to commit whatever crimes he likes.

- The impossibility of setting laws or achieving justice.

This is because absolute freedom will turn man into an ugly creature, as it has been undoubtedly proven that he is incapable of bearing such freedom. So, what is wrong is wrong even if the whole world agrees on its being right, and the only valid truth is that morals are not relative and that they do not change with the change in time or place.

. Order: The non-existence of an absolute truth leads to chaos.

For example, if the law of gravity were not a scientific fact, we could not be sure of standing or sitting in the same place unless we do this again. We could not be sure as well that one plus one equals two every time. This will gravely affect the civilization, as scientific and physical laws will be of no significance, and it would be impossible for people to buy and sell things.

What is the only absolute truth about the source of existence?

The existence of mankind on the earth planet that floats in space resembles the passengers who belong to various cultures who gathered on board of an airplane that takes them on a flight to an unknown

destination and with an unidentified captain. They find themselves compelled to serve themselves and to deal with the troubles occurring aboard.

They receive a message from the captain through a member of the flight crew explaining to them the reason behind their existence, the place of their take-off and their destination, and clarifying to them his personal qualities and how to communicate with him directly.

The first passenger said: Yes, it goes without saying that this airplane has a captain, and he is merciful because he sent us this person to answer our questions.

The second one said: The airplane has no captain and I do not believe the messenger. We came from nothing and we are here for no purpose.

The third said: None brought us here, we were gathered randomly.

The fourth said: The airplane has a captain but the messenger is the captain's son, and the captain came in the form of his son to live among us.

The fifth said: The airplane has a captain but he did not send any messenger. He comes in the form of everything to live among us, and there is no final destination for our flight and we will remain aboard.

The sixth said: There is no captain and I want to find myself an imaginary and symbolic captain.

The seventh said: The captain is there, but he placed us on board and got distracted, and he no longer interferes with our affairs or with the airplane affairs.

The eighth said: The captain is there and I respect his messenger; however, we do not need laws on board of the airplane to determine

whether a certain act is good or evil. We need something to refer to in our dealings that is based on our personal desires and wishes so we can do whatever makes us feel happy.

The ninth said: The captain is there and he is mine alone and all of you are here to serve me, and you will not reach your destination in all cases.

The tenth passenger said: The captain's existence is relative, i.e., he exists for those who believe in his existence, and does not exist for those who deny his existence. Moreover, all passengers' notions of this captain, the flight's goal, and the method of dealing between the passengers are right.

From this imaginary story, which gives us a hint of the actual notions that people on earth currently have of the origin of existence and the goal behind life, we realize the following:

. It is self-evident that the airplane has one captain who knows how to fly it from one destination to another for a certain purpose, and this is an unquestionable axiom.

. The one who denies the existence of the captain or has various notions of him is the one required to offer an explanation, which could be right or wrong.

If we apply this symbolic example on the truth of the Creator's existence, while bearing in mind that Allah has the highest attributes, we shall discover that the diversity of the theories on the origin of existence does not negate the existence of one absolute truth, which is:

that the Creating God, the One and Only, Who has no partner and no child, is independent from His creation and is not embodied in the form of any of them. So, if the whole world wants to adopt the idea that the Creator is embodied in the form of an animal, for instance, or a human

being, this does not actually make Him so, as Allah is far exalted above that.

The Creating God is just, and out of His justice, He rewards and punishes. He has to be connected with mankind, for He will not be a god if he creates them and then abandons them. For this reason, He sends them messengers to clarify the way for them and to convey His methodology, which revolves around worshiping Him and resorting to Him alone without taking a priest, a saint, or any mediator. The one who deserves reward is the one who follows this course, whereas the one who deviates from it is worthy of punishment, and this is represented in the bliss of Paradise and the punishment of Hellfire.

This is what is called the "Religion of Islam", which is the true religion that the Creator has approved of for His creatures.

Is calling the non-Muslim a "disbeliever" a derogatory term?

Does the Christian not consider the Muslim a disbeliever, for instance, because he does not believe in the Trinity, and that he will not be admitted to the Kingdom of God except through having faith in it?"Disbelief" is a term that means denial of the truth, and the truth for the Muslim is represented in Tawhīd (monotheism), and for the Christian it is the Trinity.

The Last Divine Book

What is the Qur'an?

The Qur'an is the last book sent by the Lord of the worlds. Muslims believe in all the Books sent before the Qur'an, i.e., the Scriptures of Abraham, the Psalms, the Torah, the Gospel, etc. Muslims believe that the true message conveyed by all the Books was pure monotheism, i.e., having belief in Allah and worshiping Him alone. However, the Qur'an, unlike the previous heavenly books, was not sent exclusively to a certain category or group, and it does not have various versions, and it has not been changed; rather, it is one copy for all Muslims. The text of the Qur'an is still in its original language, the Arabic language, and it has not undergone any change, distortion, or replacement. It has still been preserved in its original form until now and it will remain so, as the Lord of the worlds has promised to preserve it. It is available among all Muslims and is memorized by many of them. The current translations of the Qur'an in various languages, which are widely spread among people, are nothing but the mere translation of the meanings of the Qur'an. The Lord of the worlds has challenged the Arabs and non-Arabs to bring the like of this Qur'an, knowing that the Arabs at that time were the masters of eloquence, rhetoric, and poetry; however, they were certain that this Qur'an could come from none but Allah. This has been a standing challenge for over fourteen centuries, and none has been able to rise to it, and this is one of the greatest proofs that it is from Allah.

Did Prophet Muhammad copy the Qur'an from the Torah?

If the Qur'an had come originally from the Jews, they would have hastened to attribute it to themselves. Did the Jews claim this at the time of its revelation?

Are there no differences in the legislations and transactions, including the prayer, Hajj, and Zakah? Moreover, let us consider the testimony of non-Muslims about how the Qur'an is distinguished from other books, how it could not possibly come from a human, and how it contains scientific miracles, and when a non-Muslims admits the soundness of a belief, this represents the most sufficient proof of its authenticity. It is all one message from the Lord of the worlds, and it should be one. What Prophet Muhammad brought is not a proof of its falsity; rather, it is a proof of its truthfulness. Allah challenged the Arabs who were excellent in rhetoric at that time, as well as non-Arabs to bring even the like of one verse; however, they all failed, and this is still a standing challenge.

Did Prophet Muhammad quote what is mentioned in the Qur'an from the previous civilizations?

Some of the sciences of the ancient civilizations were sound, whereas many of them were only myths and superstitions. How was an illiterate Prophet, who grew up in a barren desert, able to copy from these civilizations the sound knowledge only leaving out the myths?

Why was the Qur'an revealed in the Arabic language?

There are thousands of languages and accents spread around the world, and if the Qur'an had been revealed in any of these languages, people would have wondered why it was not revealed in a different

language. Allah sends the messenger speaking the language of his people, and He chose His Messenger Muhammad to be the last messenger, and the Qur'an was revealed in the language of his people. Allah has protected it against distortion and this will last till the Day of Judgment. He also chose the Aramaic language, for instance, for the Book of Jesus.

Allah Almighty said:

{We did not send any messenger but in the language of his people to make things clear for them...} [126]

What is the Nāsikh (abrogating) and the Mansūkh (abrogated)?

The abrogating and the abrogated represent a development in the legislation rulings like cancelling a previous ruling or replacing it with another, restricting the unrestricted, or unrestricting the restricted. It is something usual and familiar in the previous legislations since the time of Adam. For example, giving the sister in marriage to her brother was serving an interest during the time of Adam (peace be upon him). However, it became something evil in all other legislations. Working on Saturdays was likewise serving an interest in the legislation of Abraham (peace be upon him) and before him and in all other legislations; however, it became something evil in the legislation of Moses (peace be upon him). Allah Almighty ordered the Children of Israel to kill themselves after worshiping the calf; however, this ruling was abrogated after that. There are many other examples in this regard, as replacing a ruling with another is possible in the same legislation or between one legislation and another as we mentioned in the previous examples.

A doctor, for instance, who starts treating his patient with a certain medication, then by time, he increases or decreases the dosage to treat

his patient gradually, is considered wise. Bearing in mind that Allah has the highest example, the existence of the abrogating and the abrogated in the Islamic rulings is an indication of the wisdom of the great Creator.

What is the story of collecting the Qur'an during Abu Bakr's era and burning it during 'Uthman's era?

The Messenger of Allah left the Qur'an documented and written down by the Companions to recite it and teach it to others. When Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) became the Caliph, he ordered that such scrolls should be collected to be in one place and to be used as a reference. However, during the era of 'Uthmān, he ordered that the copies and scrolls that were available with the Companions in the various countries and in various dialects be burnt, and he sent them new copies identical with the original copy that was left by the honorable Messenger and collected by Abu Bakr, to ensure that all countries refer to the same original and only copy that was left by the Prophet.

The Qur'an has remained intact without any changes or alterations, and it has always been with Muslims throughout the ages, handing it to one another and reciting it in their prayers.

Is there any contradiction between the Qur'an and the experimental science?

Islam does not contradict the experimental science; rather, many of the western scientists, who did not believe in Allah, have reached the reality through their scientific discoveries that there must exist a creator. Islam gives preponderance to the mind and intellect and invites people to contemplate and reflect on the universe.

As a matter of fact, Islam calls all mankind to reflect on the signs of Allah and His magnificent creation. It calls people to travel through the land and explore the universe using the mind, intellect, and logic. It also encourages people to look and examine the horizons and their own selves more than once, for they will inevitably find the answers they are looking for and will definitely find themselves believing in the existence of the Creator. People will reach the perfect conviction and certainty that this universe has emerged with deliberation and for a purpose, and at the end, they will reach the conclusion that there is no god but Allah, which Islam calls for.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَلُّوتٍ فَأرْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ﴿٣﴾ ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾ [المك: 4-3]

{He Who created seven heavens one above another; you will not see any imperfection in the creation of the Most Compassionate. Look again; can you see any flaw?ث. Then look again and again; your sight will turn back to you humbled and weary.} [127]

﴿سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٥٣﴾﴾ [فصلت: 53]

{We will show them Our signs in the universe and in their own selves, until it becomes clear to them that this [Qur'an] is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a Witness over all things?}

﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 164]

{Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and earth; the alternation of the night and day; the sailing of the ships in the sea for the benefit of people; the sending down of rain from the sky by Allah, reviving thereby the earth after its death; the spreading of all kinds of creatures therein; the directing of the winds and clouds between the sky and earth – in all these, there are signs for people of understanding.}

﴿وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ﴾ [النحل: 12]

{And He has subjected for you the night and day, the sun and moon, and the stars are made subservient by His command. Indeed, there are signs in this for people of understanding.}

﴿وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ﴾ [الذاريات: 47]

{We built the heaven with might, and We are indeed expanding it.}

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَلَكَهُ يَنْبِيعَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُ بِهِ زَرْعًا مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيَجُ فَتَرَهُ مُضْفَرًا ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ حُطْلًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرًا لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

[الزمر: 21] ﴿١١﴾

{Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky and makes it flow as springs in the earth, then He brings forth thereby crops of various colors; then they wither and you see them turn yellow; then He causes them to crumble? Indeed, there is a reminder in this for people of understanding.}

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا^ط وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ [الأنبياء: 30]

{Are the disbelievers not aware that the heavens and earth were joined together and then We split them apart? We created from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?}

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِّنْ طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾ [المؤمنون: 12-14]

{We created man from an extract of clay, then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a safe place, then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, then We made the clinging clot into a lump, then We made the lump into bones, and We clothed the bones with flesh, and then We developed it into another creation. So Blessed is Allah, the Best of Creators.}

{O people, if you are in doubt concerning the Resurrection, then We surely created you from dust, then from a drop of sperm, then from a

clot, then from a lump of flesh – formed or unformed – so that We may make it clear to you [Our power]. We settle in the wombs whatever We will for an appointed term. Then We bring you out as infants, then [We nurture you] so that you may reach your maturity. Then some of you die, while others are left to reach the decrepit old age so that they may know nothing after having knowledge. You see the land lifeless, then as soon as We send down rain on it, it stirs and swells to life and brings forth every type of pleasant plant.}

The Last Prophet

Who is Prophet Muhammad and what proves the truthfulness of his message?

Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib ibn Hāshim, from the Quraysh, an Arab tribe that lived in Makkah. He is from the offspring of Ismā'īl ibn Ibrāhīm (Ishmael son of Abraham), the close friend of Allah.

As mentioned in the Old Testament, Allah has promised to bless Ishmael and bring out of his offspring a great nation.

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve chiefs shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." [136]

This is the strongest evidence that Ishmael was Abraham's legitimate son.¹⁶

"The angel of the Lord also said to her: You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery." [137]

"So after Abraham had been living in Canaan for ten years, Sarah his wife gave her Egyptian slave girl Hagar to Abraham to be his wife."¹⁷

¹⁶ Old Testament, Genesis 17:20.

¹⁷ Old Testament, Genesis 16:11.

Prophet Muhammad was born in Makkah. His father died before his birth, then his mother died when he was a little boy, so his grandfather took care of him. Then, after the death of his grandfather, his uncle, Abu Tālib, looked after him.¹⁸

He was known for his truthfulness and honesty. He never took part in the entertainment, play, dancing, or singing that were practiced by the people of the pre-Islamic era of ignorance. Moreover, he never consumed alcohol and never acknowledged it. The Prophet, then, started going to a mountain, which was near Makkah (the cave of Hirā'), for worship. In that place, he received the revelation. An angel sent by Allah Almighty came to him and said: "Read, read." The Prophet was unlettered, so he said: "I cannot read". The angel repeated his request, and the Prophet gave the same reply. Then, the angel requested him to read for the second time and strongly embraced him till he could not bear it anymore, and then he said: Read, but the Prophet replied: I cannot read. On the third time, he said to him:

﴿أَقْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝١ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝٢ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝٣ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝٤ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝٥﴾ [العلق: 1-5]

{Read in the name of your Lord Who created, created man from a clinging clot. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous, Who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know.} [139]

Evidence on the truthfulness of his prophethood is represented in the following:

¹⁸ Old Testament, Genesis 16:3.

Evidence could be found in his biography, as he was known to be a truthful and honest man. Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَمَا كُنْتَ تَتْلُوا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُ بِيَمِينِكَ إِذًا لَأَرْتَابَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ﴾
[العنكبوت: 48]

{You [O Prophet] never recited any book before this, nor did you write with your hand. Otherwise, the people of falsehood would have raised suspicions.} [140]

The Prophet was the first to practice what he was preaching, and his acts always conformed with his words, and he never asked for a worldly reward in return for making Da'wah (inviting people to embrace Islam). So, he lived as a poor, honorable, merciful, and modest man. He was the most willing among them when it came to making sacrifices, and was the most ascetic when it came to people's possessions. Allah Almighty said:

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدْنُهُمْ أَفْتَدَهُ قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرًا لِلْعَالَمِينَ﴾ [الأنعام: 90]

{They are those whom Allah has guided, so follow their guidance. Say, "I do not ask any reward for it. It is but a reminder for the worlds."} [141]

The Prophet presented evidence on the truthfulness of his prophethood through the verses of the Noble Qur'an that Allah revealed to him in their own language, and that expressed a great level of eloquence and fluency, which could not possibly come from human beings. Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا﴾

[النساء: 82]

{Do they not then ponder on the Qur'an? If it had been from anyone other than Allah, they would have surely found in it many discrepancies.}
[142]

﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ أَفْتَرَنَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوَرٍ مِثْلِهِ مُفْتَرِيَاتٍ وَاذْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾ [هود: 13]

{Or do they say, "He has fabricated it"? Say, "Then produce ten fabricated Chapters like it and seek help from whoever you can besides Allah, if you are truthful!"}

﴿فَإِنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكَ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ [القصص: 50]

{But if they do not respond to you, then know that they only follow their desires. Who is more astray than one who follows his desire without any guidance from Allah? Indeed, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.}

When some people in Madīnah claimed that the sun eclipsed owing to the death of Ibrāhīm, the Prophet's son, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) delivered a sermon and made a statement, which was like a message addressed to whoever adopts countless superstitions about the sun eclipse until our present day. He clearly and explicitly said, more than fourteen centuries ago:

"Indeed, the sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allah. They do not eclipse on account of the death or life of anyone. So, when there is an eclipse, hasten to remembering Allah and to prayer." [145]

Had he been a liar, he would have certainly taken advantage of this opportunity to convince people of his prophethood.¹⁹

Another evidence on the truthfulness of his prophethood is the fact that his name and traits were mentioned in the Old Testament.

"And the book is delivered to someone who cannot read, saying: Read this, and he said: I cannot read." [146]

Despite the fact that Muslims do not believe that the Old and New Testaments, which are currently available, are from Allah as they were distorted; however, they believe that both of them come from authentic sources, which are the Torah and the Gospel that were revealed by Allah to His Prophets: Moses and Jesus. Thus, it is possible that some of what is mentioned in the books of the Old and New Testaments is from Allah. Muslims believe that this prophecy, if authentic, refers to Prophet Muhammad and represents part of the authentic Torah.²⁰

The message that was advocated by Prophet Muhammad is the pure creed, which is belief in one God and worshipping Him alone. It was the same message conveyed by all the prophets before him, and he brought it to all mankind as mentioned in the Noble Qur'an:

¹⁹ "Sahīh al-Bukhāri".

²⁰ Old Testament, Isaiah 29:12.

﴿قُلْ يَتَّيِّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ ۖ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ ۚ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾ [الأعراف: 158]

{Say [O Prophet], "O people, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all. To Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and earth; none has the right to be worshiped except Him; He gives life and causes death." So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him, so that you may be guided.} [147]

None has honored the Messiah on earth as Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) did.

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "'I am the closest to Jesus, son of Mary, among all mankind in this worldly life and in the Hereafter.' They said: 'O Messenger of Allah, and how is that?' Thereupon he said: 'The prophets are brothers in faith, having different mothers. Their religion is one; however, there is no prophet between us (between Jesus Christ and myself).'" [148]

The name of Jesus Christ was mentioned in the Qur'an more than the name of Prophet Muhammad (25 times against 4 times).²¹

Mary, the mother of Jesus, has been given preference over all women according to what is mentioned in the Qur'an.

Moreover, Mary is the only woman whose name was mentioned in the Qur'an.

²¹ "Sahih Muslim".

There is also a whole Chapter in the Qur'an that is named after Mary.
[149]

This is among the strongest proofs of his truthfulness (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), for had he been a liar, he would have mentioned the names of his wives, his mother, or his daughters. Had he been a liar, he would not have honored the Messiah or have made the belief in him one of the pillar's of the Muslim's faith.²²

By making a simple comparison between Prophet Muhammad and any priest today, we will instantly realize the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad. He rejected all the privileges that he was offered: the money, the social status, and even the religious authority. He did not listen to confessions or forgive the believers' sins; rather, he commanded his followers to resort directly to the Creator.

Another proof of the truthfulness of his prophethood is the prevalence of his message and people's acceptance of his call and the success that Allah granted him, for none of those who falsely claimed prophethood has ever been granted success in the history of mankind.

Thomas Carlyle, an English Philosopher (1795- 1881), said: "It is a great shame for anyone civilized living in this age to listen to the accusation that Islam is a lie and that Muhammad was a fabricator and a deceiver. It is time for us to fight such absurd and shameful statements. The message that was conveyed by this Messenger has been acting as a beacon of light, for twelve centuries, for about two hundred million people like us, created by the same God. Have you ever seen a liar who can invent a religion and spread it? How odd! A liar cannot even build a house out of

²² "'Ayn 'ala al-Haqīqah" by Faten Sabri. www.fatensabri.com

bricks, for if he is not well-informed about the characteristics of lime, plaster, sand, and the like, he will be building nothing but a pile of debris and a heap of mixed substances. A house like this cannot stand for twelve centuries and cannot be inhabited by two hundred million people; rather, its pillars would definitely collapse and it would fall down as if it had not existed in the first place." [150]

How did Prophet Muhammad reach Jerusalem, ascend the heaven, and return on the same night?

Human technology has succeeded in transmitting people's voices and images all around the world at the same moment, is it not possible for the Creator of mankind to make His Prophet ascend the heavens with his body and soul more than 1400 years ago?

The Isrā' and Mi'rāj Journey (the Prophet's night journey from Makkah to Jerusalem and his ascension from Jerusalem to the heavens) occurred in compliance with the absolute divine power and will, which are far beyond our realization and which are different from all the laws that we know. They are signs and proofs of the Lord's omnipotence, as He is the One Who created and set such laws.²³

²³ The Prophet's ascension on the back of an animal called "Al-Burāq", which was a white and tall animal, larger than a donkey and smaller than a mule. It would place its hoof at a distance which was the furthest point within its sight reach. It had a bridle and a saddle and the prophets (peace be upon them) used to ride it. [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

Why did Prophet Muhammad marry ‘Ā’ishah when she was still so young?

In "Shaīh al-Bukhāri", which is the most authentic book of the Prophet's Hadīths, we find what indicates ‘Ā’ishah's great love for the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and we find that she never complained about this marriage.

What is strange is that at such time, the Prophet's enemies accused him with most bitter accusations, saying that he was a poet and a madman; however, none discredited him for such a story and it has never been mentioned except now by some of the prejudiced ones. This story is either something normal that was common among people at that time, as history tells us stories of royal marriages that took place at a young age, like the age of Mary in the Christians' belief, which was close to the age of ‘Ā’ishah at the time she got married to the Prophet, when she was engaged to a man in his nineties before conceiving Jesus. There is also the story of Isabella, the Queen of England, in the eleventh century, who got married at the age of eight, and there are other stories too. [152] Or the story of the Prophet's marriage did not take place in the way they are imagining.

Are the massacre of the Jews of Banu Qurayzah and the Hirābah (highway murder or robbery) punishment not inhuman?

The Jews of Banu Qurayzah breached the covenant and allied with the polytheists against the Muslims, so their own evil scheme turned against them. The corporal punishment that is prescribed in their own legislation for treason and the breach of covenants was executed on them after the Prophet had allowed them to choose someone to give his verdict

on their case. They chose one of the Prophet's Companions and he decided that the retaliation ruling mentioned in their own legislation be executed on them. [153]

What is the punishment of traitors and the breachers of covenants today according to the laws of the United Nations? Just try to imagine a group of people determined to kill you and all your family and steal your money, what would you do to them? The Jews of Banu Qurayzah breached the covenant and allied with the polytheists to eliminate the Muslims, what did the Muslims have to do then to protect themselves? The Muslims' reaction to what happened was simply practicing their right of self-defense.²⁴

There is no compulsion in religion, so, why does Allah say: Fight those who do not believe in Allah?

The first verse reads:

{There is no compulsion in religion; the truth has been made distinct from falsehood...}[154], establishes a great Islamic principle, which is the prohibition of compulsion in religion, whereas the second verse reads

{Fight those of the People of the Book who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day...}[155], tackles another issue related to those who prevent people from the way of Allah and stop them from accepting Islam. Thus, there is no real contradiction between the two verses.

²⁴ "Tārīkh al-Islām" (318- 307/2).

Why should an apostate be killed according to the Sharia of Islam?

Faith is a relationship between the slave and his Lord, whenever he wants to sever it, his matter is left up to Allah. However, if he declares it publicly and uses it as a pretext to fight Islam, betray it, and distort its image, then, according to the man-made war laws, he must be killed and this is indisputable.

The confusion that led to such an allegation about the punishment prescribed for apostasy stems from the illusion that all religions are equally sound, and considering faith in the Creator and worshipping Him alone and exalting Him above all deficiencies and flaws equal to disbelief in His existence, or the belief that He is embodied in the form of a human or stone, or that He has a child, while Allah is far exalted above that. The reason behind this illusion is the belief in the relativity of creed, i.e., it is possible that all religions are true, which is impossible according to the basic rules of logic. It goes without saying that faith contradicts atheism and disbelief. Hence, the one who adopts the sound creed finds that belief in the relativity of the truth is nothing but heedlessness and logical foolishness. Consequently, it is invalid to deem two contradicting creeds true.

Despite all this, the apostates who rejected the true religion are never subject to the prescribed punishment as long as they do not declare their apostasy, and they know that very well. However, they ask the Muslim community to open the door for them so they can spread their ridicule of Allah and His Messenger without being called to account and urge others to adopt disbelief and disobedience and this, for instance, is what no king accepts or allows in his kingdom. No king would accept that any of his subjects deny his existence or ridicule him or any of his courtiers, nor

would he accept that someone would attribute to him what does not befit his status as a king. If this is the case with worldly kings, how about the King of all kings and the Creator and Sovereign of everything?!

Some also think that if the Muslim commits an act of disbelief, he becomes immediately subject to the execution of the prescribed punishment. The truth, however, is that there are excuses that might prevent deeming him a disbeliever in the first place, like ignorance, false interpretation, compulsion, and mistake. This is why the majority of scholars confirmed the fact that an apostate must be asked to repent due to the probability of him being confused about the truth, with the exclusion of the combatant apostate.[156]

Muslims used to treat the hypocrites the way they treat normal Muslims, granting them all their rights, despite the fact that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) knew them and informed Huzhayfah, his Companion, of their names; however, such hypocrites did not declare their disbelief.²⁵

Jesus did not fight against his enemies, so why was Prophet Muhammad a fighter?

Prophet Moses was a fighter, and so was Prophet David. Both Prophets, Moses and Muhammad (peace be upon them all), were in charge of the political and worldly affairs, and both of them emigrated from the pagan community. Moses took his people out of Egypt, while Muhammad's emigration was to Yathrib, and before that his followers had emigrated to Abyssinia escaping from the political and military authorities in the countries from where they fled for the sake of their

²⁵ Ibn Qudāmah in "Al-Mughni".

religion. The call of Jesus (peace be upon him) was different as it was addressed to the Jews, who were not pagans, unlike Moses and Muhammad who lived in two pagan environments: Egypt and the Arab Peninsula, which made things harder and more challenging. The change that was contingent on the call of Moses and Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon them) was fundamental and comprehensive, as it was a big leap from idolatry to monotheism.

Victims of the wars that took place during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad did not exceed one thousand, taking into account that such wars were for self-defense, repelling aggression, or protecting religion. On the other hand, millions fell victims to wars that were waged under the name of other religions.

Moreover, the mercy of Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) was manifest on the Day of the Conquest of Makkah and after Allah Almighty had granted him empowerment, as he said: "Today is a day of showing compassion". He issued a general pardon forgiving the Quraysh who spared no effort to hurt the Muslims, and meeting the offense and abuse with benevolence and kindness.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَلَا تَسْتَوِی الْحُسْنَةُ وَلَا السَّیِّئَةُ ۚ اُدْفَعْ بِالَّتِی هِیَ اَحْسَنُ فَاِذَا الَّذِی بَیْنَكَ وَبَیْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ کَانَهُ وِلِیٌّ حَمِیْمٌ﴾ [فصلت: 34]

{Good and evil are not equal. Repel evil with what is good; the one whom you have enmity with will become as if he was a close friend.} [157]

Allah Almighty said about the traits of the pious:

{...and who restrain their anger and pardon people; for Allah loves those who do good.} [158]

Conveying the Right Religion

What is Jihad?

Jihad means striving against the self to prevent it from committing sins. The mother's Jihad is in her pregnancy by enduring the pregnancy pains. The student's Jihad is in his study. There is also the Jihad of the one who defends his property, honor, and religion. Even perseverance in performing the acts of worship, like fasting and prayer on time, is considered one type of Jihad.

So, the meaning of Jihad is not, as understood by some, killing non-Muslims from among the innocent and peaceful people.

Islam honors life, thus, it is not permissible to fight against the peaceful people and civilians, and it is an obligation to protect properties, children, and women even during wars. Moreover, deformation and mutilation are forbidden as such acts are against the morals of Islam.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقْتِلُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلَا يُخْرِجُواكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾ [الممتحنة: 8-9]
﴿فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُم الظَّالِمُونَ﴾ [الممتحنة: 9]

{Allah does not forbid you from being kind and just to those who did not fight against you nor did they drive you out of your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who are just. Allah only forbids you from taking as allies those who fought against you on account of your religion, and drove you

out of your homes or helped others in driving you out. Whoever takes them as allies, it is they who are the wrongdoers.} [159]

﴿مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلْنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعَدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لُمُسْرِفُونَ﴾ [المائدة: 32]

{For this reason We ordained for the Children of Israel that whoever kills a person – unless in retribution for murder or corruption in the land – it is as if he killed all mankind; and whoever saves a life, it is as if he saved the life of all mankind. Our messengers came to them with clear signs, yet many of them continued to exceed the limits afterwards in the land.}

A non-Muslim is one of the four:

. Musta'man: the one who is granted protection.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ وَذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [التوبة: 6]

{If any of the polytheists asks you for protection, give it to him, so that he may hear the Word of Allah, then escort him to his place of safety; that is because they are a people who do not know.} [161]

. Mu'āhad: the one who is committed to a peace treaty with Muslims.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَإِنْ نَكَثُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ وَطَعَنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ فَقَاتِلُوا أَيْمَةَ الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَأَ أَيْمَانَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَهُونَ﴾ [التوبة: 12]

{But if they break their oaths after making a pledge and revile your religion, then fight the leaders of disbelief – whose oaths mean nothing to them – so that they may desist.} [162]

. Dhimmi: "Dhimmah" means a covenant, and Dhimmis are non-Muslims who enter into an agreement with Muslims to pay Jizyah (protection tax) and committed to certain conditions in return for maintaining their religion and for being granted safety and protection. It is a small sum of money that is determined according to their ability. It is to be taken only from those who are able to pay, i.e., the free adult men who can fight with the exclusion of women, children, and the insane. "Humbled" means submitting to the divine law. On the contrary, the taxes paid by millions of people today include all individuals and constitute large sums of money in return for having their affairs managed by the country and they must submit to this man-made law.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ﴾ [التوبة: 29]

{Fight those of the People of the Book who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, nor do they consider forbidden what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden, nor adopt the religion of truth [Islam], until they pay the protection tax willingly while they are humbled.} [163]

. Muhārib: the one who declares war against Muslims. This person does not respect treaties or covenants and is unworthy of protection. They are those about whom Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ﴾ [الأنفال: 39]

{Fight them until there is no more persecution and the religion is entirely for Allah; but if they desist, then Allah is All-Seeing of what they do.} [164]

The Muhārib (belligerent) category is the only category that we should fight against, and even those, Allah has not commanded us to kill them; rather, fight against them and there is a great difference between the two. The fight here refers to the confrontation in war between two fighters for self-defense, and this is what is stipulated by all the positive laws.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ﴾ [البقرة: 190]

{Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight you, but do not transgress, for Allah does not like transgressors.} [165]

We often hear non-Muslim monotheists saying that they did not think there existed any religion on the surface of earth stating that there is no god but Allah. They thought that Muslims worship Muhammad, the Christians worship Jesus, and the Buddhists worship Buddha. They thought that all the religions they could find on earth do not conform to what lies in their hearts.

This stresses the importance of the Islamic conquests that many used to and are still eagerly waiting for. Such conquests aim at conveying the message of Tawhīd (monotheism) only within the limits of "there is no compulsion in religion", by respecting others' sanctities and making sure that they fulfill their commitments towards the country in return for maintaining their religion and providing them with safety and protection, like what happened in the conquest of Egypt, Andalusia, and many others.

Does Islam permit suicide operations and promise to reward this with the Hūr 'Īn (maidens with wide gorgeous eyes) in Paradise?

It is not logical to say that the Giver of Life commands the one to whom He has given life to kill himself and kill innocent without having committed sin, as He Almighty says:

﴿... وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ...﴾ [النساء: 29]

{And do not kill yourselves [or one another].}[166] There are other verses that forbid killing except with a cause, like legal retribution or repelling an attack, and without violating sanctities or proceeding towards death and subjecting oneself to destruction for the sake of serving the benefits of certain sects that have nothing to do with religion or with its objectives, and that are far from the tolerance and morals of such a great religion. The bliss of Paradise must be regarded from a broader sense, as it is not only restricted to the attainment of the Hūr 'Īn; rather, there are what no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no human heart has ever conceived.

The suffering of the youth today from the economic circumstances and their inability to attain the financial means necessary for their marriage

make them an easy prey to those who advocate such shameful acts, especially those from among them who are addicts and suffer from psychological disturbances. Had the advocates of this idea been truthful, they would have done this themselves instead of sending the youth on such missions.

Has Islam spread with the sword?

The word "sword" is not mentioned in the Noble Qur'an, not even once. The countries that did not witness any wars in the history of Islam are the countries where the majority of Muslims of the world live today like Indonesia, India, China, and others. The existence of Christians, Hindus, and others until today in the countries conquered by Muslims is an evidence on that. Whereas, Muslims who live in countries occupied by non-Muslims are only few, those countries in which genocides were committed and people were compelled to adopt their beliefs like the Crusades and others.

Edouard Montet, the Head of the University of Geneva, said in one of his lectures: "Islam is a fast spreading religion. It spreads by itself without any encouragement offered by organized centers. This is because each Muslim is a missionary by nature. The Muslim possesses strong faith, and the strength of his faith overwhelms his heart and mind, and this is a special advantage of Islam not found in any other religion. Hence, a Muslim glowing with faith preaches his religion wherever he goes. He transmits the infection of strong faith to whoever gets in contact with him from among the pagans. In addition to faith, Islam is compatible with social and economic circumstances. It has an amazing ability to adapt with the surroundings and to make the surroundings adapt with the requirements of this strong religion." [167]

Ideology of Islam

Are there saints and righteous people in Islam? Do Muslims sanctify the Companions of Prophet Muhammad?

The Muslim follows in the footsteps of the righteous and the Prophet's Companions. He loves them and tries to be as righteous as they were, and he worships Allah alone just as they did. However, he does not sanctify them or take them as mediators between himself and Allah.

Allah Almighty said:

{...and that we do not take one another as lords besides Allah...} [168]

What is the difference between the Shiite and the Sunni?

Muhammad was neither a Sunni nor a Shiite; rather, he was a monotheist Muslim. Jesus also was not a Catholic or anything else. Both were the slaves of Allah alone without a mediator. Jesus did not worship himself or his mother, and similarly, Muhammad did not worship himself, his daughter, or his son-in-law.

The emergence of diverse sects due to political problems or deviations from the right religion is possible and has nothing to do with the right, clear, and simple religion. In all cases, the word "Sunnah" means full compliance with the Prophet's methodology, whereas the word "Shia" means a group of people who deviated from the methodology adopted by the majority of Muslims. Therefore, the Sunnis are followers of the

Prophet's methodology and the ones on the right course in general, while the Shiites represent the sect that deviated from the right course of Islam.

Allah Almighty said:

{Those who have made divisions in their religion and turned into factions, you have nothing to do with them. Their case rests with Allah alone; He will inform them of what they used to do.} [169]

Is the Imam in Islam like the priest in Christianity?

"Imam" is a word that means the one who leads his people in prayer or manages their affairs and their leadership. It is not a religious rank restricted to certain people. In Islam there are no classes or priesthood; rather, religion is for all and all people are equal before Allah, i.e., there is no difference between an Arab and a non-Arab except in terms of piety and righteous deeds. The one who is more entitled to lead people in prayer and be their Imam is the one who memorizes more of the Qur'an and is well-informed about the rulings related to prayer. No matter how much Muslims revere the Imam, he, in all cases, does not listen to the confessions and does not forgive sins like the Christian priest does.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣١﴾﴾ [التوبة: 31]

{They have taken their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allah, as well as the Messiah, son of Mary, even though they were commanded to worship only One God; none has the right to be worshiped except Him, glorified is He far above what they associate with Him.} [170]

Islam stresses the prophets' infallibility in what they convey from Allah, yet no priest or saint is infallible or receives revelation. It is totally forbidden in Islam to resort to anyone but to Allah when seeking aid or making a request, even if the request is addressed to the prophets themselves; as one cannot give what he does not have. How could man seek help from another man if he cannot even help himself?! All honor lies in asking Allah, while humiliation lies in asking other than Him. Is it logical to put the king on an equal footing with his subjects in terms of request?! This idea is totally unacceptable to both mind and logic. Seeking help from other than Allah despite belief in the existence of an Omnipotent God is frivolity and constitutes Shirk (polytheism), which contradicts Islam and is deemed the gravest sin.

Allah Almighty said, reporting the Prophet's words:

﴿قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ لَأَسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾﴾
 [الأعراف: 188]

{Say, "I have no power to benefit or harm myself, except what Allah wills. If I had knowledge of the unseen, I would have acquired much good, and no evil would have touched me. I am only a warner and bearer of glad tidings for people who believe."} [171]

He also said:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ ۚ أَحَدًا﴾ [الكهف: 110]

{Say, “I am only a man like you; it has been revealed to me that your God is One God. So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and associate none in the worship of his Lord.”} [172]

{The mosques are for Allah alone, so do not supplicate to anyone along with Allah.}

What is the difference between the prophet and the messenger?

The prophet is the one who received divine revelation but was not sent with a message or a new methodology. The messenger, on the other hand, is the one sent by Allah with a methodology and legislation that suit his people. Examples include the Torah revealed to Prophet Moses, the Gospel revealed to Jesus, the Qur’an revealed to Prophet Muhammad, the Scriptures of Abraham, and the Psalms of Prophet David.

Why did Allah send human messengers to people instead of sending angels?

It is more appropriate to send mankind human messengers to talk to their in own language and act as role models for them. Had Allah sent an angel to mankind as a messenger, and he did what they found difficult to copy, they would have argued that the angel could do what they could not.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَلَائِكَةٌ يَمْشُونَ مُطْمَئِنِّينَ لَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَلَكًا

رَسُولًا ﴿٩٥﴾ [الإسراء: 95]

{Say, “If there had been angels walking on earth peacefully, We would have certainly sent down to them from the heaven an angel as a messenger.”} [174]

{And if We had made him an angel, We would have surely made him [appear as] a man, and We would have caused them confusion just as they are confused.}

What is the evidence that Allah communicates with His creation through revelation?

Some of the proofs indicating Allah's communication with His creation through revelation are:

1. Wisdom: If someone, for instance, built a house and left it uninhabited and allowed none to inhabit it, including their own children, we would normally judge him unwise or abnormal. Bearing in mind that Allah has the highest attributes, there is surely a wisdom behind the creation of the universe and the subjugation of everything in the heavens and earth to man.

2. Fitrah (sound natural disposition): Inside the human soul, there is a strong natural inclination to know one's origin, the source of one's existence, and the purpose behind such existence. Man's Fitrah always drives him to search for the cause of his existence. However, man alone cannot realize his Creator's attributes, the purpose behind his existence, and his destiny. Therefore, the interference of such unseen powers, represented in sending messengers, is necessary for revealing this truth.

Many nations managed to find their way through the heavenly messages, whereas others are still lost in their misguidance trying to find the truth, thinking of nothing beyond terrestrial material symbols.

3. Morals: Our thirst for water is a proof of its existence even before knowing about it. Similarly, our yearning for justice is a proof of the existence of the Just Being.

One who witnesses the deficiencies in this worldly life and the oppression of some people over others, reaches the conviction that life cannot just end with the oppressor's salvation and the loss of the oppressed ones' rights. Rather, the idea of the existence of resurrection, the Hereafter, and divine retaliation brings about feelings of serenity and tranquility. There is no doubt that one who will be held accountable for his deeds cannot be left without direction and guidance, and without encouragement and intimidation, and this is the role of religion.

Moreover, the existence of the current heavenly religions whose followers believe in the divinity of its source is another direct proof of the Creator's communication with mankind. Even if atheists deny the fact of sending messengers and heavenly books by the Lord of the worlds, their existence and survival remain a sufficient and powerful testimony to one fact, which is man's extreme desire to communicate with God and satiate the natural thirst within himself.

Between Islam and Christianity

What is the stance of Islam on the original sin?

The lesson that Allah taught mankind, on accepting Adam's repentance for eating from the forbidden tree, represents the first incident of the Lord's forgiveness to mankind. The Christians' belief of inherited sin from

Adam is meaningless, as no bearer of burden will bear the burden of another. In other words, everyone will be alone responsible for his own sins, and this is a manifestation of the Lord's mercy. Man is born pure and sinless and becomes responsible for his deeds since the age of puberty.

He will not be held accountable for a sin he did not commit, as he will not be granted salvation except through his faith and righteous deeds. Allah has granted man life and gave him a free will as a trial and an affliction, and he will be responsible only for his acts.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾﴾ [الزمر: 7]

{...No bearer of burden can bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return, and He will inform you of what you used to do. He is All-Knowing of what is in the hearts.} [176]

Moreover, it is mentioned in the Old Testament:

"The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his down sin." [177]

Forgiveness does not contradict justice, as justice does not negate forgiveness and mercy.²⁶

²⁶ Book of Deuteronomy: 24:16.

What is the stance of Islam on the crucifixion of Jesus?

The Creating God is Ever-Living, All-Sustainer, All-Sufficient, and Omnipotent. He does not need to die crucified, while embodied in the form of Jesus, for the sake of mankind as the Christians believe. He is the Giver and Taker of life, hence, He did not die and he was not resurrected as well. He is the One who protected His Messenger, the Jesus Christ, from being killed and crucified just as He protected His Messenger Abraham from the fire, and protected Moses from the Pharaoh and his soldiers, as He always protects and saves His righteous slaves.

Allah Almighty said:

{And for their saying, “We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah.” But they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but it was made to appear to them so. Even those who dispute about it are in doubt; they have no certain knowledge other than conjecture. But they certainly did not kill him. Rather, Allah raised him up to Himself, and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.} [178]

Why does not a Muslim give his daughter in marriage to a Jew or a Christian?

A Muslim husband respects the origin of his wife's religion, be she a Christian or a Jew, her Book, and her messenger and his faith is deemed incomplete without that. He also gives her the freedom of practicing her religious rituals. The opposite; however, is not true. If a Christian or a Jew believes that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, we can give him our daughters in marriage.

Islam complements and completes the creed. So, if a Muslim wanted to embrace Christianity, for instance, it would be at the expense of his

belief in Muhammad and the Qur'an, and he will lose his direct relation with the Lord of the worlds by believing in Trinity and resorting to priests, saints, and others. And if he wanted to embrace Judaism, it would be at the expense of his belief in Jesus and the true Gospel, although none is allowed to embrace Judaism, in the first place, because it is a national religion, not international one, and it is the epitome of ultranationalism.

Distinction of the Islamic Civilization

What did make the Islamic civilization distinct?

The Islamic civilization dealt with its Creator in a perfect way; putting the relationship between the Creator and His creation in the right place. Whereas other human civilizations failed to do so, as they disbelieved in Allah and associated His creation with Him in belief and worship, and ascribed to Him what does not befit His majesty and dignity.

The true Muslim does not mix between civilization and urbanization. He adopts a moderate approach in determining the way of dealing with ideas and sciences and distinguishing between:

- . The element of civilization: which is represented in doctrinal, logical, and intellectual aspects, and in behavioral and moral values.
- . The element of urbanization: which is represented in scientific achievements, material discoveries, and industrial inventions.

A true Muslim takes from such sciences and inventions according to his faith and behavioral concepts.

The Greek civilization believed in the existence of Allah, yet it denied His Oneness and negated His ability to bring benefit or ward off harm.

The Roman civilization turned away from the Creator at the beginning. Then, after embracing Christianity, they associated partners with Him, as their beliefs were smeared with pagan practices like worshiping idols and the powers of nature.

The pre-Islamic Persian civilization, disbelieved in Allah, worshiped the sun instead, and prostrated to the fire and deemed it sacred.

The Hindu civilization abandoned worshipping the Creator and worshiped a created god instead, represented in the Trimurti that consists of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Shiva the destroyer.

The Buddhist civilization turned away from God, the Creator, and took Buddha as their god.

As for the Sabian civilization, they were from the People of the Book but they denied the existence of their Lord and worshiped the planets and stars instead, with the exception of some of the monotheists' sects that were mentioned in the Noble Qur'an.

As for the Pharaonic civilization, despite the fact of its achieving monotheism to a great extent and its exaltation of God during the era of Akhenaten; yet it continued to believe in God's incarnation and His resemblance to some of His creatures like the sun and others, which became for them a symbol of God. Moreover, disbelief reached its utmost when the Pharaoh claimed divinity and deemed himself the prime legislator during Moses' era.

The Arab civilization abandoned worshipping the Creator and worshiped the idols instead.

The Christian civilization denied Allah's absolute oneness and associated with Him Jesus Christ and his mother Mary. They adopted the Trinity doctrine which is based on the belief in one God embodied in three hypostases (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit).

The Jewish civilization turned away from its Creator and chose its own god and considered him a national god. They worshiped the calf and attributed to God in their Books human qualities that do not befit Him.

The past civilizations have perished, while both the Christian and Jewish civilizations have turned into non-religious civilizations, which are

capitalism and communism. Owing to the methods used by these two civilizations in dealing with Allah as well as life in terms of creed and intellect, they are deemed backward and not advanced, and are characterized with brutality and immorality despite reaching the highest peak in cultural, scientific, and industrial progress, which do not count in evaluating the progress of civilizations.

The sound criterion of the civilizational progress depends on the logical evidence as well as the sound concept about Allah, man, the universe, and life. Furthermore, the sound and sublime civilization is that which leads one to the true concepts about Allah and His relation with His creation, to know the source of his existence and his destiny, and put this relationship in the right place. In conclusion, the Islamic civilization is the only advanced civilization among all these civilizations simply because it has fulfilled the required balance. [179]

Is it not contradictory that Islam is so logical whereas the Muslims' conditions are so haphazard?

Islam calls for good morals and prohibits evil deeds. Thus, the reason behind bad conduct of some Muslims is their cultural customs or their ignorance of their religion and their distance from the sound religion.

In this case there is no contradiction. If the driver of a splendid car, for instance, had a terrible accident because of his ignorance of the sound rules of driving, would this negate the splendidness of the car?

Why is religion not separated from the state, considering man's opinion as the criterion, as in the West?

The western experience came as a reaction to the dominance and alliance between the church and the state, by dominating people's properties and minds during the middle ages. However, the Islamic world has never faced such a problem due to the practicality and rationality of the Islamic system.

As a matter of fact, we need an established divine legislation that suits man in all conditions. We do not need resources that depend on man's personal whims, desires, and on mood swings, as is the situation with the legalization of usury, homosexuality and others. We do not also need references written down by the strong to be a burden on the weak as in capitalism, or communism that contradicts man's natural desire for ownership.

Does Islam approve of democracy?

Muslims already have what is better than democracy, namely the Shūra (consultation) system.

Democracy: It is to consider the opinion of all your family members before taking a crucial decision on family matters, regardless of their experience, age, or level of wisdom, putting all on an equal footing, starting from the kid of kindergarten up to the wise grandfather.

Shūra, on the other hand, means consulting seniors and those who are experienced regarding what serves the interest and what does not.

The difference between the two is crystal clear. The biggest evidence on the deficiency of democracy is what occurs in some countries regarding the legalization of acts that are against the sound natural disposition, religion, customs, and traditions like homosexuality, usury, and other heinous practices, just for the sake of winning the majority votes. Because of the excessive votes advocating immorality, democracy has big role in creating immoral communities.

The difference between the Islamic Shūra and the western democracy lies in the source of legislation. In democracy, the supremacy in legislation is given first to the people and the nation, whereas in the Islamic Shūra, the supremacy in legislation belongs first to the rulings of the Almighty Creator represented in the Sharia, which is not a human product. The only authority that man has in legislation is the authority of building upon that divine legislation, in addition to the authority of practicing Ijtihād (personal reasoning) in what is not decided by a divine law, provided that the human authority remains controlled within the Sharia-approved frame of the lawful and the unlawful.

The Islamic Sharia is a unique religious law, which does not contradict the reason, so why is there a need for Hudūd (legal prescribed punishments)?

The Hudūd have been prescribed to deter and punish whoever causes corruption deliberately. This is proven by the fact that they are not put in action in cases of unintentional killing or theft that is driven by hunger and dire need. Moreover, Hudūd are not implemented when it comes to minors or people with mental health issues. They are basically prescribed to protect the society, and their severity serves an interest that is ensured by religion for the society, which should be a cause of happiness for the society members. The existence of Hudūd is a mercy for people and a

means for ensuring their security, thus, none would have an objection to such Hudūd except criminals, highway robbers, and corruptors out of fear for themselves. Some of these Hudūd already exist in man-made laws like the Hadd (legal prescribed punishment) of execution and others.

Those who criticize such punishments take the criminal's interest into account and forget the society's interest. They sympathize with the culprit and neglect the victim. They condemn the severity of the punishment and overlook the brutality of the crime.

Had they coupled the punishment with the crime, they would have become certain of the justice of the Sharia penalties and of its appropriateness for the crimes. On recalling, for instance, how the thief sneaks under the cover of the night, breaks locks, aims his weapon, and terrifies people; violating by that people's privacy and intending to kill whoever tries to stop him, since murder frequently takes place as an excuse to complete the theft or escape its consequences without any sense of reason, we come to realize the profound wisdom behind the severity of the Sharia penalties.

The same applies to the rest of penalties, we only have to recall the crimes that incur such punishments with the dangers and damages, the oppression and aggression they cause to be certain that Allah Almighty has prescribed for every crime an appropriate punishment, and for every deed a suitable recompense.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿...وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا﴾ [الكهف: 49]

{...And your Lord does not wrong anyone.} [180]

Before imposing deterring punishments, Islam has offered methods of upbringing and precaution sufficient to keep the criminals away from the crimes they committed only if they had understanding hearts or merciful souls. Moreover, Islam never implements such punishments except after making sure that the perpetrator committed the crime without any justification or a doubt of necessity. Committing crime, after all this, indicates one's corruption and perversion and, thus, his deserving of such painful and deterring punishments.

Islam has worked on distributing wealth fairly and has allocated a known portion of the rich people's properties to the poor. It has made it obligatory to provide for one's wife and relatives, and has enjoined the acts of honoring the guest and treating the neighbor kindly. It has made the state responsible for supporting its members by providing them with sufficiency in terms of essential needs including food, clothing, and habitation so they can have a good and decent life. The state also supports its members by helping those who have the ability to work to find a decent job and enabling everyone to work according to his ability, and by providing equal opportunities for all.

Let us assume that a person returned home to find all his family members killed by someone for the sake of theft or revenge. Then, this person was arrested and imprisoned for a certain period of time, be it short or long, where he eats and benefits from the facilities available in prison, which is provided by the victim through the taxes he pays.

What would be the reaction of this victim at this moment? He would either go insane or would become a drug addict to forget about his pains. If that same situation occurred in a country that applies the Islamic Sharia, the authorities would act in a totally different manner. They would bring the criminal to the victims' family to decide what should be done to him. They could either choose legal retribution, which is exact justice, or

choose the Diyyah, which is the blood money paid for murdering a free human being as a sort of compensation, or choose to pardon him, which is better.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿...وَإِنْ تَعْفُوا وَتَصْفَحُوا وَتَغْفِرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾﴾ [التغابن: 14]

{...But if you pardon and overlook, and forgive, then Allah is indeed All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.} [181]

Anyone who studies the Islamic Sharia is quite aware that Hudūd (legal punishments) are nothing but an educational and a precautionary method rather than a vindictive act or a desire to implement such punishments. For example,

before implementing any of the Hudūd, all precautions must be taken with deliberation, benefit of doubt given, and uncertainty cleared before applying the punishment, as the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Ward off Hudūd (legal prescribed punishments) by doubtful evidence."

Whoever falls into error and Allah conceals it, and he does not expose himself in public is not be subject to punishment, as Islam forbids spying on people and exposing their secrets.

Moreover, the victim's pardon of the offender suspends the Hadd.

﴿... فَمَنْ عَفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتَّبِعْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدِّءْ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ...﴾ [البقرة: 178]

{...But if one is pardoned by the victim's guardian, then a fair ransom of blood-money should be set and paid in best way. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord...} [182]

Furthermore, the offender must have a free will and must not be under coercion when committing the crime, as the Hadd is not to be implemented on the coerced since the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"My Ummah (people) have been forgiven what they do by mistake or due to forgetfulness and what they do under coercion." [183]

There is a wisdom behind imposing heavy Sharia penalties, which are brutal and barbaric according to their claim; as the murderer is to be killed, the adulterer is to be stoned, the thief's hand is to be cut off, etc. The wisdom lies in the fact that such crimes are considered the primary crimes as each of them entails a violation of one or more of the five major necessities: religion, life, offspring, property, and mind, and all man-made legislations and laws throughout time have agreed on the obligation of protecting and maintaining these necessities without which life will remain deficient.

That is why the perpetrator of any of these crimes deserves a heavy penalty to restrain him and deter others.

The Islamic methodology must be adopted as a whole and its Hudūd must not be implemented apart from the Islamic teachings concerning the economic and social approaches. In fact, people's remoteness from the right teachings of religion is what drives some to commit crimes. We have

seen how such major crimes ruin many of the countries that do not apply the Islamic Sharia despite all their potentialities and abilities and all their material and technical progress.

The number of verses in the Noble Qur'an is 6348 and the number of verses that tackle Hudūd do not exceed ten verses, and they were put with profound wisdom by One Who is All-Wise, All-Aware. How could one miss the opportunity of enjoying the process of reading and applying this methodology, which is considered unique of its kind by many non-Muslims, only because they do not know the wisdom behind ten verses?!

Moderation of Islam

How did Islam achieve social balance?

One of the general rules of Islam states that wealth belongs to Allah and people are entrusted with it and that wealth must not circulate only among the rich. Islam forbids the act of hoarding wealth without giving the poor and the needy a small share of it through Zakah, which is an act of worship that helps man give preponderance to sacrifice and giving out over stinginess and miserliness.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿مَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٧﴾﴾ [الحشر: 7]

{Whatever gains Allah has bestowed upon His Messenger from the people of the towns belongs to Allah and the Messenger, and to his close relatives, orphans, the needy, and stranded wayfarers, so that wealth should not circulate only among those of you who are rich. Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and whatever he forbids you, refrain from it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in punishment.} [184]

﴿عَامِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُسْتَخْلِفِينَ فِيهِ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْفَقُوا لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧﴾﴾ [الحديد: 7]

{Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and spend [in Allah's cause] out of what He has entrusted you with. For those among you who believe and spend, there will be a great reward.}

﴿...وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ
أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾﴾ [التوبة: 34]

{...Those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah, give them tidings of a painful punishment.}

Also Islam encourages all people, who are able, to work.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذُلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ ۗ وَإِلَيْهِ
النُّشُورُ ﴿١٥﴾﴾ [الملك: 15]

{It is He Who made the earth smooth for you, so travel through its regions and eat from His provisions. And to Him is the resurrection.} [187]

Islam, in reality, is a religion that appreciates work and Allah Almighty commands us to adopt Tawakkul (reliance on Allah) rather than Tawākul (to depend on Allah inactively). Tawakkul requires determination, diligence, and utilization of the available means, followed by submission to the decree and judgment of Allah.

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said to the one who wanted to leave his she-camel loose as an expression of his reliance on Allah:

"Tie it up and then rely (on Allah)."[188]

This is how the Muslim achieves the required balance.²⁷

²⁷ "Sahīh at-Tirmidhi".

Islam has forbidden extravagance and has raised the individuals' level to control the standard of livelihood. However, it should be noted that richness in Islam does not just mean the fulfillment of essential needs; rather, it means possessing food, clothes, habitation, and the necessary means to get married, perform Hajj, and give charity as well.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا﴾ [الفرقان: 67]

{And those who neither spend wastefully nor stingily, but are moderate between them.} [189]

In the sight of Islam, the poor person is the one who fails to achieve a standard of living that satisfies his essential needs according to the standard of living in his country. The higher the living standard is, the wider the actual meaning of poverty becomes. So, if it is common in a certain community that every family owns an independent house, then, failing to possess an independent house becomes a form of poverty. Consequently, balance means granting each individual, Muslim or Dhimmi, sufficiency in a way that fits the society's resources at that time.

Islam guarantees fulfilling the needs of all society members through public solidarity, as Muslims are brothers and it is obligatory upon them to support one another. Hence, it is the Muslims' duty to make sure that none among them is indigent.

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, he neither wrongs him nor does he hand him over (to one who does him wrong). Whoever fulfills his brother's needs, Allah will fulfill his needs; and whoever relieves a Muslim of his troubles, Allah will relieve him of one of the troubles of the Day of

Judgment; and whoever covers up (the fault of) a Muslim, Allah will cover him up on the Day of Judgment." [190]

How does Islam achieve economic balance?

By drawing a simple comparison between the economic system in Islam, capitalism, and socialism, for instance, it becomes obvious how Islam has achieved this balance.

Concerning the freedom of ownership:

In capitalism: private ownership is the basic principle,

In communism: common ownership is the basic principle,

In Islam: ownerships of various types are allowed:

- . Public property: It is for all Muslims such as the inhabited lands.
- . State property: It refers to natural resources like forests and minerals.
- . Private property: It is acquired only through investment means that do not threaten the general equilibrium.

Concerning the economic freedom:

In capitalism: the economic freedom is limitless.

In socialism: the economic freedom is totally confiscated.

In Islam: the economic freedom is given within limits represented in the following:

- . Personal limitation that emanates from the soul due to the Islamic upbringing and the spread of the Islamic concepts in society.

. Objective limitation represented in specific legislations that forbid certain acts like cheating, gambling, usury, etc.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَرْبَآءَ أضعفًا مُضعفَةً ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾ [آل عمران: 130]

{O you who believe, do not consume usury, doubled and multiplied. And fear Allah, so that you may succeed.} [191]

﴿وَمَا ءَاتَيْتُمْ مِّن رَّبَّا لِيَرْبُؤَ فِي أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُوا عِندَ اللَّهِ وَمَا ءَاتَيْتُمْ مِّن زَكَاةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضْعِفُونَ﴾ [الروم: 39]

{Whatever you lend in usury in order to gain more at the expense of people’s wealth, it will not increase [in reward] with Allah. But whatever you give as charity, seeking Allah’s pleasure – it is they who will have multiple reward.}

﴿* يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ ۖ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِّن نَّفْعِهِمَا ۗ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ ۖ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 219]

{They ask you about intoxicants and gambling. Say, “In both there is a great sin, and some benefits for people, but their sin is far greater than their benefit.” They ask you as to what they should spend. Say, “The surplus”. This is how Allah makes His verses clear to you, so that you may contemplate.}

Capitalism drew an unrestricted methodology for man and invited him to follow its guidance, claiming that such liberal methodology is what will make him attain sheer happiness. However, man found himself at the end confined in a class-based society, i.e., it is either extreme wealth founded on oppressing others, or extreme poverty for those who abide by morals.

Then, communism came and revoked all classes. It tried to establish firmer principles; however, it only created poorer communities that suffered more pains and were more rebellious than others.

As for Islam, it adopted a moderate course and the Muslim nation, thus, became the moderate nation. It offered humanity a great system, as testified by the enemies of Islam. Nevertheless, some Muslims have been negligent in their adherence to the great values of Islam.

Is Islam a religion of extremism?

Extremism, fanaticism, and bigotry are nothing but qualities that are basically forbidden by the right religion. The Noble Qur'an urges people in many verses to be gentle and merciful, pardoning and forgiving.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۗ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ عَلَىٰ تَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾﴾ [آل عمران: 159]

{It is by Allah's mercy that you [O Prophet] became lenient to them. If you had been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from you. So pardon them, seek forgiveness for them, and consult them in the important matters. But once you have made a decision, put your trust in Allah, for Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.} [194]

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾﴾ [النحل: 125]

{Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and reason with them in the best manner. Your Lord knows best who has strayed from His way and knows best those who are rightly guided.}

Lawfulness is the basic rule in Islam with the exclusion of a limited number of prohibitions, which are indisputable and clearly mentioned in the Noble Qur'an.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَبْنَىِٔ عَادَمَ خُدُوًا زِينَتِكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوْا وَشَرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾﴾ قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِي اُخْرِجَ لِعِبَادِهِهٖ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَّوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۗ كَذٰلِكَ نُوَفِّصُ الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قُلْ اِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ ۗ وَالْاِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۗ وَاَنْ تُشْرِكُوْا بِاللّٰهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهٖ سُلْطٰنًا وَاَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا عَلٰى اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾﴾ [الأعراف: 31-33]

{O children of Adam, dress well for every prayer. Eat and drink, but do not waste, for He does not like the wasteful. Say, “Who has forbidden the adornments and lawful provisions that Allah has brought forth for His slaves?” Say, “They are for the believers in the life of this world, and they will be exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection. This is how We make the verses clear for people who have knowledge.” Say, “My Lord has forbidden shameful acts done openly or in secret, sinfulness, unjustified aggression, associating partners with Allah for which He has

not sent down any authority, and saying about Allah that of which you have no knowledge.”} [196]

Islam has described as demonic acts all what calls to extremism, fanaticism, or prohibition without a Sharia-valid evidence, and religion has nothing to do with them.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾ إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾﴾ [البقرة: 168-169]

{O people, eat from what is lawful and good on earth and do not follow the footsteps of Satan, for he is your sworn enemy. He only orders you to commit evil and immoral deeds, and to say concerning Allah what you do not know.} [197]

{And I [Satan] will surely mislead them and arouse in them false hopes, and will order them to slit the ears of livestock, and will order them to change Allah’s creation.” Whoever takes Satan as a protector instead of Allah has surely suffered a manifest loss.}

Is Islam a religion of moderation and ease?

Religion, in principle, came to alleviate many of the restrictions that people impose on themselves. In the pre-Islamic era of ignorance, for instance, abominable practices became widespread like burying girls alive, permitting certain types of food only for men and making them prohibited for women, depriving women of inheritance, eating carrion, committing adultery, consuming intoxicants, devouring the orphan's property, consuming usury among other evil acts.

One of the things that cause people to have an aversion to religion and resort to material science is the existence of contradictions in some religious concepts among some people. Hence, moderation and balance are among the major characteristics and main causes that make people interested in the right religion, and this is clearly manifest in the Islamic religion.

The problem with other religions, which emerged from the distorted sound religion, is represented in

either being too spiritual, thus encouraging their followers to adopt monasticism and isolation,

or purely materialistic.

This has caused many people to turn away from religion in general among many peoples and followers of the previous religions.

Moreover, we find among some other peoples that many legislations, rulings, and errant practices were falsely attributed to religion as a pretext for forcing people to apply them, the thing that caused them to deviate from the right course and from the sound Fitrah-based concept of religion. Consequently many people lost the ability of distinguishing between the true concept of religion, which fulfills man's natural and unquestionable needs, and man-made laws, customs, traditions, and inherited practices, and this has led them later to seek the replacement of religion with modern science.

As a matter of fact, the right religion is the one that aims at making things easy for people and at alleviating their suffering, introducing rulings and legislations that aim primarily at bringing along facilitation.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا﴾ [النساء: 29]

{...And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is Most Merciful to you.} [199]

﴿... وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ [البقرة:

[195]

{...And do not throw yourselves into destruction, and do good, for Allah loves those who do good.}

﴿... وَيَجِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ...﴾ [الأعراف: 157]

{...He makes lawful for them what is pure and makes unlawful for them what is impure; he relieves them of their burden and the shackles that were on them. So those who believe in him, they honor and support him, and follow the light which is sent down with him – it is they who will be successful.}

Moreover, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"Make matters easy (for people) and do not make them difficult, and give people glad tidings and do not repulse them." [202]

I recall here the story of the three men who were talking together, and one of them said that he would pray all night long, while the other said that he would observe fast continuously without ever breaking it, whereas the third said that he would abstain from women and never get married. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) then came and said to them:

[148]

"Are you the ones who said such-and-such? By Allah, I fear Allah more than you do, and I am the most obedient and dutiful among you to Him, but still I observe fast and break it; perform prayer and sleep (at night), and I take wives. So, whoever turns away from my Sunnah does not belong to me." [203]

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) advised 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr, on knowing that he used to pray all night long, observe fast continuously, and recite the whole Qur'an every single night, saying:

"Do not do that; rather pray (at night) and sleep, fast and break your fast for your body has a right over you, your eye has a right over you, your guest has a right over you, and your wife has a right over you." [204]

Women in Islam

Why does the Muslim woman wear Hijab?

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلْبَابِهِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ أَذْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ [الأحزاب: 59]

{O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters, and the believing women to draw their outer garments over themselves; that is more likely that they will be known [as chaste women] and will not be harassed. And Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.} [205]

The Muslim woman understands well the meaning of the term "Khusūsiyyah" (particularity). Her love for her father, brother, son, and husband made her realize the particularity of each type of love, as her love

for her husband and her love for her father or brother require her to give everyone his due right. Her father's right over her, mainly showing respect and dutifulness, is different from her son's right over her such as providing care, upbringing and so on. She knows quite well when, how, and to whom she could reveal her adornment, so, her outfit in the presence of a stranger is different from what she wears in the presence of a close relative. In other words, she does not appear in the same look before all people. A Muslim woman is a free woman who refuses to be a captive of fashion and others' personal desires. She wears only what is appropriate for her and what makes her happy and pleases her Lord. See how the woman in the West has become a captive of fashion and fashion houses. Once they declare that the new trend is wearing short and tight pants, she hurries to wear it whether it fits her or makes her feel comfortable or not.

It is no secret to anyone how the woman today has turned into a commodity, as almost no commercial or flyer is devoid of an image of a naked woman. This conveys an indirect message to the western woman about her current value. When a Muslim woman conceals her adornment, she is the one who sends the world a message indicating how valuable she is, and how honored she is by Allah. So, those who deal with her must evaluate her in terms of her knowledge, culture, convictions, and ideas not in terms of her physical beauty.

A Muslim woman also understands the human nature that Allah has instilled in people, hence, she does not reveal her adornment in the presence of strangers to protect the society and herself from abuse. I think none can deny the fact that every beautiful girl who feels proud of exposing her physical charms to the public, when reaches old age would wish that all women wear Hijab.

Have a look at the statistics of death and disfigurement rates resulting from plastic surgeries nowadays, what has driven women to go through all this suffering? It is because they forced her to take part in physical beauty contests instead of focusing on her intellectual beauty, the thing that has caused her to waste her true value as well as her life.

Does the woman's head-cover indicate backwardness?

As a matter of fact, uncovering the head is complete and utter backwardness. Is there any further backwardness beyond the time of Adam; Allah ensured for Adam and his wife concealment and clothing since the time they were created and made to live in Paradise.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَى﴾ [طه: 118]

{Here you will neither go hungry nor naked.} [206]

Allah has also provided Adam's offspring with garments to cover their private parts and as an adornment. Since then, humanity has been developing in its clothing with concealment and covering, which has become the criterion of measuring people's progress. It is well-known that people who live away from civilization, like some African nations, barely wear anything besides what covers their private parts.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَبْنِيْ عَادَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُوَارِي سَوْءَاتِكُمْ وَرِيْشًا وَّلِبَاسٌ اَلتَّقْوٰى ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُوْنَ﴾ [الأعراف: 26]

{O children of Adam, We have given you garments that cover your private parts and as an adornment. However, the garment of piety – that is best. That is one of the signs of Allah, so that they may take heed.} [207]

Let the Western man have a look at his grandmother's photos on her way to school and see what she used to wear. When swimsuits appeared for the first time, demonstrations took place in Europe and Australia against it because it opposed man's sound nature and customs and not for religious reasons. The manufacturing companies then were dedicated to producing intensive commercials using five-year-old girls wearing swimsuits to encourage women to wear it. The first girl appeared to be extremely shy while walking in a swimsuit and she failed to complete the show. At that time, both men and women used to swim in full black-and-white swimsuits that cover the whole body.

Why, in Islam, men and women do not cover their bodies in the same manner?

The difference between men's physical structure and that of women is an unquestionable axiom to all people, simply because men's swimsuits differ from those of women in the West. A woman completely covers her body to ward off temptation, but has anybody ever heard of a woman charged with raping a man? Women, in the West, go on demonstrations demanding their right to have a secure life free of harassment and rape which they lack; however, we have never heard of similar demonstrations held by men.

Has Islam guaranteed women equality with men?

A Muslim woman seeks justice rather than equality, since equality with man causes her to lose many of her rights and a great deal of her distinctions. Let us assume that someone has two sons at the age of five and eighteen. He wants to buy each of them a shirt. Equality, in this case, means buying them shirts of the same size, which means that one of them will have to suffer. On the other hand, justice here means buying each of them a shirt with the size that fits him, the thing that will make everybody happy.

Nowadays women try to prove that they can do whatever men do. In reality; this causes them to lose their uniqueness and distinction, as Allah has created the woman to do what man cannot do. It has been proven that labor pains are among the most severe pains that could be experienced by a human being. Religion came to bestow on women the honor they deserve in return for such exhaustion, and to grant them the right of not being responsible for financial maintenance or work and of being fully entitled to their own property without having to share it with their husbands like what happens in the West. Although Allah has not given man the ability to endure labor pains, yet He has given him the ability to climb mountains for instance.

If a woman, wishes to climb a mountain and work hard and claims she can do this exactly like man, she may do so; however, at the end she will be the one who gives birth to children as well, and she will be the one responsible for caring and breastfeeding them as man cannot do this in all cases. So, she will be forced to double her efforts although she had the chance to avoid this from the beginning.

What is unknown to many is that if a Muslim woman claims her rights through the United Nations, giving up her rights in Islam, the loss will be

all hers because she enjoys much more rights in Islam. Islam achieves integration that man and woman have been created for and this fulfills happiness for all.

Why does Islam permit polygamy?

According to global statistics, the male and female birth rates are almost equal. However, it is scientifically acknowledged that the rates of females' survival are higher than those of males. Moreover, in wars more men get killed than women. It is also scientifically proven that the average age of females is bigger than that of men which, consequently, leads to increasing the rate of widows globally than that of widowers. Thus, women will come to constitute the majority of the world population and that is why it is not practically appropriate to restrict every man to one wife.

In societies where polygamy is legally forbidden, we find it common for men to have mistresses and several intimate relations out of wedlock, which is an implicit, yet illegal, approval of polygamy. This was a predominant phenomenon before Islam, and Islam came to rectify this situation and preserve the woman's rights and dignity, turning her from a mistress to a self-respecting wife, enjoying her and her children's rights.

It is quite astonishing that these societies find no trouble in accepting affairs out of wedlock, or even same-sex marriages, and accepting relationships void of clear responsibilities, as well as accepting fatherless children. However, such societies can by refuse to accept a legal marriage between a man and more than one woman. Islam, on the other hand, shows great wisdom in this regard and clearly permits man to practice polygamy, for the sake of preserving the woman's dignity and rights, so long as he has less than four wives and the two conditions of justice and ability are met. Polygamy also aims at solving the problem of the woman

who cannot find a single husband and has no choice except to get married to a married man or accept to be someone's mistress.

Despite the fact that Islam allows polygamy; yet, it is not true that a Muslim man is forced to marry more than one as some may believe.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبْعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً...﴾ [النساء: 3]

{If you fear that you may not maintain justice with orphan girls [by marrying them] then marry women of your choice – two, three, or four; but if you fear that you may not maintain justice, then marry only one...} [208]

Actually, the Qur'an is the only religious book in the whole world that clarifies the fact that one must have only one wife in case the condition of justice cannot be met.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمِيلِ فَتَدْرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ [النساء: 129]

{You will never be able to maintain absolute justice between your wives, no matter how keen you are. So do not completely incline to one leaving the other in suspense. If you do what is right and fear Allah, Allah is surely All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.} [209]

In all cases, a woman is entitled to be her husband's only wife by mentioning such condition in the marriage contract, which is an essential and binding condition that must not be revoked.

Why is it not permissible for a woman to be married to four men at the same time as it is permissible for man?

One of the extremely important points that is often neglected by modern society is the right that Islam has granted women but not to men. Man can only marry unmarried women, whereas a woman can either marry a single or a married man and this is meant to guarantee the attribution of children to their real father and to protect the children's rights and their inheritance from their father. Islam allows a woman to be married to a married man provided that he has less than four wives and can fulfill the conditions of justice and ability. Thus, a woman is allowed a wider range of choices from among men and has the opportunity to learn how to deal with the co-wife and how to approach marriage while being aware of the morals of this husband.

Even if we assume the possibility of maintaining the children's right through the DNA test owing to the scientific advancement, what is the mistake of the children to deserve being introduced to their father through such a test? How would this affect their mental state? Moreover, how could one woman manage to be a wife to four men with such moodiness of hers?! All this along with the diseases that she could get as a result of her intimate relation with more than one man at the same time.

Why are men in charge of women in Islam?

Man's Qiwāmah (being in charge) is nothing but an honor bestowed on women and a responsibility placed on men's shoulders to look after women and fulfill their needs. A Muslim woman plays the role of a queen, which every woman on earth aspires to. A smart woman is the one who chooses what she should be: an honorable queen or a hardworking woman in the middle of the road.

If we admit that some Muslim men misuse Qiwāmah, this does not indicate a deficiency in the Qiwāmah system itself; rather, it indicates a deficiency in those who misuse it.

Why does a woman inherit half of what man inherits in Islam?

In the pre-Islamic era, women were deprived of inheritance. When Islam came, they were not only included in inheritance but they were also granted more or equal shares to those of men, and in some cases a woman is entitled to inheritance while man is not. In other cases, men get higher shares than women depending on the degree of kinship and consanguinity, and this is the case mentioned in the Noble Qur'an:

﴿يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ...﴾ [النساء: 11]

{Allah instructs you concerning [the inheritance of] your children: the share of a male is equal to that of two females...} [210]

A Muslim lady once said that she had not understood this point until the death of her father-in-law when her husband inherited double the amount that was inherited by his sister. He used the money to buy the missing essentials including a house for his family and a car, whereas his

sister used her money to buy jewelry and saved the rest in a bank, as it is her husband's responsibility to provide the a place to live and other essential needs.Only then she understood the wisdom behind this ruling and praised Allah.

Even if the woman works hard in many societies to provide for her family, this does not indicate a deficiency in the inheritance ruling.For example, if a mobile phone starts to malfunction because its user did not follow the usage instructions, this does not indicate the deficiency of such instructions.

Why has Islam permitted man to beat the woman?

Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) has never beat a woman in his whole life. As for the Qur'anic verse that talks about beating, it refers to non-violent beating in case of recalcitrance.In some period, this kind of beating was depicted in the man-made law of the United States of America as the permissible beating that should not leave trace on the body.That is used to prevent a graver danger like when someone shakes his son by the shoulder to wake him up from his deep slumber so as not to miss his exam.

Let us imagine that someone found his daughter standing on the edge of the window to throw herself; he will inadvertently grab her and pull her back so as not to hurt herself. This is exactly what is meant here by beating the woman; it is the husband's endeavor to prevent his wife from destroying her home and her children's future.

This, actually, comes after several stages as mentioned in the verse that reads:

﴿... وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ ذُشُورَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَأَهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَأَضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا﴾ [النساء: 34]

{As for those women on whose part you fear rebellion, [first] admonish them, [next] forsake them in bed, and [last] hit them [gently]. Then if they obey you, do not take further action against them. Indeed, Allah is Most High, All-Great.} [211]

Considering the woman's weakness in general, Islam has granted her the right to resort to the court in case of being mistreated by her husband.

The marital relationship in Islam is to be built, in principle, on love, tranquility, and mercy.

Allah Almighty said:

{And among His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves that you may find comfort in them, and He placed between you love and mercy. Indeed, there are signs in this for people who reflect.} [212]

How did Islam honor the woman?

Islam has honored the woman by considering her innocent of Adam's sin, unlike other religions, and by holding her in high esteem.

In Islam, Allah forgave Adam and taught us how to return to Him whenever we commit a sin throughout our life. Allah Almighty said:

﴿فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ [البقرة: 37]

{Then Adam received some words from his Lord, and He accepted his repentance. He is the Acceptor of repentance, the Most Merciful.} [213]

Mary, the mother of Jesus (peace be upon him), is the only woman whose name is mentioned in the Noble Qur'an.

The woman played an important role in many of the stories mentioned in the Qur'an. An example of that is Bilqīs, the Queen of Sheba, and her story with Prophet Solomon that ended up with accepting Islam and submitted to the Lord of the worlds as mentioned in the Noble Qur'an

﴿إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ أُمَّرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾ [النمل: 23]

{I found a woman ruling over them, who has been given of all things, and she has a great throne.} [214]

The Islamic history sheds light on how Prophet Muhammad consulted women and adopted their opinions in many situations. He also allowed women to go to mosques just like men, provided that they be modestly dressed, knowing that a woman's prayer in her house is better. Moreover, women used to participate with men in wars and provide medical care. They also used to take part in trade transactions and compete in the fields of education and knowledge.

Islam has significantly improved women's conditions compared to the ancient Arab cultures. It has forbidden the burial of baby girls alive and granted the woman an independent personality. It has also arranged the contractual issues related to marriage, maintaining the woman's right to a dowry and ensuring her rights in inheritance and private possession in addition to her right to manage her own properties by herself.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "The most perfect believer in his faith is the one who has the most excellent morals, and the best of you are those who are best to their wives." [215]

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَنَاتِينَ وَالْقَنَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَشِيعِينَ وَالْخَشِيعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّيِّمِينَ وَالصَّيِّمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾ [الأحزاب: 35]

{Muslim men and women, believing men and women, obedient men and women, truthful men and women, patient men and women, humble men and women, charitable men and women, fasting men and women, and the men and women who guard their chastity, and men and women who remember Allah much – Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward.} [216]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾ [النساء: 19]

{O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to forcibly inherit women, nor to hinder them from marriage, in order to take back some of what you have given them, unless they commit a clear adultery. Treat them kindly. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike something which Allah has put much good in it.}

﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ أُنثُقُوا رَبَّكُمْ أَلَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا
وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَأَتَقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾﴾ [النساء: 1]

{O people, fear your Lord Who created you from a single soul, and created from it its mate, and from both of them created countless men and women. Fear Allah in Whose name you ask one another, and be mindful of your kinship ties, for Allah is ever Watchful over you.}

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ
أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾﴾ [النحل: 97]

{Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, while being a believer, We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely reward them according to the best of their deeds.}

﴿... هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ...﴾ [البقرة: 187]

{...They are garment for you just as you are garment for them...}

﴿وَمِنَ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ
مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾﴾ [الروم: 21]

{And among His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves that you may find comfort in them, and He placed between you love and mercy. Indeed, there are signs in this for people who reflect.}

﴿وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ فِي يَتْلَىٰ النِّسَاءِ الَّتِي لَا تُوْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ وَرَغِبُونَ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الْوَالِدِينَ وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَامَىٰ بِالْقِسْطِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا ﴿١٢٧﴾ وَإِنْ أَمْرًا خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُورًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٢٨﴾﴾ [النساء: 127-128]

{They ask you [O Prophet] concerning women. Say, “It is Allah Who gives you a ruling concerning them. It has been recited to you in the Book concerning orphan girls whom you deprive of their prescribed rights [of dowry and inheritance], yet you desire to marry them, and concerning helpless children, and that you should treat orphans with justice. Whatever good you do, Allah is All-Knowing of it.” If a woman fears ill treatment or indifference on her husband’s part, there is no blame on them to reach an amicable reconciliation between themselves, for reconciliation is best, even though human souls are prone to avarice. If you do good and fear Allah, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

Allah Almighty has commanded men to provide for women and preserve their properties, and has relieved women of all financial responsibilities towards the family. Islam has also preserved the woman's identity and personality as it has allowed her to keep her family name even after getting married.

Why did Prophet Muhammad implement the Hadd (prescribed legal punishment) of adultery whereas Jesus forgave the adulteress?

There is a total agreement between Judaism, Christianity and Islam on imposing a heavy penalty for the adultery crime. [223]

In Christianity, Jesus stressed the meaning of adultery and made it inclusive of the moral conception and not just restricted to the physical and tangible act itself.²⁸Christianity has made it forbidden for the adulterers to inherit the Kingdom of God; so, they will have no other option but to suffer the eternal torment in Hellfire.The punishment to be inflicted on adulterers in this worldly life is that which was decided by the legislation of Moses, i.e., being stoned to death.

Moreover, scholars of the Holy Scripture admit today that the story of Jesus' forgiveness of the adulteress does not actually exist in the earliest copies of the Gospel of John; however, it was added to it later, the thing that is affirmed by the recent translations.²⁹More important than all this is the declaration made by Jesus himself at the beginning of his call when he stated that he had not come to revoke the laws of Moses and the previous prophets, rather the disappearance of the heavens and the earth were less significant for him than missing one single point of Moses' legislation as mentioned in the Gospel of Luke.Hence, Jesus could not

²⁸ The Old Testament, Book of Leviticus 20: 10-18.

²⁹ The New Testament, Gospel of Matthew 5: 27-30.The New Testament, First Epistle of the Corinthians 6: 9-10.The New Testament, Gospel of John 8: 3-11.

have possibly suspended Moses' legislation by leaving the adulteress unpunished.

For the punishment to be implemented, there must be four witnesses along with a description of the adultery incident in a way that confirms its occurrence and not just the mere presence of a man with a woman in the same place. If any of the witnesses withdraws his testimony, the punishment is to be suspended. This explains the scarcity of cases where the punishment of adultery is implemented throughout history, as this is the only way to prove it and it is difficult, rather impossible, unless the adulterer himself makes a confession.³⁰

In case the punishment is implemented, based on the confession of one of the offenders not the testimony of four witnesses, punishment should not be inflicted on the second offender who has not confessed his crime.

Allah has left the door open to repentance,

as Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ يُتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا﴾ [النساء: 17]

{Allah only accepts the repentance of those who commit evil out of ignorance, then repent soon thereafter; it is they to whom Allah will turn in forgiveness, for Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.} [229]

³⁰ [https://www.alukah.net/sharia/0/82804/The New Testament, Gospel of Luke 16: 17.](https://www.alukah.net/sharia/0/82804/The_New_Testament,Gospel_of_Luke_16:_17)

﴿وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾

[النساء: 110]

{Whoever commits evil or wrongs himself, then seeks Allah's forgiveness will find Allah All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.}

﴿يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا﴾ [النساء: 28]

{Allah wants to lighten your burdens, for man was created weak.}

Islam acknowledges man's natural need; however, it seeks to satisfy such instinctual motive through the legal method, i.e., marriage. That is why Islam advocates early marriage and offers support from the Muslims' public treasury in case of financial inability. Islam is also keen on purifying the society from all means of spreading immorality, setting sublime goals that would consume the energy and direct it to what is good, and filling the free time with what would bring closeness to Allah. All such things block all justifications for committing the crime of adultery. Despite all this, Islam does not hasten to inflict the punishment until adultery is proven by the testimony of four witnesses, knowing that it is extremely rare to find four witnesses to such a crime unless the offender declares it in public, in which case he becomes liable for this severe punishment. It should be noted that adultery is one of the major sins, whether committed secretly or openly.

Once a woman came to the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and willingly confessed and asked him to implement the punishment on her, and she was pregnant from adultery. The Prophet summoned her guardian and ordered him to treat her kindly, the thing that indicates the perfection of the Sharia and the perfection of the Creator's mercy towards His creation.

The Messenger of Allah said to her: "Go back until you give birth." When she came back, he said to her: "Go back until your child is weaned." Owing to her insistence on returning to the Prophet after her child was weaned, he implemented the punishment on her and said: "She repented such a repentance (for her sin) that if were distributed among seventy of the inhabitants of Madīnah, it would be sufficient for them."

This noble situation was a clear manifestation of the Prophet's mercy.

The Creator's Justice

What is the stance of Islam on the principle of justice and fairness?

Islam calls for the establishment of justice among people and fairness in measure and weight.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَالِى مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ إِلٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۗ قَدْ جَاءتْكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا ۚ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾﴾ [الأعراف:

[85

{And to the people of Midian [We sent] their brother Shu'ayb. He said, "O my people, worship Allah; you have no god other than Him. There has come to you a clear proof from your Lord. Give full measure and weight, and do not defraud people of their property, and do not spread corruption in the land after it has been set aright. That is best for you, if you are [truly] believers.} [232]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ءَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾﴾ [المائدة:

[8

{O you who believe, stand firm for Allah by bearing true testimony, and do not let the hatred of a people lead you away from justice. Be just; that is closer to righteousness. And fear Allah, for Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَٰتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾﴾ [النساء: 58]

{Indeed, Allah commands you to return trusts to their owners, and when you judge between people, judge with justice. What an excellent exhortation from Allah to you! Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.}

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاٰى ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاٰءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾﴾ [النحل: 90]

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts, evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed.}

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّىٰ تَسْتَأْذِنُوا وَتُسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾ [النور: 27]

{O you who believe, do not enter any house other than your own until you ask permission and greet their dwellers. That is best for you, so that you may take heed.}

﴿فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَجِدُوا فِيهَا أَحَدًا فَلَا تَدْخُلُوهَا حَتَّىٰ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ ۗ وَإِنْ قِيلَ لَكُمْ ارْجِعُوا فَارْجِعُوا ۗ هُوَ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾ [النور: 28]

{If you do not find anyone therein, do not enter it until you have been given permission. If you are told to go back, then go back; that is more proper for you. And Allah is All-Knowing of what you do.}

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهْلَةٍ فَتُصِيبُوهَا ۗ إِنَّمَا تَعْلَمُونَ نَدِيمِينَ ﴿٦﴾﴾ [الحجرات: 6]

{O you who believe, if an evildoer brings you some news, verify it, lest you harm a people unknowingly, then you become regretful for what you did.}

﴿وَإِنْ طَافَتَا مِنْ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اُقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِئَءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٩﴾﴾ [الحجرات: 9]

{If two groups of the believers fight one another, make peace between them. If one of them transgresses against the other, fight against the transgressing group until they submit to the rule of Allah. Then if they submit, make peace between them with fairness, and be just, for Allah loves those who are just.}

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾﴾ [الحجرات: 10]

{The believers are but brothers, so make peace between your brothers. And fear Allah, so that you may be shown mercy.}

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُونَ قَوْمٍ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّن نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِاللِّقَبِ بِيْسَ الْأَسْمِ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١١﴾﴾ [الحجرات: 11]

{O you who believe, let not some men ridicule others, for it may be that they are better than them; nor let some women ridicule others, for it may be that they are better than them. Do not speak ill of one another, nor call one another by [offensive] nicknames. How evil is the name of wickedness after having faith! And whoever does not repent, it is they who are the wrongdoers.}

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾﴾ [الحجرات: 12]

{O you who believe, avoid much suspicion, for some suspicions are sin. Do not spy on one another, nor backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would surely abhor it. So fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Accepting of Repentance, Most Merciful.}

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "None of you is a real believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

Rights in Islam

What is the stance of Islam on slavery?

Slavery was an established and applied system among the nations before Islam and it was free of any restrictions. Islam's struggle against slavery aimed at changing the perspective and mentality of the whole society in such a way that slaves, after their emancipation, would become full and effective members of society without the need to resort to demonstrations, strikes, civil disobedience, or even ethnic revolutions. The objective of Islam was to get rid of this abominable system as soon as possible through peaceful methods.

Islam did not allow the ruler to treat his subjects as slaves. It granted the ruler and the ruled rights and duties within the limits of freedom and justice that are guaranteed for all. Thus, the slaves' emancipation took place gradually through expiations, voluntary charities, and hastening to do goodness by freeing slaves to get closer to the Lord of the worlds.

Moreover, a woman who gave birth to her master's child would not be sold; rather, she would automatically get her freedom after her master's death. Unlike all the previous traditions, Islam legislated that a bondmaid's child should be attributed to his father and, thus, become free. It also legislated that a slave could buy himself from his master by paying a sum of money or working for a certain period of time.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتِغُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا ۗ﴾
[النور: 33]

{...If any of your slaves wishes to enter the contract of emancipation, make this contract with them, if you find goodness in them...} [244]

In the battles that Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) fought in defense of the religion, life, and property, he used to command his Companions to treat the captives kindly. The captives had the choice to win their freedom back either through paying a sum of money or through teaching children reading and writing. Moreover, captivity in Islam did not deprive a child of his mother or a man of his brother.

Islam also ordered Muslims to show mercy to the fighters who surrender.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ ۗ﴾
[التوبة: 6]

{If any of the polytheists asks you for protection, give it to him, so that he may hear the Word of Allah, then escort him to his place of safety; that is because they are a people who do not know.} [245]

Furthermore, Islam stipulated the possibility of helping slaves free themselves by paying from the Muslims' money or from the state treasury, as the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), along with his Companions, offered ransom from the public treasury to free slaves.

What is the stance of Islam on parents' and relatives' rights?

Allah Almighty said:

﴿ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ إِنَّمَا يُبَلِّغُنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾ وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذَّلِيلِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾ [الإسراء: 23-24]

{Your Lord has ordained that you worship none but Him, and show kindness to parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, do not say to them a word of annoyance nor scold them, rather speak to them noble words, and lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy, and say, “My Lord, have mercy upon them as they raised me when I was small.”} [246]

﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصْلُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي ۗ إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾ [الأحقاف: 15]

{We have enjoined upon man kindness to his parents. His mother bore him in hardship and gave birth to him in hardship, and his bearing and weaning take thirty months, until when he reaches full maturity and reaches forty years, he says, “My Lord, inspire me to be grateful to Your favors which You blessed me and my parents with, and to do righteous deeds that will make You pleased; and make my offspring righteous. Indeed, I repent to you, and I am one of the Muslims [submitting to You].”}

{Give relatives their due, and the needy and the stranded travelers, and do not spend wastefully.}

What is the stance of Islam on the neighbor's right?

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "By Allah, he is not a believer! By Allah, he is not a believer! By Allah, he is not a believer." It was said: "Who is that, O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "One whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil." [249]

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said: "The neighbor is the most entitled to the right of preemption, so let him wait for him even if he is absent, if they share the same road."³¹

³¹ Agreed upon.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said as well: "O Abu Dharr, if you cook broth, increase the amount of water in it and give some to your neighbors."³²

Moreover, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever has a piece of land and wants to sell it, let him offer it to his neighbor."³³

What is the stance of Islam on animals' rights?

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ﴾ [الأنعام: 38]

{There is no moving creature on earth or a bird flying with its two wings, but are communities like you. We have missed nothing in the Record, then to their Lord they will be gathered.} [253]

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "A woman was tormented because of a cat which she had locked up until it died, and she was thrown into Hellfire for that. She neither gave it food or drink when she locked it up nor freed it so that it would eat from the vermin of the earth."

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said: "A man saw a dog eating mud from (the severity of) thirst. So, he took his shoe (and filled it) with water and kept on pouring the water for the dog

³² "Musnad al-Imām Ahmad".

³³ Narrated by Muslim.

till it quenched its thirst. Allah accepted his deed and admitted him to Paradise."³⁴

Has the Qur'an tackled environmental issues?

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ [الأعراف: 56]

{Do not spread corruption on earth after it has been set aright, but call upon Him with fear and hope. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is close to those who do good.} [256]

﴿ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ﴾ [الروم: 41]

{Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what people's hands have earned, so that He may cause them to taste the consequence of some of their deeds, so that they may return.}

﴿وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ﴾ [البقرة: 205]

{When they leave [you], they strive to spread corruption in the land and destroy crops and livestock, whereas Allah does not like corruption.}

³⁴ Agreed upon.

{And on the earth there are neighboring [yet different] tracts of land, and gardens of grapevines, grains and palm trees – some growing in clusters from one root or standing alone. They are all irrigated with the same water, yet We cause some of them excel others in taste. Indeed, there are signs in this for people of understanding.}

How does Islam maintain social rights?

Islam teaches us that social duties must be built on love, kindness, and respect for others.

It laid down the standards and criteria and defined the rights and duties concerning all relations that connect the society.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا﴾ [النساء: 36]

{Worship Allah and do not associate any partners with Him. Be kind to parents, relatives, orphans, the needy, near and distant neighbors, close friends, wayfarers, and slaves whom you own. For Allah does not like those who are arrogant, boastful.} [260]

﴿... وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُنَّ شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا﴾ [النساء: 19]

{...Treat them kindly. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike something which Allah has put much good in it.}

{O you who believe, when you are told to make room in your gatherings, then make room; Allah will give you abundance. And when you are told to rise, then rise; Allah will raise in ranks those who believed from among you and those who are given knowledge. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

Why did Islam forbid adoption?

Islam encourages orphan sponsorship and urges the sponsor to treat the orphan the way he treats his children; however, it maintains the orphan's right to know his real family to protect his right in his father's inheritance and to avoid mixture of lineages.

The story of the western girl who learnt by coincidence after thirty years that she was adopted and, thus, committed suicide is the biggest proof of the inadequacy of the adoption law. Had they informed her when she was still young, they would have spared her such an end and would have given her the chance to look for her family.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ﴿٩﴾﴾ [الضحى: 9]

{Do not mistreat the orphan.} [263]

﴿فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْنَتْكُمْ عَنْ اللَّهِ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

[البقرة: 220] ﴿٢٢٠﴾

{In this life and the Hereafter. They ask you about orphans. Say, “Serving their interests is best. Should you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers. Allah knows who is dishonest and who is

honest. If Allah had willed, He could have made things hard for you. Allah is indeed All-Mighty, All-Wise.”}

{If at the time of distribution, [other] relatives, orphans, and the needy are present, give them something too, and speak to them kindly.}

In Islam, there should be neither harm nor reciprocal harm

Why is it permissible in Islam to eat red and white meat?

Meat is an essential source of protein. Humans have flat and sharpened teeth suitable and prepared for chewing and grinding meat. Allah has granted man teeth suitable for eating plants and animals, and has created his digestive system in a way that suits digestion of plant food and animal food, which is an evidence on the lawfulness of eating meat.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ الْأَنْعَامِ...﴾ [المائدة: 1]

{...Lawful to you are all grazing livestock...} [266]

The Noble Qur’an laid down some rules concerning the food:

﴿قُلْ لَا آجِدُ فِي مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَىٰ طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَّسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهْلًا لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [الأنعام: 145]

{Say [O Prophet], “I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to eat except carrion, running blood or the swine flesh – which is impure – or a sinful offering in the name of other than Allah. However, if someone is compelled by necessity – neither driven by desire nor transgressing due limit – then your Lord is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”} [267]

﴿حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلِيَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ ۖ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النَّصَبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَمِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ ۗ﴾ [المائدة: 3]

{Forbidden to you are carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which is sacrificed to other than Allah; and that which is killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by being gored; and that which is partly eaten by a predator unless you slaughter it [before it dies]; and that which is sacrificed to idols. Also it is forbidden to use arrows [of chance] to determine your decisions. This is all evil practice.}

Allah Almighty also said:

﴿...وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ﴾ [الأعراف: 31]

{Eat and drink, but do not waste, for He does not like the wasteful.} [269]

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "He instructed His slaves to consume what maintains their body from food and drink, which must be according to what benefits the body in terms of quantity and quality. Once it exceeds this, it becomes wastefulness. Both are unhealthy and cause diseases: refraining from food and drink or consuming them wastefully. So, the ultimate way of maintaining good health lies in these two words."

Allah Almighty described Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) saying: {...He makes lawful for them what is pure and makes unlawful for them what is impure...}³⁵ Allah Almighty also said:

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ ... [المائدة: 4]

{They ask you [O Prophet] what is lawful to them. Say, "All good things are lawful for you...}

Thus, all pure things are lawful and all impure things are unlawful.

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) clarified how the believer should act regarding his food and drink, as he said: "The son of Adam does not fill any vessel worse than his stomach. It is enough for the son of Adam to eat a few mouthfuls to straighten his back, but if he must (fill his stomach), then one third for his food, one third for his drink, and one third for his breath." [273]

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said: "There should be neither harm nor reciprocal harm."³⁶

³⁵ "Zād al-Ma'ād" (4/213).

³⁶ Narrated by At-Tirmidhi.

Is not the manner of slaughtering animals in Islam inhuman?

The Islamic manner of slaughter, namely cutting the animal's throat and esophagus with a sharp knife, is much more merciful than the electric shock and strangulation that cause the animal to suffer. Once the blood stops flowing to the brain, the animal feels no pain. As for the shaking of the animal at the time of its slaughter, it is not caused by pain; rather, it is caused by the rapid blood flow that facilitates the process of getting all the blood out unlike other methods that block the blood inside the animal body causing harm to those who eat its meat.

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Verily, Allah has enjoined kindness for all things; so when you kill, kill with kindness; and when you slaughter, slaughter with kindness. Let one of you sharpen his blade and spare suffering to the animal he slaughters." [275]

Is it not true that animals, slaughtered to be eaten, have souls like human beings?

There is a big difference between the animal's soul and man's soul. The animal's soul is the moving force of the body; once it departs by death, it becomes a lifeless body, which is a type of life. Plants and trees also possess a type of life but it is not called a soul; rather, it is called a life that flows into its parts through water without which it withers and falls.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ [الأنبياء: 30]

{...We created from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?} [276]

However, it is not like man's soul that was attributed to Allah as a symbol of honor. None knows about its essence except Allah, and it is only for man. Man's soul is a divine matter and he is not required to comprehend its true essence. It is a combination of the moving force of the body along with the intellectual force (the mind), perception, knowledge, and faith and this is what makes it distinct from the animals' soul.

Why don't Muslims eat pork?

It is out of Allah's mercy and kindness to His creatures that He allowed us to eat what is pure and forbade us from eating what is impure.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ [الأعراف: 157]

{Those who follow the Messenger – the unlettered Prophet – whose description they find in their Torah and the Gospel. He enjoins them to do what is good and forbids them from what is evil; he makes lawful for them what is pure and makes unlawful for them what is impure; he relieves them of their burden and the shackles that were on them. So those who

believe in him, they honor and support him, and follow the light which is sent down with him – it is they who will be successful.”} [277]

Some of those who converted to Islam mentioned that the swine was the cause behind their conversion to Islam.

Knowing that this animal is extremely filthy and causes many diseases, they hated to consume its meat. They thought that Muslims do not eat pork only because it is forbidden in their Book that they sanctify and worship, until they realized later that it is forbidden for Muslims to consume it because it is a filthy animal and its flesh is harmful; only then they understood the greatness of this religion.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالْدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ أَضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [البقرة: 173]

{He has only forbidden to you carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, and what has been sacrificed to other than Allah. But if someone is compelled by necessity – neither driven by desire nor exceeding immediate need – then there is no sin upon him; for Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.} [278]

The consumption of swine was also forbidden in the Old Testament.

"وَالْخِنْزِيرِ، لِأَنَّهُ يَسْقُ ظِلْفًا وَيَقْسِمُهُ ظِلْفَيْنِ، لِكَنْهٍ لَا يَجْتَرُ، فَهُوَ نَجِسٌ لَكُمْ. مِنْ لَحْمِهَا لَا تَأْكُلُوا وَجُثَّتْهَا لَا تَلْمِسُوا. إِنَّهَا نَجِسَةٌ لَكُمْ. [279]."

"And the pig, although it has cloven hoof, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you." [279]

"وَالْخِزِيرُ لِأَنَّهُ يَشُقُّ الظِّلْفَ لِكِنَّهُ لَا يَجْتَرُ فَهُوَ نَجِسٌ لَكُمْ. فَمِنْ لَحْمِهَا لَا تَأْكُلُوا وَجُنَّتْهَا لَا تَلْمَسُوا."³⁷

"And the pig, which indeed has cloven hoof, but does not chew the cud, is unclean for you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their dead bodies you shall not touch."

It is well-known that Moses' legislation is the same as that of Jesus according to what was mentioned in the New Testament quoting Jesus.³⁸

"لَا تَظُنُّوا أَنِّي جِئْتُ لِأَنْقُضَ النَّامُوسَ أَوْ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ. مَا جِئْتُ لِأَنْقُضَ بَلْ لِأُكَمِّلَ. فَإِنِّي الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ: إِلَى أَنْ تَزُولَ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ لَا يَزُولُ حَرْفٌ وَاحِدٌ أَوْ نُقْطَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ مِنَ النَّامُوسِ حَتَّى يَكُونَ الْكُلُّ. فَمَنْ نَقَضَ إِحْدَى هَذِهِ الْأَوْصَايَا الصُّغْرَى وَعَلَّمَ النَّاسَ هَكَذَا، يُدْعَى أَصْغَرَ فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ. وَأَمَّا مَنْ عَمِلَ وَعَلَّمَ، فَهَذَا يُدْعَى عَظِيمًا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ." [281]

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven." [281]

Thereupon, the consumption of pork is deemed forbidden in Christianity just as it was forbidden in Judaism.³⁹

³⁷ Book of Leviticus 11: 7-8.

³⁸ Book of Deuteronomy 14: 8.

³⁹ Gospel of Matthew 5: 17-19.

Why does Islam forbid Riba (usury)?

Money, from an Islamic perspective, is a means of trade, exchange of commodities, services, and construction. However, when we lend money to earn a profit, we deprive money of its chief purpose as a means of exchange and development, and we turn it into a goal in itself.

Interests, or usury, that are imposed on loans is a motivation for the loaners as they are not liable to loss. Consequently, the accrued profits that loaners get throughout the years will increase the gap between the rich and the poor. In the recent decades, governments and institutions got involved in this field on a wider range as we have witnessed many examples of the collapse of economic systems in some countries. Usury has the ability to spread corruption in society in such a way that no other crime can ever do. [282]

Allah Almighty said:⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Based on the Christian principles, Thomas Aquinas condemned usury, or usurious loans. The church, owing to its important religious and worldly role, managed to generalize the prohibition of usury to its subjects after it had already forbidden clergymen from practicing it since the second century. According to Thomas Aquinas, the causes behind the prohibition of interest is that it cannot be the price paid for the loaner's wait, i.e., the price of the time that the loaner already owns, as they deem this procedure a trade dealing. In the past, Aristotle used to believe that money is nothing but a means of trade not a method of gaining interests. As for Plato, he used to believe that interests entail exploitation practiced by the rich over the poor from among the society members. Moreover, usurious transactions prevailed during the time of the ancient Greeks. At

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا أَضْعَافًا مُّضَاعَفَةً ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾ [آل عمران: 130]

{O you who believe, do not consume usury, doubled and multiplied. And fear Allah, so that you may succeed.} [283]

﴿وَمَا ءَاتَيْتُمْ مِّن رَّبًّا لَّيْرُبُوا فِيْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا ءَاتَيْتُمْ مِّن زَكَاةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضْعِفُونَ﴾ [الروم: 39]

{Whatever you lend in usury in order to gain more at the expense of people's wealth, it will not increase [in reward] with Allah. But whatever you give as charity, seeking Allah's pleasure – it is they who will have multiple reward.}

Usury was also forbidden in the Old Testament as we find in the Book of Leviticus, the following is an example of many others:

"If your brother becomes poor and was in need of you, you should support him as though he were a stranger and a sojourner, and he shall live with you. Take no interest from him or profit, but fear your God, and let your brother live with you. You should not lend him your money by usury, nor give him your food for profit." [285]

that time, the creditor was entitled to sell the debtor in the slave market if the latter failed to repay his debt. The Romans' state was not different. It is worthy to mention that this prohibition was not subject to religious influences since it occurred more than three centuries before Christianity, bearing in mind that the Gospel forbade its followers from dealing in usury, and so did the Torah before that.

As previously mentioned, it is well-known that Moses' legislation is the same as that of Jesus according to what was mentioned in the New Testament quoting Jesus.⁴¹

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven." [286]

Thereupon, usury is forbidden in Christianity as it was forbidden in Judaism.⁴²

The Noble Qur'an also states:

{For the wrongdoing of the Jews, We prohibited for them good things that were lawful for them; and for their frequent hindering many from the way of Allah, and for their taking usury, although it was forbidden to them, and for unjustly consuming people's wealth. We have prepared for the disbelievers among them a painful punishment.} [287]

⁴¹ Book of Leviticus 25: 35-37.

⁴² Gospel of Matthew 5: 17-19.

Why does Islam forbid the consumption of intoxicants?

Allah Almighty has made man distinct from all other creatures by the faculty of mind. He has forbidden us from whatever could harm us, our minds, or our bodies. Thus, He has forbidden us from everything causing intoxication since it conceals and harms the mind and it leads to various types of corruption. The one who is drunk may kill others, commit adultery, steal, or commit any of such grave crimes that result from consuming intoxicants.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَمُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَأَجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾﴾ [المائدة: 90]

{O you who believe, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters and divining arrows are of Satan's evil work; therefore avoid such [evil], so that you may be successful.}[288]

Intoxicants refer to everything that causes intoxication regardless of its name or form, as the Prophet said: "Everything that causes intoxication is an Khamr (intoxicant), and everything that causes intoxication is unlawful."

It has been forbidden on account of the grave damage it causes to the individual and society.

Intoxicants were also forbidden in Christianity and Judaism; however, the majority today do not comply with this.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink leads to brawl, and whoever is led astray by one of them is not wise." [290]

"And do not get drunk with wine, which involves dissipation."⁴³

In 2010, the famous medical magazine, The Lancet, published a research on drugs with the most destructive effects on the individual and society. The study was based on 20 drugs including alcoholic drinks, heroin, tobacco and others. They were evaluated according to 16 criteria, nine of which were related to the harm inflicted on the consumer himself and seven were related to the harm inflicted on others, and the evaluation was out of one hundred degrees.⁴⁴

The conclusion drawn, considering both the individual and communal harm together, was that alcohol is absolutely the most harmful among all drugs and it was ranked number one.

Another study that tackled the safe consumption rate of alcohol stated:

"Zero is the safe consumption rate of alcohol to avoid the loss of lives given the diseases and injuries that result from consuming it." Researchers declared this clearly in a report published on the website of the famous scientific magazine, Lancet, itself. The study included the biggest data analysis on this topic until now. It comprised 28 million people from around the globe representing 195 countries during the period from 1990 to 2016 to estimate the extent of alcohol consumption and the consumed quantities, using 694 informational sources, and how

⁴³ Book of Proverbs, Chapter 20, verse 1.

⁴⁴ Book of Ephesians, Chapter 5, verse 18.

such consumption is related to health risks resulting from alcohol that were derived from 592 studies conducted before and after sickness. Results revealed that alcohol causes the death of 2.8 million people around the world annually.

In this context, researchers recommended that actions must be taken to impose taxes on alcohol to restrict its availability in the market, and to propagate this as a preliminary step before its prevention from the markets in the future. Allah, the Great, has spoken the truth as He said:

{Is not Allah the Most Just of all judges?} [292]

Pillars of Islam

What are the pillars of Islam brought by Prophet Muhammad?

The testimony of faith, which includes testifying the Creator's oneness and worshiping Him alone along with testifying that Muhammad is His slave and messenger.

Constant communication with the Lord of the worlds through prayer.

Strengthening man's will and self-control as well as enhancing his feelings of mercy and familiarity with others through fasting.

Paying a small percentage of one's savings to the poor and the needy through Zakah, which is an act of worship that helps man give prevalence to charity and giving over stinginess and miserliness.

Being fully devoted and dedicated to the Creator at a certain time and place through performing similar rituals by all believers during the Hajj (pilgrimage) journey to Makkah. It is a symbol of unity in turning to the

Creator despite various human affiliations, cultures, languages, degrees, and colors.

Why does a Muslim pray?

A Muslim prays in obedience to his Lord Who commanded him to pray and Who made prayer one of the pillars of Islam.

A Muslim gets up every day at five o'clock to pray, whereas his non-Muslim friends wake up at the same time exactly to practice their morning sport. His prayer is nourishment for his body and soul, whereas sports for them is only physical nourishment. Prayer is different from supplication, which is asking Allah some need without physical movement like bowing and prostration and which a Muslim can make any time.

Let's consider how much we care about our bodies and leave our souls starving; the result of which is suicide cases beyond count committed by people enjoying the highest degrees of luxury in the world.

Acts of worship lead to cessation of the feeling that exists in the consciousness center in the brain, which is related to self-feeling and feeling those around us. Thus, one feels a great deal of sublimity, a feeling that cannot be perceived except by one who experienced it.

Acts of worship stimulate the emotion center in the brain and, consequently, turn the creed from mere theoretical information and rituals to personal conscience experiences. A father cannot suffice only with a verbal welcome when his son returns from a journey; rather, he feels relieved only when he hugs and kisses him. The mind possesses a natural desire for giving beliefs and ideas a physical form, hence, the acts of worship came to satisfy such a desire as worship and obedience take the form of prayer, fasting, etc.

Dr. Andrew Newberg [293] said: "Acts of worship play an important role in improving the physical, mental, and psychological health and in attaining tranquility and spiritual sublimity. Similarly, turning to the Creator leads to more tranquility and sublimity."

Why does a Muslim pray five times a day?

A Muslim follows the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and prays in the exact manner the Prophet used to pray.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Pray as you have seen me pray." [294]

Through prayer, a Muslim addresses his Lord five times a day to satisfy his strong desire for communicating with Him throughout the day. It is the means that Allah provided us with to address Him, and He commanded us to adhere to it for our own interest.⁴⁵

Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾ [العنكبوت: 45]

{Recite [O Prophet] what is revealed to you of the Book, and establish prayer, for indeed prayer restrains one from immoral acts and wickedness. Indeed, the remembrance of Allah is of greater merit. And Allah knows all what you do.} [295]

⁴⁵ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri.

As human beings, we almost never stop talking to our spouses and children on the phone on daily basis out of strong love and attachment.

The prayer also plays another important role as it acts as a deterrent on approaching evil acts and as a motivation for performing good acts; that is when one recalls his Creator, fearing His punishment and longing for His pardon and reward.

Moreover, one's deeds must be offered with pure sincerity for the sake of the Lord of the worlds, and since it is difficult for man to constantly remember this or renew his intention; therefore, there had to be certain times for prayer to communicate with the Lord of the worlds and renew one's sincerity towards Him through worship and deeds. The minimum is five times every day and night. Such times reflect the main timings and phenomena of the alternation of the day and night throughout the day: Fajr (morning), Zhuhr (noon), 'Asr (afternoon), Maghrib (sunset), and 'Ishā' (evening).

Allah Almighty said:

﴿فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا وَمِنْ
ءَانَائِ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَأَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضَىٰ﴾ [طه: 130]

{So be patient with what they say, and glorify your Lord with praise before sunrise and before sunset, and glorify Him during the night and at both ends of the day, so that you may be pleased [with the reward].}
[296]

Before sunrise and before sunset: the Fajr and 'Asr prayers.

During the night: the 'Ishā' prayer.

At both ends of the day: the Zhuhr and Maghrib prayers.

They are five prayers to cover all the natural changes that occur during the day and to act as a reminder of its Creator and Originator.

Why do Muslims pray facing the Ka'bah?

Allah Almighty made the Ka'bah [297], the Sacred House, the first House for worship and a symbol of the believers' unity since all Muslims from around the world form circles at the time of prayer with Makkah lying at the center. The Qur'an presents many scenes of the interaction between worshippers and nature like the glorification and recitation of the mountains and birds along with Prophet Dāwūd (David):

{Indeed, We bestowed favors upon David: "O mountains, echo Allah's praise with him, and the birds too!" And We made iron malleable for him.} [298] Islam confirms, in more than one occasion, that the whole universe with all its creatures exalt and glorify the Lord of the worlds. Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾ [آل عمران: 96]

{The first House [of worship] established for mankind was the one at Bakkah [Makkah], full of blessings and guidance for the worlds.}

The spherical nature of the earth, the alternation of day and night, and the Muslims' joining them with their circumambulation around the Ka'bah and their five prayers every day from various spots on earth while facing the direction of Ka'bah represent part of the universal system in terms of the constant and perpetual interaction to magnify and glorify the Lord of the worlds. It is a command addressed by the Creator to His Prophet Abraham to raise the foundations of the Ka'bah and circumambulate it, and we were commanded to take the Ka'bah as our Qiblah (direction) during the prayer.

Why was the prayer direction changed from the Aqsa Mosque to the Sacred Mosque in Makkah?

The Ka'bah was mentioned many times throughout history. People used to visit it every year even from the farthest parts of the Arabian Peninsula, which showed great reverence for its holiness. It was also mentioned in the prophecies of the Old Testament: "As they pass through the Valley of Bakkah, they turn it into a spring." [300]

The Arabs used to venerate the Sacred House during their pre-Islamic era of ignorance. When Prophet Muhammad was sent, Allah Almighty made Jerusalem his first prayer direction. Then, He commanded him to turn towards the Sacred House instead to distinguish between those who were sincere to Allah and those who turned against Him from among the followers of Prophet Muhammad. The main objective behind changing the prayer direction was to make the hearts completely devoted to Allah and to purify them from all kinds of attachment to other than Allah. Muslims, thus, submitted and turned towards the new prayer direction as instructed by the Prophet. The Jews used to consider the Prophet's facing the direction of Jerusalem in prayer as an argument supporting their stance.⁴⁶

Furthermore, such a change in the prayer direction was also a turning point and a symbol of the shift of religious leadership to the Arabs after being taken away from the Children of Israel for their breach of covenants with the Lord of the worlds.

⁴⁶ Old Testament, Psalms: 84.

Are the rituals of Hajj, including the glorification of the Ka'bah, not considered pagan rituals?

There is a huge difference between paganism and revering certain places and rituals, whether religious, national, or ethnic.

According to the opinion of some scholars, throwing pebbles at the Jamrahs (stoning pillars), for instance, shows our disobedience to the devil and our abstention from following him, and is a symbol of following the example of Abraham (peace be upon him), who threw stones at the devil when the latter appeared to him and tried to prevent him from carrying out his Lord's command by slaughtering his son. [301] Similarly, performing Sa'y (walking at a brisk pace) between Safa and Marwah is a symbol of following the example of Hajar, who kept walking at a brisk pace in search of water for her son Ishmael. In all cases and regardless of the views in this regard, all the rituals of Hajj are meant to establish the remembrance of Allah and to indicate obedience and submission to the Lord of the worlds. They are not meant to worship stones, places, or people. Meanwhile, Islam calls for worshipping one God, the Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them and the Creator and Sovereign of everything.

Why do Muslims kiss the Black Stone if they do not worship it?

Can we blame someone for kissing the envelope that contains a message from his father, for instance?! All rituals of Hajj are meant to establish the remembrance of Allah and to indicate obedience and submission to the Lord of the worlds. They are not meant to worship stones, places, or people. Meanwhile, Islam calls for worshipping one God,

the Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them and the Creator and Sovereign of everything.

Allah Almighty said:

{I turn my face towards the One Who originated the heavens and earth, inclining to true faith, and I am not one of those who associate partners with Allah.} [302]

Considering the possibility of death of some Muslims due to extreme crowdedness, are the rituals of Hajj not deemed scary?

Death caused by crowdedness during Hajj has only occurred in a limited number of years, and usually those who die because of the crowdedness are extremely rare. However, those who die because of consuming alcohol, for instance, amount to millions every year, and victims from among the crowds of football fields and the South American carnivals are even more. In all cases, death is an inevitable truth and meeting Allah is truth, and dying while performing an act of obedience is better than dying while committing a sin.

Malcolm X says:

"For the first time, after spending twenty-nine years on this earth, I stood before the Creator of everything and felt that I am a perfect human being. I have never witnessed in my life something more truthful than such establishment of brotherhood between people of all colors and races. America needs to understand Islam because it is the only religion that can solve the problem of racism." [303]

The Creator's Mercy

If Allah loves His slaves according to Islam, why does He not permit them to adopt the individualism methodology? [304]

There are many verses in the Qur'an that refer to Allah's mercy and His love for His slaves. However, the love of Allah Almighty for His slave is different from the slaves' love for one another. This is because according to human standards, love is a need that the lover finds with the loved one. Whereas, Allah Almighty does not need us; rather, His love for us is that of favor and mercy. It is love of the Strong for the weak, love of the Self-Sufficient for the needy, love of the Able for the helpless, and love of the Great for the insignificant, a love that is based on wisdom.⁴⁷

Do we allow our children to do whatever they like on the pretext of loving them? Do we allow our little children to throw themselves from the window or play with exposed electric wires on the pretext of loving them?

It is impossible to allow one to make decisions based on his personal interest and pleasure, or to make him the main focus of attention and to give precedence to his personal interests over that of the state and the influence of society and religion; giving him permission to change his sex and do whatever he wishes and act and dress the way he likes in public on the pretext that the street belongs to all.

⁴⁷ Individualism considers the individual's interests a fundamental issue that must be achieved before the interests of the state and the communities, while they oppose any external interference in one's own interests by society or institutions such as the government.

If one lives with a group of people in the same shared house, could he accept the idea that any of his housemates does something loathsome, such as answering the call of nature in the living room, arguing that the house belongs to all of them? Could he accept to live in such a house without rules or standards regulating it? Absolute freedom turns man into an ugly creature, and it has been undoubtedly proven that he is incapable of handling such freedom.

Individualism can not be an alternative entity to the collective entity, regardless of the individual's power or authority. Members of the society are of various classes that complement one another and cannot dispense with one another. Some of them being soldiers, doctors, nurses, and judges. How could any of them give precedence to his personal interest over that of others to achieve his own happiness and be the main focus of attention?!

By giving full rein to one's instincts, one becomes a slave to such instincts; however, Allah wants him to be the master of his own instincts. Allah wants man to be rational and wise and to know how to control his instincts without suppressing them; rather, directing them to promote his soul and elevate his self.

When a father obliges his children to allocate some time for study, despite their desire to only play, to obtain an academic degree in the future, is he considered a cruel father on account of this?

If the Creator is merciful to His slaves, then why does He not accept the tendencies of someone who is homosexual?

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَلَوْطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَلْحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾
 إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ
 قَوْمِهِ ۚ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ أَنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾﴾ [الأعراف: 80-82]

{And [We sent] Lot, when he said to his people, “Do you commit such a shameful act that nobody has ever done before you? For you approach men lustfully instead of women; you are but a transgressing people.”The only reply his people gave was to say, “Drive them out of your town, for they are people who keep themselves pure!”} [305]

This verse confirms the fact that homosexuality is not genetic and has nothing to do with the human genetic code because the people of Lūt were the first to practice this type of immorality. This corresponds with the most extensive scientific study affirming that homosexuality has nothing to do with genes.

Should we accept the thief's tendency to stealing? It is a tendency as well but in both cases they are abnormal tendencies, and is transgression against the human natural disposition and against nature that must be redressed.⁴⁸

Allah created man and guided him to the right path and gave him a free will to choose either the path of goodness or the path of evildoing.

Allah Almighty said:

⁴⁸ "Mawsū'at al-Kahīl lil-l'jāz fil-Qur'ān wa as-Sunnah"
<https://kaheel7.net/?p=15851>

{And We have shown him the two ways [of right and wrong]?} [307]

Hence, communities that forbid homosexuality rarely suffer from such sexual perversion, whereas communities that allow and encourage such an attitude contain a high rate of homosexuals. This indicates the fact that the environment and the surrounding doctrines are what determine man's probable tendency to homosexuality.

Man's entity changes every moment based on the satellite channels he watches, his use of technology, or his fanaticism in favor of a football team for instance. In fact, globalization has turned him into a complicated human being. The traitor is deemed as someone with a viewpoint, the gay is deemed as someone with a normal attitude and has attained legal competency to participate in public discussions; rather, we are required to support him and reconcile with him. Dominance now belongs to whoever possesses technology. So, if the gay is the one who owns the means of power, he will impose his convictions on others, the thing that would lead man to ruin his relationship with his own self, his society, and his Creator. Since individualism is directly related to sexual perversion, therefore, the human natural disposition, to which humanity belongs, has vanished and the one-family concept has collapsed. This is why the West has started to offer solutions to get rid of individualism because proceeding with this concept will lead to losing the gains that were achieved by modern man just as the family concept was lost. Consequently, the West has been suffering until today from the decreasing number of the society members, the thing that has led them to open their doors in an endeavor to attract immigrants. So, believing in Allah and respecting the laws of the universe that He has created for us

along with adhering to His commands and avoiding His prohibitions are the only way to attain happiness in this world and in the Hereafter.

How could Allah describe Himself as the All-Forgiving the Most Merciful one time and as the One Severe in punishment another time?

Allah is All-Forgiving and Most Merciful with those who commit sins without insistence, given man's human nature and weakness, and who repent of such sins and do not mean thereby to challenge the Creator. However, Allah Almighty destroys those who challenge Him, deny His existence, or visualize Him in the form of an idol or an animal and those who exceed the limits in disobeying Him without repenting and whom Allah does not want to forgive. If one insults an animal, none will blame him; however, if one insults his parents, he will be harshly blamed. How about the Creator's right? We should not consider the insignificance of the sin; rather, we should consider the greatness of the One Whom we disobey.

Does evil come from Allah?

Evil does not come from Allah. Evils are not of existential things, as existence is pure goodness.

If someone, for instance, hit another person until he made him lose his ability to move, then this person has acquired the attribute of oppression, and oppression is evil.

However, the existence of power in the one who grabs a stick to hit someone else is not evil.

Moreover, the existence of the will that Allah granted him is not evil.

Also the existence of his ability to move his hand is not evil,
and the existence of hitting function in the stick is not evil.

All these existential things are good in themselves and do not acquire the attribute of evil unless they lead to harm by being misused, which is the harm of paralysis as in the previous example. Consequently, the existence of the scorpion and the serpent is not evil in itself unless man comes their way and gets bitten. Evil must not be attributed to Allah's acts, which are pure goodness; rather, it must be attributed to the events that Allah has allowed to occur according to His decree and has predestined for a certain wisdom that leads to many benefits, despite His ability to prevent its occurrence. Such events were the result of man's misuse of this goodness.

What is the Creator's wisdom behind natural catastrophes?

The Creator has laid down nature's laws and rules that regulate it. On the outbreak of any corruption or ecological disorder, it protects itself by itself and maintains this balance with the aim of achieving reformation on earth and ensuring that life will proceed in a better way, and only what is beneficial to people and life will stay and survive. When catastrophes occur on earth and cause damages to mankind, like diseases, volcanoes, earthquakes, and floods, these are the times when the names and attributes of Allah become evident, for instance, the All-Powerful, the Healer, and the All-Preserver which are manifest in His healing the sick and preserving the survivors. Other names also become evident during such catastrophes like His name the Just, which is manifest in His punishing the oppressor and the sinner, the All-Wise, which is manifest in afflicting and testing the non-sinner to recompense him with goodness for his patience and with torment for his impatience. This way man gets to

know the greatness of his Lord through such afflictions exactly as he gets to know His beauty through His favors. If man only recognizes the attributes of the divine beauty, then he does not truly know Allah Almighty.

The existence of disasters, evil, and pain was the reason behind the atheism of many of the contemporary materialist philosophers like "Antony Flew". Before his death, he acknowledged the existence of God and wrote a book called "There is a God", despite his being the head of atheism during the second half of the twentieth century. Acknowledging the existence of God, he said:

"The existence of evil and pain in people's life does not negate the existence of God; rather, it drives us to reconsider the divine attributes." Antony Flew believed that such catastrophes have multiple positive effects as they stimulate man's physical abilities to invent whatever would grant him safety. They also stimulate his best psychological qualities and drive him to help others. Because of evil and pain, human civilizations were built throughout history. He said: "No matter how many theses are written to explain this aporia, the religious explanation will remain the most acceptable and the most compatible with the nature of life." [308]

In reality, we sometimes take the hands of our little children and lovingly lead them to the operation room to have their abdomens slit, while being fully confident of the doctor's wisdom, his love for the child, and his keenness on saving him.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Quoted from "Khurāfat al-Ilhād" by Dr. 'Amr Sharīf, edition 2014 AD.

Does the existence of evil indicate the non-existence of God?

The one who wonders why evil exists in this life, taking it as a pretext for negating the existence of God only reveals his shortsightedness and his fragile thinking in realizing the wisdom behind this, and reveals his lack of awareness about underlying issues. By posing such a question, the atheist implicitly admits that evil is an exception.

Therefore, before asking about the wisdom behind the existence of evil, it is worthier to ask a more realistic question, which is: How was goodness brought into existence in the first place?

Undoubtedly, the most important question to start with is: Who brought goodness into existence? We must first agree on the starting point or the original or prevailing principle, then, we can search for the causes behind the exceptions.

Scientists, in the beginning, lay down fixed and definite laws for physics, chemistry, and biology, after which they conduct a study on the exceptions and cases that deviate from such laws. Similarly, atheists cannot get past the hypothesis of the existence of evil unless they first admit the existence of a world full of beautiful, organized, and good phenomena beyond count.

Comparing the periods of health to those when diseases spread during the average lifetime, or the decades of welfare and prosperity to periods of destruction and ruin, or the centuries of calm and tranquil nature to periods when volcanoes erupt and earthquakes strike all bring up one question, which is: Where does goodness come from in the first place? A world built on chaos and coincidence can never produce a good world.

Ironically, scientific experiments confirm this. The second law of thermodynamics states that full entropy (degree of disorder or randomness) in an isolated system away from any external influence will constantly increase, and this process is irrevocable.

In other words, organized objects will collapse and vanish forever unless they are bound from the outside. Thus, blind thermodynamic forces could never produce anything good by itself or as good on a broad scale as it is without the Creator organizing such random phenomena that appear in magnificent things like beauty, wisdom, joy, and love. All this came after proving that goodness is the basic rule while evil is the exception and that there exists a Capable God, a Creator, and a Sovereign Who manages all affairs.

Why does Allah punish with the fire?

How would you feel about someone who dissociated himself from his parents, kicked them out of the house, and left them in the street?

If someone said that he would let this person in his house, treat him with generosity, feed him, and thank him for such an act, would people appreciate that for him? Would people accept that from him? Bearing in mind that Allah has the highest attributes, what destiny do we expect for someone who rejected his Creator and disbelieved in Him? Whoever is punished with fire is as if put in his due place, as he despised peace and goodness on earth, thus, became unworthy of the bliss of Paradise.

What destiny do we expect for someone who tortures children with chemical weapons? Do we expect him to enter Paradise without reckoning?!

Their sin is not limited to a certain time; rather, it is a consistent trait.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ﴾ [الأنعام: 28]

{...And even if they were sent back, they would surely return to what they were forbidden, for they are indeed liars.} [309]

They even swear false oath in the presence of Allah on the Day of Judgment.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ﴾ [المجادلة: 18]

{On the Day when Allah will raise them all, they will swear to Him as they swear to you, thinking that they have something to stand on. Indeed, it is they who are the liars.} [310]

Moreover, evil can emerge from people who bear envy and jealousy in their hearts and who create troubles and conflicts among people, thus, it is out of justice that they get recompensed with fire, a recompense that suits their nature.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾ [الأعراف: 36]

{But those who reject Our verses and show arrogance towards them, they are the people of the Fire, they will abide therein forever.} [311]

Allah's attribute of justice entails His being the Avenger besides His being the Merciful. Allah, in Christianity, is love only and in Judaism, He is wrath only; however, in Islam He is a just and merciful God to Whom all the beautiful names belong, which are the attributes of beauty and majesty.

In real practical life, we use fire to remove impurities from the pure substance like gold and silver. Similarly, while bearing in mind that Allah has the highest attributes, Allah Almighty uses fire to purify His slaves in the Hereafter from sins and misdeeds. At the end, Allah brings out of Hellfire whoever has an atom's weight of faith in His mercy.

Allah is Most Merciful and the source of all goodness, so, why does He not admit us all to Paradise without reckoning?

As a matter of fact, Allah wants all His slaves to have faith.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾﴾ [الزمر: 7]

{And He does not approve of disbelief for His slaves. If you are grateful, He approves that for you. No bearer of burden can bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return, and He will inform you of what you used to do. He is All-Knowing of what is in the hearts.} [312]

However, if Allah sends all people to Paradise without reckoning, this will be a flagrant violation of justice. It means that Allah will treat His Prophet Moses and the Pharaoh the same way and will admit every oppressor along with his victims to Paradise as if nothing happened at

all. There is a need for a mechanism that ensures that those admitted to Paradise will be admitted based on eligibility.

The beauty of the Islamic teachings lies in the fact that Allah, Who knows us better than we know ourselves, informs us that we possess the necessary qualifications to utilize the worldly means and attain His pleasure and enter Paradise.

Allah Almighty said:

{Allah does not burden any soul greater than it can bear...} [313]

Why does the Creator punish His slaves with eternal torment for few sins committed during their short lives?

Many crimes lead those who commit them to life sentence. Does anyone object saying that this life sentence is unjust because the criminal committed his crime only in a few minutes? Is a ten-year sentence considered unfair because the criminal embezzled from the money only within one year? Penalties do not depend on the duration of committing crimes; rather, they depend on the magnitude and gravity of the crime itself.

Why does Allah repeatedly warn against the Fire, does it not contradict the attribute of divine mercy?

A mother exhausts her children with her numerous warnings whenever they travel or go to work to be careful to themselves in their each commute. Is she considered a cruel mother? This is a clear misjudgment to consider mercy cruelty. Allah alerts His slaves and warns them out of

His mercy. He guides them to the way of salvation and promises to replace their misdeeds with good deeds when they repent to Him.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَعَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ [الفرقان: 70]

{Except those who repent and believe, and do righteous deeds; for them Allah will change their evil deeds into good deeds, for Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.} [314]

Why have we not wondered about the greatness of the reward and the bliss in the eternal gardens of Paradise in return for a few acts of obedience?

Allah Almighty said:

{But whoever believes in Allah and does righteous deeds, He will absolve them of their bad deeds and will admit them to gardens under which rivers flow, abiding therein forever. That is the supreme triumph.} [315]

Why does the Qur'an mention repeatedly that Allah loves the believers and does not love the disbelievers, are they not all His slaves?

Allah Almighty guided all His slaves to the way of salvation and He does not approve of disbelief for them. However, He does not love the wrong attitude itself that man adopts by disbelief or causing corruption on earth.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ وَإِنْ تَشْكُرُوا يَرْضَهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾﴾ [الزمر: 7]

{If you disbelieve, then Allah is in no need of you, but He does not approve of disbelief for His slaves. If you are grateful, He approves that for you. No bearer of burden can bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return, and He will inform you of what you used to do. He is All-Knowing of what is in the hearts.} [316]

What would we say about a father who keeps telling his children that he will be proud of them all if they steal, commit adultery, kill, and cause corruption on earth and tells them that he considers them like the righteous worshippers? Simply the best description of such a father is that he is like a devil encouraging his children to spread corruption on earth.

The Creator's Right over His slaves

Why does the Creator not accept His slaves to sin?

If man wants to disobey Allah, then, he must not eat from His provision and must go out of His land and seek a secure place where Allah cannot see Him. And when the angel of death comes to take his soul, let him ask for a respite to repent truly to Allah and offer good deeds for His sake. Then, when the Angels of Torment come to take him to Hellfire on the Day of Judgment, he must not go with them and must resist them. Then, let him lead himself to Paradise. Can man do that?

When man owns a pet in his house, the best he could expect of it is to obey him only because he bought it, but he did not create it. How about our Creator and Initiator, is He not worthy of our obedience, worship, and submission?! In this worldly journey, we are involuntarily submissive in many of our affairs; our heart beats, our digestive system works, and our senses, which are responsible for perception, function perfectly. All we have to do is to submit to Allah concerning the rest of our affairs, which are left to our choice, to reach safety.⁵⁰

Why does Allah torment His slaves when they do not believe in Him?

We must differentiate between faith and submission to the Lord of the worlds.

The right that the Lord of the worlds is entitled to and that none can neglect is submitting to His Oneness and worshipping Him alone without

⁵⁰ The story of Ibrāhīm ibn Ad'ham.

associating partners with Him, and submitting to the fact that He alone is the Creator to Whom sovereignty and all affairs belong, whether we accept this or not. This is the origin of belief, which should be fulfilled by words and deeds, and we have no other option. In the light of this, man will be reckoned and punished.

The opposite of submission is delinquency.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ﴾ [الفلم: 35]

{Should We then treat Muslims like the criminals?}[318]

As for wrongdoing, it is associating partners or rivals with the Lord of the worlds.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أُنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 22]

{...So do not set up rivals to Allah while you know.} [319]

﴿الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ﴾ [الأنعام:

[82

{Those who believe and do not mix their faith with falsehood are the ones who will be secure, and it is they who are rightly guided.}

Faith is an issue related to the unseen that requires belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day as well as acceptance and being content with Allah's decree and predestination.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ ءَامَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيْمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِتْكُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

[الحجرات: 14]

{The Bedouins say, “We have believed.” Say, “You have not believed, but say, ‘We have submitted,’ for faith has not yet entered your hearts. But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not detract anything from the reward of your deeds. Indeed, Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”} [321]

The previous noble verse indicates that faith is a higher and loftier degree, which refers to acceptance and contentment. Faith has degrees and levels and it increases and decreases. Man's ability and his heart's readiness to comprehend unseen matters vary from one person to another. People differ in the extent of their perception of the attributes of beauty and majesty and their knowledge of their Lord.

Thus, man will not be punished for his low perception of unseen matters or for his narrow-mindedness; however, Allah will hold him accountable for the minimum accepted level that could save him from eternity in Hellfire. It is a must to submit to Allah's Oneness and to admit the fact that the creation and all affairs belong to Him and to worship Him alone. By fulfilling such submission, Allah forgives all other sins for whomever He wills. No other choice is available for man; it is either faith and triumph or disbelief and loss; he must either be something or nothing at all.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ
أَفْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [النساء: 48]

{Allah does not forgive associating partners with Him, but forgives anything less than that for whom He wills. Whoever associates partners with Allah has indeed committed a grave sin.} [322]

Faith is an issue related to the unseen and it ceases once the unseen is revealed or the signs of the Hour appear.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ ءَامَنَتْ مِن قَبْلُ أَوْ
كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيْمَانِهَا خَيْرًا...﴾ [الأنعام: 158]

{...On the Day when some of your Lord's signs come, belief will be of no benefit to those who did not believe before, or those who did not do some good through their faith...} [323]

If man wants to benefit from his faith by performing righteous deeds and increasing his rewards, he must do this before the advent of the Hour and appearance of the unseen.

As for the one who has no record of good deeds, if he wishes to be saved from eternity in Hellfire, then, he must leave this world while submitting to Allah and admitting His Oneness and the fact that He alone is worthy of worship. Some sinners may remain temporarily in Hellfire, depending on the will of Allah as He may forgive them if He wishes or admit them to Hellfire if He so wills.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ [آل

عمران: 102]

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.} [324]

In Islam, faith is fulfilled by both words and deeds. It is not belief alone as in Christian teachings today, or deeds alone as in atheism. Man's deeds during the stage of his belief in the unseen along with his patience are not equal to those of the one who examined and witnessed the unseen in the Hereafter. Furthermore, the deeds of the one who worked for the sake of Allah during hardships and the stage of weakness and uncertainty about the future of Islam are not equal to the deeds of the one who worked for the sake of Allah during a period when Islam was victorious, strong, and powerful.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿... لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَنۢ أَنفَقَ مِنۢ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَتَلَ أُو۟لَآئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أَنفَقُوا مِنۢ بَعْدُ وَقَاتَلُوا۟ وَكَلَّا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ﴾ [الحديد:

[10

{...Those of you who spent and fought before the conquest [of Mecca and those who did not] are not equal. They are much greater in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards. Yet Allah has promised each a fine reward, and Allah is All-Aware of what you do.} [325]

The Lord of the worlds does not inflict punishment for no reason. He reckons and punishes either for peoples' violating the rights of others or the right of the Lord of the worlds.

The right that none can neglect to ensure safety from eternity in Hellfire is submitting to the Oneness of the Lord of the worlds and worshipping Him alone without associating partners with Him by saying: "Ash-hadu alla ilāha illallāh wahdahu la sharīka lahu, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhu wa rasūluh, wa ash-hadu anna rusulullāhi haqq wa ash-hadu anna al-jannata haqq wa an-nāra haqq (I testify that there is no god but Allah alone without a partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, and I testify that the messengers of Allah are true, and I testify that Paradise is true and that Hellfire is true)", and fulfilling its due requirements.

Refraining from turning people away from the path of Allah and from advocating or supporting any act intended to obstruct Da’wah (calling to Islam) or prevent the spread of Allah's religion.

Refraining from treating people unjustly, violating their rights, or oppressing them.

Sparing people one's harm even if that requires keeping oneself far or isolated from people.

One might not have a record full of good deeds; however, if he did not harm anyone and did not get engaged in any act that would bring evil either to himself or to others, and testified to the Oneness of Allah, it is hoped that he might be saved from the torment of Hellfire.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَعَامَنْتُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا﴾ [النساء: 129]

[147]

{Why would Allah punish you, if you are grateful and faithful? Allah is ever Appreciative, All-Knowing.} [326]

[218]

People are classified into ranks and levels starting from their deeds in the worldly life and until the Day of Judgment when the world of the unseen is disclosed and the Reckoning begins. Among people, there are those whom Allah will afflict in the Hereafter as mentioned in the noble Hadīth.

The Lord of the worlds punishes people according to their acts and evil deeds. He either hastens their punishment in the worldly life or delays it and inflicts it on them in the Hereafter. This depends on the extent of the enormity of the evil deed and whether it is forgivable or not. It also depends on the extent of its effect and harm on crops and livestock and all other creatures, as Allah does not like corruption.

The previous nations of Nūh (Noah), Hūd (Heber), Sālih, and Lūt (Lot) as the Pharaoh and others who rejected their messengers, Allah hastened their punishment in this life because of their evil deeds and tyranny as they did not keep themselves away from evil or spare people their evil; rather, they exceeded their limits. As for the people of Heber, they were haughty and arrogant. The people of Sālih killed the she-camel, and the people of Lot insisted on immorality. The people of Shu‘ayb (Jethro) insisted on corruption and on violating people's rights in measure and weight. The people of Pharaoh pursued the people of Moses out of transgression and tyranny, and before them the people of Noah insisted on associating partners with Allah in worship.

Allah Almighty said:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلْ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ﴾ [فصلت:

[46

{Whoever does a righteous deed, it is to his own benefit; and whoever does an evil deed, it is to his own loss. Your Lord is not unjust to His slaves.} [327]

{Each of them We seized for their sin: against some of them We sent a storm of stones; some were seized by a blast; some We caused the earth to swallow; and some We drowned. It was not Allah Who wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves.}

Determining Fate and Attaining Safety

Can one change the religion of his fathers and forefathers?

It is man's right to seek knowledge and explore the horizons of this universe, as Allah Almighty has granted us these minds to use them not to suspend them. Everyone who follows the religion of his forefathers without using his mind, thinking, or analyzing such a religion, certainly wrongs and let's himself down, and disdains this great blessing that Allah Almighty has bestowed on him which is the mind.

Many Muslims grew up in a Muslim family but, then, deviated from the right path by associating partners with Allah. On the other hand, others grew up in a polytheistic or Christian family believing in Trinity, then, rejected this creed and testified that there is no god but Allah.

The following allegory clarifies this point. A woman cooked a fish for her husband but before cooking it, she cut its head and tail. When her husband asked her why she did that, she replied saying: My mother cooks

it this way. He asked her mother why she would cut the head and tail when cooking fish, and she gave him the same reply as her daughter. After that, he asked the grandmother why she would cut the head and tail, and she said: I had a small cooking pot and I had to cut the head and tail so the fish would fit in the pot.

As a matter of fact, many of the previous events that took place in the past ages depended on the circumstances of their age and time and had their relevant causes, as reflected in the previous story. Actually, this is a human disaster; to live at a time that is not ours and to imitate others' acts without thinking or wondering despite the different circumstances and times.

Allah Almighty said:

{...Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own attitude and conduct...} [329]

What is the destiny of those whom the message of Islam has not reached?

Allah will not wrong such people; rather, He will test them on the Day of Judgment.

People who did not have an opportunity to learn about Islam well have no excuse because, as we mentioned, they should not have been negligent in searching for the truth and thinking about it, although it is difficult to verify the act of informing people of Islam beyond ignorance and doubt since people vary. The destiny of those who are excused for their ignorance or for not being provided with irrefutable proof will be decided by Allah in the Hereafter, whereas the rulings related to this worldly life depend on what is apparent.

Allah's judgment to punish them is not injustice after all such irrefutable proofs that He provided them with through the mind, the natural disposition, the messages, and the signs in the universe and in their own selves. The least they were expected to do in return for all this was to know Allah Almighty and worship Him alone with adhering to the pillars of Islam at least. Had they done this, they would have been saved from eternity in Hellfire and would have attained happiness in this life and in the Hereafter. Do you think this is difficult?

The right of Allah Almighty over His slaves whom He created is to worship Him alone, and the slaves' right over Allah is that He does not punish those who do not associate anything with Him. It is very simple, only words that man must say, believe in, and act upon and this will be sufficient to save him from Hellfire. Is this not justice? This is Allah's judgment and He is the Judge, the Just, the All-Subtle, and the All-Aware, and this is His religion.

The real problem is not the fact that man errs or sins because making mistakes is part of man's nature, as all the children of Adam are sinners and the best of the sinners are those who frequently repent, as the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) told us. The real problem; however, lies in exceeding the limits and insisting on committing sins. Besides, when one is offered an advice, he does not listen to it or apply it, and when reminded, he does not benefit from the reminder, and when admonished, he does not learn his lesson, repent, or ask for Allah's forgiveness; rather, he insists and turns away in arrogance.

Allah Almighty said:

{When Our verses are recited to him, he turns away in arrogance, as if he did not hear them, as if there were deafness in his ears. So give him tidings of a painful punishment.} [330]

What is the shore of safety?

Allah Almighty said:

The conclusion of the journey of life and the reaching the shore of safety are summed up in the following verses:

﴿وَأَشْرَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ وَجِئَتْ بِالتَّيِّبِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَوَفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا فَتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمْ وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِنْ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَةُ الْعَذَابِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ قِيلَ ادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فَبئسَ مَثْوًى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلِّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ ۖ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾﴾

[الزمر: 74-69]

{The earth will shine with the light of its Lord, the record of deeds will be laid open, the prophets and the witnesses will be brought forth, and judgment will be passed between them with fairness, and they will not be wronged. Every soul will be paid in full for what it has done, for He knows best what they do. Those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups, until when they reach it, its gates will be opened and its keepers will say to them, “Did there not come to you messengers from among you, reciting the verses of your Lord and warning you of your meeting of this Day?” They will say, “Yes indeed, but the decree of punishment has come to pass against the disbelievers.” It will be said, “Enter the gates of Hell,

abiding therein forever.” What a terrible abode for the arrogant! But those who feared their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups, until when they reach it, its gates will be wide open, and its keepers will say to them, “Peace be upon you. You have done well, so enter it, abiding forever.” They will say, “All praise be to Allah Who has fulfilled His promise to us, and made us inherit the land to dwell wherever we please in Paradise.” How excellent is the reward of those who do [good]!} [331]

I testify that there is no god but Allah alone, Who has no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and messenger.

I testify that the messengers of Allah are true,

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