



QUICK GRASP OF L

HARUN YAHYA

There are questions about religion that people seek answers to and hope to be enlightened in the best way. However in most cases, people base their opinions on hearsay rather than acquiring them from the real source of religion: the Qur'an. In these booklets, you will find the most accurate answers to all the questions you seek answers for and learn your responsibilities towards your Creator.

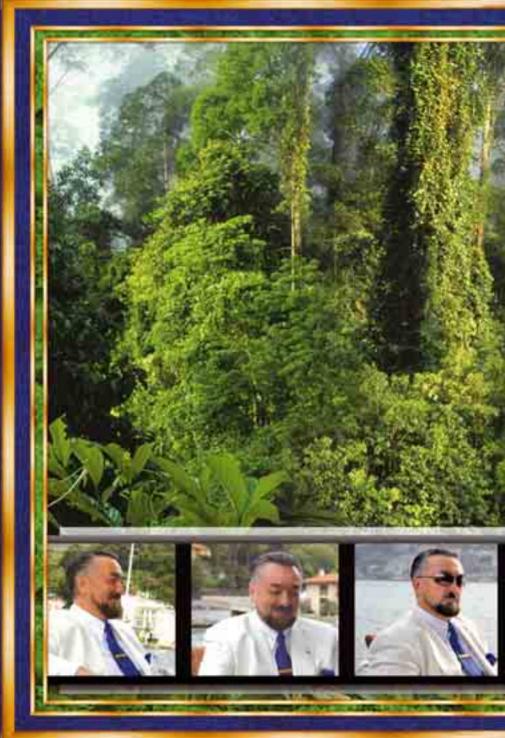


About the Author

The author, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. He studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University, and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in helping many

to return their faith in Allah, and, in many others, to gain a deeper insight into their faith. Harun Yahya's books appeal to all kinds of readers, regardless of their age, race, or nationality, for they focus on one objective: to broaden the reader's perspective by encouraging him or her to think about a number of critical issues, such as the existence of Allah and His unity, and to live by the values He prescribed for them.







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We have made the Qur'an easy to remember.

But is there anyone who will take heed?

(Surat al-Qamar: 17)

Harun Yahya - Adnan Oktar







ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Now writing under the pen-name of HARUN YAHYA, Adnan Oktar was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, he has published many books on political, scientific, and faith-related issues. Harun Yahya is well-known as the author of important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, their invalid claims, and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and such bloody ideologies as fascism and communism.

Harun Yahya's works, translated into 60 different languages, constitute a collection for a total of more than 45,000 pages with 30,000 illustrations.

His pen-name is a composite of the names Harun (Aaron) and Yahya (John), in memory of the two esteemed Prophets who fought against their peoples' lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the Final Scripture) and Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet [may Allah bless him and grant him peace]), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of irreligious ideologies and to have the "last word," so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the final Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of his intention to offer the last word.

All of Harun Yahya's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur'an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as Allah's existence and unity and the Hereafter; and to expose irreligious systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies. Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, Spain to Brazil, Malaysia to Italy, France to Bulgaria and Russia. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Chinese, Swahili, Hausa, Dhivehi (spoken in Mauritius), Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, Indonesian, Bengali, Danish and Swedish.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering faith in Allah and gaining deeper insights into their faith. His books' wisdom and sincerity, together with a distinct style that's easy to understand, directly affect anyone who reads them. Those who seriously consider these books, can no longer advocate atheism or any other perverted ideology or materialistic philosophy, since these books are characterized by rapid effectiveness, definite results, and irrefutability. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence, since these books refute such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the books written by Harun Yahya.

This is no doubt a result of the Qur'an's wisdom and lucidity. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for Allah's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Those who encourage others to read these books, to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of Allah, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological confusion, and that clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the Qur'an's moral values. The success and impact of this service are manifested in the readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and other ordeals endured by the vast majority of people is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This can be ended only with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, leading into a downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, clearly this service must be provided speedily and effectively, or it may be too late.

In this effort, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of Allah, these books will be a means through which people in the twenty-first century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

TO THE READER

A special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution because this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation-and therefore, Allah's existence-over the last 150 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. It is therefore an imperative service, a very important duty to show everyone that this theory is a deception. Since some readers may find the opportunity to read only one of our books, we think it appropriate to devote a chapter to summarize this subject.

All the author's books explain faith-related issues in light of Qur'anic verses, and invite readers to learn Allah's words and to live by them. All the subjects concerning Allah's verses are explained so as to leave no doubt or room for questions in the reader's mind. The books' sincere, plain, and fluent style ensures that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand them. Thanks to their effective, lucid narrative, they can be read at one sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts these books document and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.

This and all the other books by the author can be read individually, or discussed in a group. Readers eager to profit from the books will find discussion very useful, letting them relate their reflections and experiences to one another.

In addition, it will be a great service to Islam to contribute to the publication and reading of these books, written solely for the pleasure of Allah. The author's books are all extremely convincing. For this reason, to communicate true religion to others, one of the most effective methods is encouraging them to read these books.

We hope the reader will look through the reviews of his other books at the back of this book. His rich source material on faith-related issues is very useful, and a pleasure to read.

In these books, unlike some other books, you will not find the author's personal views, explanations based on dubious sources, styles that are unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, pessimistic arguments that create doubts in the mind and deviations in the heart.

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1. How do we realize the existence of Allah?

The plants, animals, seas, mountains, and people we see when we look around, and everything else in the micro universe – living or non-living – which we cannot see, are all obvious evidence of a superior wisdom which has brought them into being. Similarly, the equilibrium, order, and perfect creation present in the entire universe also prove the existence of a supreme possessor of knowledge who has brought them into being perfectly. The possessor of this wisdom and knowledge is Allah.

We realize the existence of Allah from the perfect systems He created and the awesome qualities of living or non-living entities. This perfection is highlighted in the Qur'an:

He created the seven heavens one above the other. You will not find any flaw in the creation of the All-Merciful. Look again—do you see any gaps? Then look again and again. Your eyes will become dazzled and exhausted! (Surat al-Mulk: 3-4)

2. How do we know Allah?

It is again the perfect creation throughout the universe that introduces to us the supreme power of Allah. However, Allah has principally introduced Himself to us in the Qur'an, which He has sent down to people as a guide to right living. In the Qur'an, all the supreme qualities of Allah, His wisdom, knowledge, compassion, mercy, justice, omnipresence, His seeing and hearing everything, His being the sole owner and sole God of the Heavens, the Earth and all that lies between

and His being the sole sovereign of the kingdom are conveyed to us.

He is Allah – there is no god but Him. He is the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible. He is the Compassionate and Most Merciful. He is Allah – there is no god but Him. He is the King, the Most Pure, the Perfect Giver of Peace, the Trustworthy, the Safeguarder, the Almighty, the Compeller, the Supremely Great. May Allah be exalted above all they associate with Him. He is Allah – the Creator, the Maker, the Giver of Form. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies Him. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise. (Surat al-Hashr: 22-24)

3. What is the purpose of our creation?

Allah tells us the purpose for our creation as follows:

I only created jinn and man to worship Me. (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 56)

As stated in this verse, the purpose of man's existence on Earth is his being just a servant of Allah, worshipping Him and gaining His approval. Man is tested on this subject as long as he is on this Earth.

4. Why are we tested?

Allah tests people in the world to distinguish the ones who believe in Him from those who don't, and to determine which of the believers are best in their behaviour. Therefore, it is not enough for an individual to say "I believe". As long as one lives, his faith and devotion to Allah, his perseverance in

religion, in short, his steadfastness in being a servant of Allah are tested in specially created conditions and environments. Allah states this truth in the following verse:

He created death and life to test which of you acquitted himself best. He is the Almighty, the Ever-Forgiving. (Surat al-Mulk: 2)

5. How are we to be servants of Allah?

To be a servant of Allah means leading one's whole life for the purpose of gaining Allah's pleasure and approval. It means trying to carry out all actions in the best possible manner so as to gain Allah's approval, fearing Allah alone and orienting all one's ideas, words, and deeds to this purpose. Allah has brought it to our attention in the Qur'an that being a servant to Him covers the whole life of the individual:

Say: 'My salat (prayers) and my devotions, my living and my dying, are for Allah alone, the Lord of all the worlds.' (Surat al-An'am: 162)

6. Why is religion necessary?

What a man who believes in the existence of Allah has to do first, is learn the orders of Allah, our Creator, and the things that will please Him, Who gave him a soul when he was nothing, made him live, eat, and drink, and gave him health. Then he has to spend his whole life abiding by Allah's orders and seeking Allah's approval. It is religion that shows us the morals, behaviour, and way of life of which Allah will approve. Allah has made it clear in the Qur'an that people who abide by

religion will be on the true path, whereas others will go astray.

He whose breast is opened to Islam is therefore illuminated by his Lord. Woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allah! Such people are clearly misguided. (Surat az-Zumar: 22)

7. How does one live one's religion (deen)?

People who believe in Allah, and who humbly obey Him, organize their lives in accordance with Allah's recommendations in the Qur'an. He who lives the religion leads his life, complying with the right things his conscience inspires in him and abandoning everything bad that his self, the negative voice within him, orders. Allah states in the Qur'an that He created men with the predisposition to live their religion:

Therefore, stand firm in your devotion to the true Faith, the upright Faith which Allah created for man to embrace. There is no changing Allah's creation. That is the true Faith, although most people may not know it. (Surat ar-Rum: 30)

8. How can there be morals without religion?

In societies where there is no religion, people become predisposed to commit all kinds of immoral acts. For instance, a religious person would never take a bribe, gamble, feel envy, or lie because he would know that he would have to account for these actions in the hereafter. Yet, an irreligious person is prone to doing all these things. It is not enough for a man to say, "I am an atheist but I don't take bribes", or "I am an atheist but I don't gamble", because a man who does not

fear Allah and who does not believe that he is going to give an account of himself in the hereafter may do any one of these things when the situation or conditions change. A person who says, "I am an atheist but I do not commit fornication" may do so at some place where fornication is considered normal. Or a person who says that he does not take bribes may say, "My son is sick and about to die, therefore I have to take the bribe", if he has no fear of Allah. In a state of irreligiousness, even theft may be considered legitimate under certain conditions. For instance, people of no religion may not consider taking towels or decorative accessories from hotels and recreation centres as stealing to their own way of understanding.

However, a religious person does not display such immorality, because he fears Allah and does not forget that Allah knows his intentions as well as his thoughts. He acts sincerely and avoids sin.

A person who is distant from religion may say "I am an atheist but I am forgiving. I feel neither vengeance nor hate," but one day some untoward event may cause him to lose his self-control and display the most unexpected behaviour. He may attempt to kill or injure someone, because the morality he adopts is one that changes according to the environment and conditions of the place in which he lives.

Yet, one who believes in Allah and in the hereafter never deviates from his good morals, whatever the conditions or the environment may be. His morality is not "variable" but immutable. Allah refers to the superior morals of religious people in His verses:

Those who keep faith with Allah and do not break their agreement; those who join what Allah has commanded to be joined and are afraid of their Lord and fear an evil Reckoning; those who are steadfast in seeking the face of their Lord, and attend to their salat (regular prayer) and give alms from what We have given them, secretly and openly, and stave off evil with good, it is they who will attain the Ultimate Abode (Surat ar-Ra'd: 20-22)

9. What would happen to the social system without religion?

In an environment without religion, the first concept to be eliminated is that of the family. Values such as loyalty, fidelity, allegiance, love, and respect, which sustain the family, are totally abandoned. It must be remembered that the family is the foundation of society and if the family collapses, so does society. Even the state and the nation have no reason to exist, since all moral values that underpin the state and the nation have been obliterated.

Furthermore, in irreligious societies, there is no reason left for anyone to feel respect, love or compassion for anyone else. This leads to social anarchy. The rich hate the poor, the poor hate the rich. Anger develops against those who are handicapped or needy. Aggression towards different nations rises. The workers become aggressive towards their employers and the employers towards their workers, fathers turn against their sons and the sons against their fathers.

The reason for continuous bloodshed and the frequent news repors of murder in some countries is irreligion. On these pages, every day, we see news coverage about people who heedlessly kill each other for very insignificant causes.

However, a man who knows that he is going to be accountable in the hereafter cannot point a gun at somebody else's head and shoot him. He knows that Allah has forbidden men to commit crimes, and his fear of Allah ensures that he will avoid divine retribution.

Do not corrupt the earth after it has been purged of evil. Call on Him fearfully and eagerly. Allah's mercy is within reach of the righteous. (Surat al-A'raf: 56)

The cause for suicides being so common is also irreligion. One who commits suicide in fact commits murder.

But someone who is guided by the Qur'an would never do such a thing. He would not even give it a moment of thought. A believer lives only for Allah's approval and exercises patience in the face of all the difficulties and problems Allah afflicts him within this world. And he does not forget that he is going to be rewarded for his patience both in this world and the hereafter many times over.

Stealing too is very common in irreligious societies. A man who steals does not think of how much trouble he causes to the person he steals from. He takes ten years of his victim's earnings in a single night and doesn't worry about how much he will suffer. As he inflicts pain on the other person, he may also feel pangs of conscience. But if he does not, this is an even worse state of affairs. It means that the thief has become hardened to committing all kinds of immoral acts.

In irreligious societies, values like hospitality, making sacrifices for each other, solidarity, and generosity totally disappear. First of all, people do not value each other as the human beings they are, because they see each other as beings that have supposedly evolved from monkeys. No one wants to welcome, serve, honour or offer nice things to anyone he thinks has evolved from an ape. People sharing this thought do not value each other. Nobody thinks about the health, welfare, or comfort of others. They do not worry about anybody getting hurt nor do they try to prevent such a thing. For instance, in hospitals people who are about to die are left lying on stretchers for indefinite periods; nobody cares about them. Or the owner of a restaurant operating under extremely dirty, unhealthy conditions does not worry about the harm he may inflict on the health of the people who eat there. He only cares about the money he is making. These are a few examples that show up in our daily lives. Here, the main logic is that people are good to each other only if they can expect some profit in return. By the moral standards of the Qur'an, however, people value each other as servants of Allah. They do not expect anything in return for a favour; on the contrary, they try to gain Allah's approval by continuously doing good deeds, and compete with each other in doing good.

10. Which material and spiritual benefits does observance of the morals of the Qur'an bring to society?

The moral values of the Qur'an create a profoundly, spiritual, peaceful, and secure atmosphere of morality. The chaos of anarchy that causes great damage to the state and the nation definitely ends because for fear of Allah, people avoid

unruliness and causing mischief. Also, people with moral values stand up for their state and nation and do not stop short of any kind of sacrifice. Such people always work for the welfare and security of their country.

In a society where the morals of the Qur'an are practiced, people are extremely respectful towards each other and everyone tries to ensure the comfort and security of one another because solidarity, unity, and cooperation are very important according to the tenets of Islam. Everyone has to put the comfort and interest of others before himself. The following is an example of the morality of believers:

Those who were already settled in Madinah, and had adopted the Faith, before they came, loved1 those who came to them for refuge and entertained no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but gave them preference over themselves even if they themselves were needy. It is the people who are safeguarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Surat al-Hashr: 9)

In an environment where people go in fear of Allah, everyone works for the welfare of society. No one acts extravagantly; everyone cooperates and works in solidarity watching out for the interests of the other. The result is a rich society with a high level of welfare.

In such a society, moral richness as well as material richness prevails. The state of chaos where all kinds of rebellious attitudes are displayed totally disappears. Everyone behaves with restraint and every problem is solved in a logical manner. All issues are resolved calmly. Life is always lived in a peace-

ful atmosphere, and is filled with joy, sincerity, love, friendship and brotherhood.

11. What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to the family?

The morality of the Qur'an requires respect for the mother and the father. Allah says in the Qur'an:

We have enjoined man to be good to his parents, for his mother bore him with much pain and the period of his weaning took two years: 'Give thanks to Me and to your parents. To Me shall all things return. (Surah Lugman: 14)

In a home where the morals of the Qur'an are practiced there are no fights, quarrels or conflicts. A highly respectful attitude is displayed towards the mother, the father, and the other family members. Everyone lives in a happy and joyful environment.

12. What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to the state system?

Allah refers in the Qur'an to obedience as a positive attribute. One who has the morals of the Qur'an would be entirely obedient and respectful towards his state. In Islamic societies, everybody works for the welfare of the state and the nation, never rebelling against the state but giving it, on the contrary, spiritual and material support.

In societies formed by Allah-fearing people, judicial cases would almost never come to court. Not even a thousandth of the legal infractions that take place in today's soci-

eties would be experienced.

Governing the state becomes much easier. Since the state does not have to deal with cases of anarchy, terrorism, mischief, and murder, all the power of the state is focused on the development and enhancement of the country, on the domestic front and abroad, which results in a very powerful state.

13. What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to art?

People who comply with the morals of the Qur'an value each other and try to make it possible for each other to live in an environment that is agreeable and aesthetically beautiful in every respect. Because of the longing felt for heaven, worldly means are fully utilized to create the most pleasant and cleanest of atmospheres, which address the eye, the ear, and all senses in the most beautiful way. Therefore, art and aesthetics develop in all their aspects.

Moreover, a religious person has a clean conscience. Thus there is no pressure on his mind and he can produce beautiful, unique and original works of art. Also, people working with the desire to please and present beautiful things to other religious people, act sincerely and vigorously.

14. What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to the school system?

First of all, living the morals of the Qur'an brings maturity, wisdom, real joy, comfort and peace to children and

youngsters. The insensitive, uncaring behaviour prevalent among young people in some societies is not present in those who abide by the Qur'an. The result is a good-natured, obedient, open minded, self-sacrificing and productive generation. The dynamism, excitement, and aggression of youth are all directed towards good deeds. A considerable assiduity and intellectual power develop. In such an environment, students give great importance to their education not only to pass examinations or escape punishment, but happily and willingly to contribute to their state and nation.

Disciplinary incidents in schools become unheard of. A very peaceful, constructive, and productive educational environment is formed. Cooperation develops between teachers and students based on obedience, respect, and tolerance. Also, students become extremely respectful and obedient towards the state and the police. The student demonstrations that we often see today do not take place, because there is no necessity for them.

15. What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to the work environment?

In societies where people lived by the morals of the Qur'an, there would be mutual understanding, cooperation, and justice in the work environment. Employers would care about the health of the employees and maintain the working environment at the most sanitary level. They would construct aesthetic and visually attractive work stations bearing in mind

that employees would necessarily be working in the same environment over very long periods. They would pay them exactly what they deserve. They would not let any employee to be mistreated. They would keep themselves informed about the living conditions of the families of each employee. They would act conscientiously and ensure the protection of the employees. A situation where the powerful oppressed the weak would never develop. Also immoral behaviour like malicious gossiping, and attempts to prevent others being successful out of envy would never take place.

The relationship between the employees and the employer would be based not on self interest and cheating but on cooperation and trust. The employee would care about the interests of his company. He would not behave extravagantly, thinking, "The boss is paying for it anyway." He would always do his best, and he would never be wronged because of his good morals, but would be protected by his boss.

16. What is "ascribing a partner" to Allah, or idolatry?

Idolatry means considering a person or another being, or a concept as equal to or higher than Allah in terms of estimating, attributing significance, preference, and holding superior, and to act with this distorted point of view. Allah describes this situation as "associating with Allah any other God". In other words, to claim that somebody or something else has any of the attributes of Allah means ascribing a partner to Allah. Allah has proclaimed in the Qur'an that idolatry will not be forgiven:

Allah does not forgive anything being associated with Him but He forgives whoever He wills for anything other than that. Anyone who serves gods other than Allah is guilty of a terrible crime. (Surat an-Nisa: 48)

17. What is meant by "idolizing" something?

In conventional speech, "idolizing" only means worshipping certain things or beings. Yet, this concept has a much wider meaning and is not limited to past ages alone. In every age, there have been ignorant people who have ascribed partners to Allah, adopted other gods and worshipped idols or totem poles. It is not necessary for a person who idolizes something to say "this is a god, and I worship this" about the thing he idolizes, or to prostrate himself in front of it.

Idolatry is basically a person's erroneous preference for something or someone over Allah. For instance, preferring someone's approval to Allah's approval, or fearing someone as one fears Allah or loving someone as one loves Allah can serve as some examples.

In the Qur'an, Allah states that the idols that people ascribe as partners to Allah will not be of any help to them.

Instead of Allah you worship only idols. You are inventing a lie. Those you worship besides Allah have no power to provide for you. So seek your provision from Allah and worship Him and give thanks to Him. It is to Him that you will be returned.' (Surat al-Ankabut: 17)

18. How is one saved from idolatry?

First of all, one has to confirm from his heart that Allah is the only god, all power belongs to Him, and no being other than Him can possess any power to provide help or cause harm. A person who affirms these truths conclusively serves Allah alone and never ascribes partners to Him. Allah advised people that they must turn completely to Him to be saved from idolatry.

It is Him alone you call on and, if He wills, He will relieve your affliction; then you will forget what you associated with Him (your idols). (Surat al-An'am: 41)

The radical change experienced by a person who is freed from ascribing partners to Allah and turns to Allah, first occurs in his heart. The person who is saved from ascribing a partner to Allah gains a totally different point of view and mindset. He now leads his life which, until then, he had pursued under the sway of certain rules of ignorance, as well as his own wishes and obsessions, for Allah's approval and pleasure alone.

19. What does it mean to seek Allah's approval on the highest plane?

What would you do if the place you lived in suffered a flood disaster? Would you climb to the top floor and wait to be saved, or would you climb floor by floor as the waters arose? While climbing to the roof, would you act slowly or try with all your might to reach the roof as soon as possible? Obviously, the wisest thing to do at such a moment would be to choose out of all the alternatives that would save you, the one which would yield the fastest result. Any other course

would be quite out of the question. The person in this situation would be considered to have done his best by reaching the top floor in the fastest manner possible. This is "choosing the best course."

The believer makes use of all his material and spiritual means, every hour and even every second of his life in accordance with the will of Allah. In doing so, if he is required to make a choice among certain alternatives, he draws on his wisdom and listens to his conscience, thus behaving in a way which would please Allah. This means that he acts in compliance with Allah's approval at the highest level.

20. What does having implicit faith mean?

Any individual would know without doubt that he would be burned if he stuck his hand into a fire. He would never have to think whether it was really going to get burned or not. This means that this person has the implicit belief that the fire is going to burn his hand. In the Qur'an, "implicit belief" is referred to as follows:

This (the Qur'an) is a clear insight for mankind, and guidance and a mercy for people who believe with certainty. (Surat al-Jathiyyah: 20)

"Having implicit faith" means believing in Allah's existence and uniqueness, the day of resurrection, heaven and hell with absolute certainty, without any doubt, with full confidence as to their truth. It is like believing in the existence of the beings around one, whom one sees and talks to, and the intuitive knowledge demonstrated by the example of the fire given above. Faith built on believing with certainty develops in

the individual a conscience which will prod him into spending every moment of his life acting in a way that will please Allah.

21. How do I know which one of my actions will meet with Allah's approval?

Allah always inspires the most proper course of action through the conscience of one who fears Him. In a verse, Allah says:

You who believe! if you go in fear (taqwa) of Allah, He will give you a criterion (by which to judge between right and wrong) and will cleanse you of your sins and forgive you. Allah's favour is indeed immense. (Surat al-Anfal: 29)

It should not be forgotten that the first voice the individual hears in his heart is the voice of his conscience which helps him to judge between right and wrong, and it is this very voice which tells him the behaviour that will please Allah. People who fear Allah arrive at the truth by listening to the voice of their conscience.

22. Is there any other voice in a person's heart apart from that of his conscience?

All of the other alternatives that surface after the voice of one's conscience are the "voices of the self" that try to suppress the conscience. The self tries with all its might to prevent one from behaving righteously and to make one do evil deeds.

It may not do this very openly. It may outline certain excuses which may seem sensible. It may cause one to say

"all this will come to nothing." Allah states this truth in the Our'an:

"By the soul and Him that moulded it and inspired it with the knowledge of sin and piety: blessed shall be the man who has kept it pure." (Surat ash-Shams: 7-9)

As stated in the verse, man is a prey to sin but knows he has a duty to guard against it. Man is tested on his choice between good and evil.

23. How do we see?

Allah brought you out of your mothers' wombs devoid of all knowledge and gave you hearing, sight and hearts so that perhaps you would give thanks. (Surat an-Nahl: 78)

The act of seeing is realised progressively. During the act of seeing, light clusters (photons) travelling from any object to the eye pass through the lens at the front of the eye where they are refracted and fall upside-down on the retina at the back of the eye. Here, impinging light is turned into electrical signals that are transmitted by neurons to a tiny spot called the centre of vision in the back of the brain. This electrical signal is perceived as an image in this centre in the brain after a series of processes. The act of seeing actually takes place in this tiny spot in the posterior part of the brain, which is pitch-dark and completely insulated from light.

When we say, "we see," we are in fact seeing the effects of impulses reaching our eyes and induced in our brain, after they are transformed into electrical signals. That is, when we say, "we see," we are actually observing electrical signals in our minds

Both the book you are now reading and the boundless landscape you see when you gaze at the horizon fit into this tiny space. This adjustment in scale holds true also for the different perceptions we obtain through our other senses.

24. What does it mean "not to have direct experience of the real matter"?

All the information that we have about the world in which we live is conveyed to us by our five senses. The world we know of consists of what our eyes see, our hands feel, our noses smell, our tongues taste, and our ears hear. Modern research reveals that our perceptions are only responses created in the brain by electrical signals. In this regard, we merely deal with the copy images reaching our brains of people, colours, and everything we own in the external world.

For instance, let us take a piece of fruit: Electrical signals pertaining to the taste, smell, appearance, and hardness of the fruit, reach our brains through our nerves and build up a picture of the fruit there. If the nerves that travel to the brain were disrupted, the perceptions relating to the fruit would disappear. What we perceive as a fruit is actually a collection of perceptions reaching our brains. The fruit exists in the outside world, but we can never know its original external existence. In other words, we can never have direct experience of the original of this "collection of perceptions" that exists on the outside. We have no means of getting outside our brains to contact anything: we have only our perceptions.

25. Can we reach the original of the external world?

We can never reach the original of the external world. Since throughout our lives we merely deal with the electrical signals reaching our brains, we merely know the perceptions in the mind. The only world we know of is the world that exists in our minds: the one that is designed, recorded, and made vivid there; the one, in short, that is created within our minds.

26. Do we not also experience dreams in the mind?

Yes, dreaming is an excellent example to understand the subject. In our dreams, we experience events, see people, objects and settings that seem completely real. However, they are all nothing but mere perceptions. Both of the "dream" and the "real world" are experienced in the brain. While dreaming there is nothing apart from what is in the brain. In the real world, however, the actual matter exists outside us, but we can never reach it and merely know its version perceived in the mind.

27. If we deal merely with perceptions of all matter, then what is the brain?

Since our brains are a part of the physical world just like our arms, legs, or any other object, we deal merely with its perception just like all other objects. An example about dreams will illuminate the subject further. Let us think that we see the dream. In the dream, we will have an imaginary body,

an imaginary arm, an imaginary eye, and an imaginary brain. If during our dream, we were asked, "Where do you see?" we would answer "I see in my brain." Yet, actually, there is not any brain to talk about, but an imaginary head and an imaginary brain. The seer of the images is not the imaginary brain in the dream, but a "being" that is far "beyond" it.

28. Who or what is the perceiver?

So far, people have believed that what does the perceiving is the brain. When we analyse the brain, however, we see that there is nothing in it but lipid and protein molecules, which also exist in other living organisms. This means that within the piece of meat we call the "brain," there is nothing there to observe images, to constitute consciousness, or to create the being we call "myself."

It is clear that the being that sees, hears, and feels is supra-material in nature. This being is "alive" and it is neither matter nor an image of matter. This being associates with the perceptions in front of it by using the image of our body.

This being is the "soul." In the Qur'an Allah states:

They will ask you about the Spirit. Say: 'The Spirit is my Lord's concern. You have only been given a little knowledge.' (Surat al-Isra': 85)

29. Since the material world we have experience of is actually perceptions seen by our soul, then what is the source of these perceptions?

The reality that should be noted when answering this

question is that we see matter only as an illusion and we can never have direct experience of its external existence. Since matter is a perception to us, it is something "artificial." That is, this perception must have been caused by another power, which means that it must have been created. There is a Creator, Who has created the material universe and continues His creation ceaselessly. This Creator tells us, through the Book He revealed, about Himself, the universe and the reason of our existence. This Creator is Allah and His book is the Qur'an.

The facts that the heavens and the earth are not stable, that their presence has been made possible by Allah's having created them and that they will disappear when He ends this creation, are all explained in the following verse:

It is Allah Who keeps a firm hold on the heavens and earth, preventing them from vanishing. And if they vanished, no one could then keep hold of them. Certainly He is Most Forbearing and Ever-Forgiving. (Surah Fatir: 41)

30. How is it that Allah encompasses everything and He is closer to us than our jugular vein?

Material beings cannot see Allah; but Allah sees the matter that He created in all its forms. That is, we cannot grasp Allah's being with our eyes, but Allah has thoroughly encompassed us from the inside, from the outside, in looks and in thoughts. We cannot utter any word unless it is with His knowledge, nor can we even take a breath.

While we watch these sensory perceptions that Allah shows to us in the course of our lives, the closest being to us

is Allah Himself. The secret of the following verse in the Qur'an is concealed in this reality:

"It is We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein." (Surah Qaf: 16)

When a human being thinks that he has experience of his original and actual body, and fails to remember that every moment he experiences is actually experienced in the mind, he cannot comprehend this important fact. If he takes his brain to be "himself," then the place that he accepts to be the outside is 20-30 cm away from him. However, when he understands that he merely deals with a copy of matter formed in his brain, notions such as outside, inside, far or near lose their meaning. Allah has encompassed him and He is "infinitely close" to him.

31. Is the love of Allah not sufficient? Is fear of Allah a must?

According to the Qur'an, true love requires respect and avoiding things of which Allah does not approve. When we look at the lives and actions of people who believe that love alone is enough, we see that they are not steadfast on the point mentioned above. However, a person who loves Allah sincerely, primarily follows His commands strictly, avoids the things He prohibits and is guided towards actions of which He approves. He shows his love by seeking our Lord's approval at every moment of his life by his deep respect for, trust in, obedience and loyalty to Him.

As a result of such concern, he deeply fears losing Allah's approval and incurring His wrath. Otherwise, expressing one's love only in words, while living a heedless life, transgressing Allah's limits, is certainly a very insincere attitude. In the Qur'an Allah has ordered man to fear Him:

Turn back in repentance to Him, and fear Him: perform salat (regular prayers), and do not be of those who ascribe partners to Allah. (Surat ar-Rum: 31)

32. How intense must the fear of Allah of a sincere believer be?

Everyone who is aware of the being of Allah and who knows Him with His supreme attributes fears Allah deeply. This is because in addition to being infinitely compassionate and merciful, Allah is also al-Qahhar (the Subduer), al-Hasib (the Reckoner), al-Muazzib (the Punisher), al-Muntaqim (the Avenger), al-Saiq (the One Who consigns to Hell). Therefore, Muslims fear Allah in the unseen; they know no one is safe from His punishment. Since they know that they will be accountable for everything they do, they greatly avoid behaving in any way displeasing to Allah. However, it must be added that fear, as referred to here, has a totally different connotation from the typical fear felt in irreligious societies. It is a fear that gives peace to the believer, motivates him and prods him to action to gain Allah's approval. Allah commanded the believers as follows:

So fear Allah as much as you can, and listen and obey and spend in charity for the benefit of your own soul. It is the people who are safeguarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Surat at-Taghabun: 16)

33. Anyone who reads the Qur'an can understand it.

Allah has sent down the Qur'an to all people as a guide. This is why the Qur'an is extremely comprehensible and clear. Allah thus stresses this characteristic of the Qur'an: "A Light has come to you from Allah and a Clear Book." (Surat al-Ma'ida: 15) Another verse further clarifies this:

In this way We have sent it (the Qur'an) down with Clear Signs. Allah guides anyone He wills. (Surat al-Hajj: 16)

To be able to see the wisdom in the Qur'an and to comprehend its supreme features, one who reads it must be a hundred percent sincere and always think in accordance with his conscience.

However, it needs to be made clear that Muslims must strongly avoid producing pronouncements from the Qur'an on the basis of their own personal interpretations and opinions. The most appropriate thing to do for people seeking answers on these subjects is to make use of the catechisms collected by Ahl al-Sunnah scholars.

34. The Qur'an and the sunnah of the Prophet (saas) are the sole guide for believers.

The Qur'an is the only guide a believer will have recourse to throughout his life. In a verse of the Qur'an where Allah addressed the wives of the Prophet (saas), He commanded them to "remember the Signs of Allah and the wise words which are recited in their homes..." (Surat al-Ahzab: 34), and urged all believers to recite the Qur'an. As this verse makes clear, the believers read the scriptures in their homes and remember their verses. However, more important is reading and then fully practicing and diligently carrying out the Qur'an's injunctions.

The best reference source to see how the Qur'an has been put into practice is the life and actions of our Prophet (saas), in other words, his Sunnah.

35. The Qur'an addresses every age.

Allah sent down the Qur'an as a guide for all worlds and all times:

This is a clear explanation for all mankind, and guidance and admonition for those who fear Allah. (Surat Al-Imran: 138)

Allah gives examples in the Qur'an based on past events so that people who live throughout the ages may take warning and not repeat the same mistakes. One may commonly encounter events similar to those recounted in the Qur'an even today.

36. The verses of the Qur'an have been preserved by Allah until today without any change.

The Qur'an is protected by Allah and has come down to our day without any change for the past 1400 years. Allah informs us of this truth:

It is We Who have sent down the Reminder (the Qur'an) and We Who will preserve it. (Surat al-Hijr)

The Words of your Lord are perfect in truthfulness and justice. No one can change His Words. He is the All-Hearing, and the All-Knowing. (Surat al-An'am: 115)

These promises of Allah are sufficient for those who believe. Yet, Allah has shown us that the Qur'an is the book of truth by including certain scientific and numerical miracles in it.

37. What are the scientific miracles of the Qur'an?

Although the Qur'an was revealed 1400 years ago, it includes many scientific facts which were absolutely unknown at that time and have been discovered only in our day by the help of the latest scientific and technological means. These attributes of the Qur'an clearly demonstrate that it originated in Allah. The following are some of these miracles.

I The constant expansion of the universe is one of the greatest discoveries of the 20th century. Yet Allah proclaimed this truth to us 1400 years ago in the 47th verse of Surat adh-Dhariyat:

It is We who have built the universe with (Our creative) power, and, truly, it is We who are steadily expanding it. (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 47)

I The movement of heavenly bodies in unchanging orbits was proclaimed centuries ago in the Qur'an:

It is He Who created night and day and the sun and moon, each one moving in its own orbit. (Surat al-Anbiya: 33)

I Interesting properties are revealed when the Arabic wording of the verses that make mention of the sun and the moon is examined. In these verses, the words siraj (lamp) and wahhaj (brightly-burning) are used for the sun. For the moon, the word «munir» (enlightening, shiny) is used. Indeed, while the sun produces an enormous amount of heat and light as a result of the nuclear reactions inside, the moon merely reflects the light it receives from the sun. This distinction is made as follows:

Do you not see how God has created seven heavens in full harmony with one another, and has made the moon a light therein, and made the sun a (radiant) lamp? (Surah Nuh: 15-16)

I In the Qur'an, the 22nd verse of Surat al-Hijr refers to the "fertilizing" property of the winds:

And We send the fertilizing winds, then cause water to descend from the sky, therewith providing you with water (in abundance). (Surat al-Hijr: 22)

In Arabic, the word "fertilizing" refers to the effect on both plants and clouds. Modern science for its part has shown that the winds do indeed have both of these functions.

I Another miracle of the Qur'an is emphasized in the following verse:

He has created the Heavens and the Earth for the sake of Truth. He wraps the night up in the day, and wraps the day up in the night... (Surat az-Zumar: 5)

In this verse, the day's and the night's wrapping each other up is described by the word "tekvir". In English, this

means «to make one thing lap over another, folded up like a garment that is laid away». In Arabic dictionaries this word is explained as the action of wrapping one thing around another, in the way that a turban is put on. Implicit in this verse, therefore, is accurate information about the shape of the world. The expression used can be truly apt only if the earth is round. This means that in the Qur'an, which was revealed in the 7th century, the roundness of the world was hinted at.

38. What are the numerical miracles in the Qur'an?

The Qur'an also has numerical miracles like the insertion of the number "19" in the verses in a coded way and the numbers of repetitions of certain words.

Word repetitions in the Qur'an: Some related words are repeated the same number of times in the Qur'an. For instance:

- 1. The phrase the "seven heavens" is repeated 7 times.
- 2. The words, "world " and "hereafter" are each repeated 115 times.
- 3. The word "day" is repeated 365 times while the word "moon" is repeated 12 times.
- 4. The word "faith" (iman) (without genitive) is repeated 25 times throughout the Qur'an, as is also the word "infidelity" or the phrase "covering over the truth." (kufr).
- 5. When we count the word "say", we come up with the result of 332. We arrive at the same figure when we count the number of times the phrase: "they said" is used.
 - 6. The word "shaytan" is used 88 times. The word

"angel" is also repeated 88 times.

The miracle of 19 in the Qur'an: The number 19 is pointed out in the Qur'an in a statement about Hell: "It is guarded by nineteen keepers." (Surat al-Muddaththir: 30). This number is also encoded in certain other verses of the Qur'an. For instance:

"In the Name of God, The Compassionate, the Merciful." This formula, which is found at the beginning of every surah, has 19 letters.

The Qur'an consists of 114 surahs; 114 is a multiple of 19, being equal to 6 times 19.

There are many other such multiples:

The total count of the word "Allah" in the Qur'an is 2698 (19 x 142);

The total count of the word "Merciful" in the Qur'an is 114 (19×6) ;

When we add up all numbers in the Qur'an (without taking repetitions into account), we get the number 162, 146 that is, 19 x 8534;

The first Surah that was revealed had 19 verses.

There are innumerable other examples.

39. How do we know of the existence of the hereafter?

Allah currently causes people to live in a world, whose original they do not know and whose perceptions are what they can ever have experience of. Allah, Who created this world,—such a perfect and magnificent creation with three

dimensional images that have depth, and are full of colour and light—surely has the power to create that which is far more beautiful.

Just as Allah forms an image of the world in man's brain, so will He transfer him to another dimension after his death and will show him the image of a different environment. That dimension, to which man will be introduced, will be the hereafter.

40. What does reincarnation mean?

Reincarnation is a baseless superstition. It was produced as a result of the concern felt by certain irreligious people in their subconscious about "disappearing after death" or the fear that grips people with poor religious faith when they think about going to the hereafter after death. For either group, it is an attractive prospect, in their own eyes, to come back to the world once again after death.

However, in many verses of the Qur'an, it is stated that there is only one life in this world where man is tested. It is also stated that there is no return to the world after death. That man will die only once is emphasized in the following verse:

They will not taste any death there – except for the first one. Your Lord will through His mercy safeguard them from the punishment of the Blazing Fire. (Surat ad-Dukhan: 56)

41. Is death a disappearance?

Death is not a disappearance for man. It is a transfer to the abode of the hereafter, which is the real truth. Death disconnects one's relation to the setting of this world and the body present in this setting. When the connection between the body and the soul is cut off and the soul starts to come in contact with the images of the hereafter, that is when man dies; the curtain in front of his eyes is lifted and he realizes that death is not a disappearance as he thought. Just as he starts the day every morning waking up from sleep, so does he start living in the hereafter, resurrected after his death. It is as proclaimed in the verse: "It is He Who gives life and causes to die. When He decides on something, He just says to it, 'Be!' and it is." (Surah Ghafir: 68) The transfer of man to the hereafter happens with a single command of this type uttered by Allah.

42. What does one experience at the moment of death?

Or do those who perpetrate evil deeds suppose that We will make them like those who believe and do right actions, so that their lives and deaths will be the same? How bad their judgement is! (Surat al-Jathiyah)

How the spiritual death of man takes place has been described in detail in the Qur'an, in which it is made clear that it is different from the clinical death of the body. It is stated that certain events take place at the moment of death which are seen by the dying person but not by others.

For instance, an unbeliever who has not been able to make a just estimate of the existence of Allah may seem to have died peacefully in his sleep. But, in reality, his soul that makes the transition into another dimension experiences death in great pain. Or, in just the opposite case, the soul of a believer who is thought to be suffering is in fact gently taken out of his body by the angels, as is related in the scriptures.

The events the unbelievers and the believers respectively experience during their deaths are completely different from each other. In the Quran, it is stated that at the moment of death the unbelievers will experience the following:

Their souls will be taken by hitting them on their backs and faces.

They will suffer the throes of death.

Angels will give them the news of eternal torment.

Their souls will be pulled out of their bodies.

As for the believers:

Their souls will be gently taken away from their bodies.

They will be welcomed by the angels with kindness and greetings.

As the angels take their souls they will give them the news of Paradise.

43. Is the universe mortal too?

Allah states that apart from all the created things in the universe, the universe itself will also die. All animals die, plants die, people die. Planets also die. So do the stars and the Sun. All material beings die on the day of resurrection and they are destroyed. The day of resurrection which brings the death of

the universe will be an event greater than anything experienced by man before. This day is referred to in the Qur'an as follows:

Yet man still wants to deny what is ahead of him, asking, 'So when is the Day of Rising?'

But when the eyesight is dazzled, and the moon is eclipsed, and the sun and moon are fused together, on that Day man will ask: 'Where can I run?' No indeed! There will be no safe place.

That Day the only resting place will be your Lord.

That Day man will be told what he did and failed to do. (Surat al-Qiyamah: 13)

44. Will everyone who has ever lived until the day of resurrection experience it or will only those who are alive at that moment experience it?

The day of resurrection starts by the blowing of the trumpet. Along with a great quake and a deafening blast, all people on the earth realize that they are going to face a horrible disaster. The earth and the sky are rent apart and the physical universe dies. No live being is left on the earth. When the trumpet is blown a second time, people are resurrected and they are pulled out of their graves. (Surat az-Zumar: 39:68)

All the people who have ever been created witness the

events that develop after resurrection.

However, Allah has stated that He will keep the believers in safety and peace and will relieve them of the fear of the day of resurrection:

Those who perform good actions will receive better than them and will be safe that Day from terror. (Surat an-Naml: 89)

45. What kind of a reckoning will there be on the Day of Reckoning?

On the Day of Reckoning, everyone will be individually judged. Everything a man has done throughout his life will be shown without anything being withheld:

"...even if something weighs as little as a mustard-seed and is inside a rock or anywhere else in the heavens or earth, Allah will bring it out. Allah is All-Pervading, All-Aware." (Surah Luqman: 16).

Nothing a person has done will remain a secret.

One may forget what he did in the world of this life, but Allah does not forget any of his deeds and brings them before him on the day of reckoning. Everybody will be given the record of his deeds on the day of reckoning. At the same time, the scales of justice that weigh the good and evil deeds of man are brought in and no one is wronged by so much as the smallest speck. During the reckoning, the human being's hearing, his sight and his skin will testify against him and those who have witnessed what he has done in the life of this world will be brought in to testify. The unbelievers will be driven into hell after a dreadful reckoning. But the believers will

be given an easy reckoning, after which they will enter heaven with all the joy and excitement of a great victory.

46. Can people take the responsibility for one another's sins?

Allah has proclaimed in the Qur'an that everybody will be held accountable for what he has done. Everyone will be made to see what he has done in the world, one by one, and no one will be able to help another unless Allah so wills. This truth is stated in the Qur'an as follows:

No burden-bearer can bear another's burden. If someone who is weighed down calls for help to bear his load, none of it will be borne for him, even by his next of kin... (Surat al-Fatir: 18)

47. Can a human being have the chance to make up for what he has done when he sees the truth in the hereafter?

On that day, it is impossible to make up for anything. To believe after death will not lead anyone to success. As is also stated in the Quran, the unbelievers will beg to be allowed to do everything demanded of them on the day of reckoning, but nothing will be accepted from them any more. They will wish to go back to the world and do righteous deeds but their wishes will be refused. When they realize that there is no possibility of atonement, the unbelievers will feel an unbearable regret. The feelings of hopelessness and regret experienced there is incomparable to anything in this world, because the unbelievers will realize that they will live in the punishment of

hell forever, without the slightest hope of escape, unless Allah so wills:

If only you could see them standing before the Fire, saying, 'Oh! If only we could be sent back again, we would not deny the Signs of our Lord and we would be among those who believe.' No, it is simply that what they were concealing before has been shown to them; and if they were sent back, they would merely return to what they were forbidden to do. Truly, they are liars. They say, 'There is nothing but this life and we will not be raised again.' If only you could see them when they are standing before their Lord. He will say, 'Is this not the Truth?' They will say, 'Yes indeed, by our Lord!' He will say, 'Then taste Our punishment because you rejected the Faith.' (Surat al-An'am: 27-30)

48. What kind of a place is Hell?

For unbelievers, Hell is a place where there are all kinds of distress, torment and punishment which last forever. In the Qur'an, it is said of Hell:

Hell lies in wait—a homecoming for the profligate who shall remain in it for ages, not tasting any coolness there or any drink, except for boiling water and decaying filth— a fitting recompense. (Surat al-Naba': 21-26)

49. What do the verses of the Qur'an tell us about Hell?

In the verses of the Qur'an, it is related that there is literally a life in Hell. But it is a life in which all kinds of humiliation,

misery, disgrace, physical and psychological torture are experienced.

By the given standards of life in this world, man cannot fully comprehend the punishment of Hell. The unbelievers undergo great punishment in hell in every respect, both physically and spiritually. Moreover, there is never any interruption in or lessening of this punishment:

But no! Hell is a Raging Blaze stripping away the limbs and scalp, which claims all who drew back and turned away, and amassed wealth and hoarded it up. (Surat al-Ma'arij: 15-18)

50. What kind of a place is Paradise?

Paradise is a place where those sincere servants who love Allah very much, fear and respect Him wholeheartedly, who have observed the verses of the Qur'an, obeyed Allah's orders and lived their lives to gain His approval, will live forever in happiness, possessing everything they want. In paradise, man will be able to instantly enjoy whatever beauty he may think of and do anything he wants, whenever he wants. Paradise holds everything man's self may desire and enjoy, and even more. The generous recompense the believers will receive there is related in these verses:

My servants, you will feel no fear today; you will know no sorrow.

As for those who believed in Our Signs and became Muslims:

Enter the Garden, you and your wives, delighting in your joy.

Platters and cups of gold will passed around among you and you will have there all that the heart desires and the eye finds delight in. You will remain in it timelessly, forever.

That is the Garden you will inherit for what you did. (Surat az-Zukhruf: 68-72)

51. Who goes to Paradise?

...Allah has inscribed faith upon such people's hearts and will reinforce them with a spirit of His own and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing under them. There they shall remain timelessly, forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. Such people are of the party of Allah. Truly, it is the party of Allah who are successful. (Surat al-Mujadilah: 22)

Some other qualities of the believers to whom Allah promises Heaven are stated in the Qur'an as follows:

those who believe and do good works (Surat al-Baqarah: 25),

those who go in fear (taqwa) of Allah (Surat al 'Imran: 15),

those who control their rage (Surat al 'Imran: 134),

those who do not knowingly persist in their misdeeds. (Surat al 'Imran: 135),

those who obey Allah and His Messenger (Surat an-Nisa: 13),

those who say their prayers (salat) regularly and give in charity (zakat) regularly, and believe in Allah's

Messengers and respect and support them (Surat al-Ma'idah: 12),

those who are sincere (Surat al-Ma'idah: 119),

those who do good (Surah Yunus: 26),

those who humble themselves before their Lord (Surah Hud: 23),

those who honour their trusts and their contracts (Surat al-Muminun: 8),

those who repent (Surah Maryam: 60),

those who say their prayers (salat) regularly (Surat al-Muminun: 9),

those who outdo each other in goodness (Surah Fatir: 32),

those who turn to Allah in sincere repentance (Surah Qaf: 32),

those who fear the All-Merciful in the Unseen and come with a heart turned in devotion to Him. (Surah Qaf: 33).

52. What is true virtue?

In any society, there is a general concept of "virtue" established by its members. People who give money to beggars, behave to others in a friendly manner and, try to help them with their petty problems are considered "virtuous people". These are certainly good forms of behavior. Yet, the virtue with which Allah will be pleased is not a concept limited to such matters. A truly "virtuous person" is one who believes in Allah with a sincere heart and organizes his life in a way of which Allah will approve. In the Qur'an, Allah has

explained what true virtue is:

It is not a virtue to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, the truly virtuous are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set servants free, and who say their prayers (salat) and give in charity (zakat) regularly; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in times of war. Those are the people who are true believers. They are the people who are the Allah-fearing. (Surat al-Baqara: 177)

53. What is the concept of love in the Qur'an?

In societies which do not live according to the moral values of the Qur'an, very different values can cause people to feel love and respect towards each other, like sharing the same culture, holding a title, being beautiful, or dressing smartly. A love based on such worldly values is not, of course, true love at all. And such respect is not true respect. Once the other side no longer possesses these means, the love they maintained was so powerful will disappear in a single moment. Yet, the real goal of the believers is the approval of Allah. Because of their love for Allah, they also feel love and affection towards that which Allah created. This love never fades in the face of want or difficulty and is not shaped by material values. They are never on friendly terms with manners with which Allah is not pleased, nor can they feel any

affection towards a person embodying such manners in their hearts. This is stated in the Qur'an:

You will not find people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having any regard for anyone who opposes Allah and His Messenger, though they be their fathers, their sons, their brothers or their nearest kindred. (Surat al-Mujadilah: 22)

54. What is the reason for believers to be together all the time?

Allah orders believers in many verses of the Qur'an to be together and not to turn away from believers by desiring the life of this world:

Hold fast to the rope of Allah all together, and do not separate. Remember Allah's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing. You were on the very brink of the pit of the Fire and He rescued you from it. In this way Allah makes His Signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided. (Surat Al Imran: 103)

A person who lives according to the Qur'an is surely bound to obey these commands of Allah like all of Allah's other commands. To be with the believers is a great blessing and a support for every human being. For instance, after Allah gave Musa (as) the responsibility of prophethood, Musa (as) asked for his brother Harun (as) to be a helper to him. Believers always remind each other about Allah, they forbid one another to commit evil acts or make mistakes, they help

each other and cooperate in every way possible. Also, of all people, believers are the ones who have the highest moral standards and who always act conscientiously. Therefore, the most peaceful environments are those in which the believers live together.

55. What kind of a life has Allah promised the believers in this world?

The lives of those who believe in Allah in this world are beautiful in every respect, just as their lives will be in the hereafter. Allah gives the good news to those who act righteously that they will also be rewarded generously in this world:

To all those, male or female, who, being believers, act rightly, We will give a good life and We will recompense them according to their noblest deeds. (Surat an-Nahl: 97)

56. How does one pray to Allah? Is there a specific place, time or form of prayer?

There is no specific place, time or way of praying to Allah. Allah is closer to us than our jugular vein and He knows and sees everything that crosses our minds, everything that we think, everything in our subconscience, and everything else too. Therefore, we can call to Allah and ask for His help at any time – while walking, working at something, eating, sitting, or standing. Allah defines what the attitude of one who prays should be:

"Call on your Lord humbly and secretly..." (Surat al-A'raf: 55)

What is important is that one who prays must turn to Allah alone and be sincere.

57. Does Allah accept every prayer?

Allah hears the call of everyone and responds to whoever invokes His name. He has stated this truth thus:

"If My servants ask you about Me, I am indeed close (to them). I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me..." (Surat al-Baqara: 186)

Allah states in the Qur'an that He will respond to the oppressed and distressed when they call on Him, provided that the suppliant truly and sincerely wants what he prays for.

However, it must not be forgotten that people may not always identify what is favorable and good for them. It may be that something that we imagine to be good for us is not so. Since Allah knows that we are not fully knowledgeable and keeps everything under His control, He may on some occasions refuse to grant a prayer, but may give us a greater blessing when the time is ripe. Besides, man is created with a hasty nature and sometimes he is over eager to have everything he wants realized. Allah may then delay His response to a prayer. Allah's decree is always the most beautiful and is definitely good. The suppliant always has to be patient and await Allah's will.

58. How does one repent to Allah? Is saying "I repent" enough?

It is enough for man to say sincerely that he repents to Allah for his sins and mistakes, ask forgiveness from Allah and

pledge not to repeat them again. Allah says:

But if anyone repents after his wrongdoing and amends his conduct, Allah will turn towards him. Allah is Ever-Forgiving and Most Merciful. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 39)

59. Does Allah accept every act or profession of repentance?

Allah accepts every sincere form of repentance which involves the offender pledging not to repeat his mistake and subsequently amending his conduct. The greatness or the pettiness of the sin makes no difference. The important thing is deciding to root out bad attitudes. Allah's verdict regarding repentance is as follows:

Allah only accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and then quickly repent after doing it. Allah turns towards such people in mercy. Allah is All-Knowing and All-Wise. (Surat an-Nisa': 17)

60. Is it right to think that since Allah is going to forgive me when I repent, I can do anything and then repent?

This is an extremely insincere thought which causes many people to go wrong. Allah knows all hearts and the secrets hidden in them. Allah may have proclaimed that He will accept the repentance of those who truly regret their deeds and who decisively correct their conduct, but those who commit sins thinking, "Allah will forgive me anyway" will nevertheless have to account in the hereafter for everything

they have done and they will be recompensed or punished accordingly.

Of no effect is the repentance of those who persist in doing evil until death comes to them and who then say, 'Now we repent', nor of people who die rejecting faith. We have prepared for them a painful punishment. (Surat an-Nisa': 18)

61. Why is prayer important?

Five regular daily prayers, among the most important observances after faith itself, are acts of worship which believers are commanded to carry out throughout their lives at the specific times appointed.

Human beings are prone to forgetfulness and heedlessness. If they fail to use their will and become caught up in the flow of their day-to-day activities, then they become distanced from those subjects they really ought to be concentrating on. They may forget that Allah surrounds them in every possible way, that He sees and hears them at every moment, that they will account to Him for all their deeds, the existence of Paradise and Hell, that nothing takes place outside destiny and that there is something auspicious in all events. Falling into heedlessness may cause people to neglect the true purpose behind their lives.

The prayer, however, which is performed five times daily, eliminates this forgetfulness and neglect, and keeps a believer's consciousness and will alive. It ensures that the believer constantly turns to Allah and helps him lead a life directed towards the observance of our Creator's commandments.

The believer who stands in the presence of Allah ready to perform the prayer establishes a powerful spiritual bond with our Lord. One verse describes how the prayer reminds a person of Allah and prevents all forms of wickedness:

Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and perform prayer. Prayer precludes indecency and wrongdoing. And remembrance of Allah is greater still. Allah knows what you do. (Surat al-'Ankabut: 45)

62. Were other prophets commanded to perform the prayer?

The prayer has been made obligatory for all believers, from the prophets on down. All the prophets sent to mankind throughout the course of history have preached this observance, made obligatory by Allah, and have been role models for all believers by performing that obligation in the finest and truest manner possible.

The Qur'an contains several verses regarding the prophets being commanded to perform the prayer, the scrupulous way they performed and maintained it, and the way they passed that command on to their own societies. Some of these verses read:

- For the Prophet Ibrahim (as):
- "My Lord! Make me and my descendants people who perform prayer. My Lord! Accept my prayer." (Surah Ibrahim: 40)
- For the Prophet Isma'il (as):

Mention Isma'il in the Book. He was true to his promise and was a Messenger and a Prophet. He used to command his people to perform prayer and give the alms and he was pleasing to his Lord. (Surah Maryam: 54-55)

- For the Prophet Musa (as):

I am Allah. There is no Deity but Me, so worship Me and perform prayer to remember Me. (Surah Ta Ha: 14)

The blessed Maryam, a role model for female believers, was also commanded to perform the prayer:

Maryam, obey your Lord and prostrate and bow with those who bow. (Surah Al 'Imran: 43)

The Prophet 'Isa (as) also received that same commandment from Allah:

He said, "I am the servant of Allah, He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet. He has made me blessed wherever I am and directed me to perform prayer and give the alms as long as I live." (Surah Maryam: 30-31)

63. At what times has the prayer been made obligatory?

The times of this obligatory observance have been stipulated for believers in the Qur'an. The relevant verse reads:

When you have finished prayer remember Allah standing, sitting and lying on your sides. When you are safe again perform the prayer in the normal way. The prayer is prescribed for the believers at specific times. (Surat an-Nisa': 103)

There are five timings for the prayer; "morning," "noon," "afternoon," "evening" and "night." These are clearly set out in several verses in the Qur'an, one of which reads:

So be steadfast in the face of what they say and glorify your Lord with praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting. And glorify Him during part of the night and at both ends of the day, so that hopefully you will be pleased. (Surah Ta Ha: 130)

Our Prophet (saas), who best understood and commented on the Qur'an through the revelation and inspiration of Allah, also described the timings of the five prayers in the day. One of the hadiths in which the timings of the prayer are revealed is that reported by 'Abdullah b. 'Amr:

The time of the noon prayer is when the sun passes the meridian and a man's shadow is the same (length) as his height, (and it lasts) as long as the time for the afternoon prayer has not come; the time for the afternoon prayer is as long as the sun has not become pale; the time of the evening prayer is as long as the twilight has not ended; the time of the night prayer is up to the middle of the average night and the time of the morning prayer is from the appearance of dawn, as long as the sun has not risen. (Sahih Muslim)

Both the verses of the Qur'an and the sound hadiths of our Prophet (saas), as well as statements by Islamic scholars, show that there are five timings for the prayer and that there can be no debate over this.

The five daily prayers, with their fards (obligatory), wajibs (compulsory) and sunnahs, consist of 40 rakats (units), as follows:

- Salat al-fajr (morning prayer): sunnah prayer consisting of 2 rakats, fard prayer consisting of 2 rakats

- Salat al-zuhr (noon prayer): initial sunnah prayer consisting of 4 rakats, fard prayer consisting of 4 rakats, final sunnah prayer consisting of 2 rakats
- Salat al-'asr (afternoon prayer): sunnah prayer consisting of 4 rakats, fard prayer consisting of 4 rakats
- Salat al-maghrib (evening prayer): fard prayer consisting of 3 rakats, sunnah prayer consisting of 2 rakats
- Salat al-'isha (night prayer): initial sunnah prayer consisting of 4 rakats, fard prayer consisting of 4 rakats, final sunnah prayer consisting of 2 rakats and witr prayer consisting of 3 rakats.

64. How does one perform the prayer with khushu'?

Performing the prayer with khushu' means performing this obligation through feeling an enormous awe of Allah, in the consciousness of being in His presence and feeling His majesty and greatness in one's heart. In the prayer, a believer who is aware that he is in the presence of Allah, the Lord of the worlds, will experience that majesty and fear, and the closeness he feels to Allah will be proportionate to that fear and awe.

A believer who wishes to perform the obligation of the prayer in a proper manner must take precautions against anything that might prevent that state of the heart and try to establish the requisite attention and concentration.

Allah tells us that when we stand in His presence we must remember Him alone, praise Him and express His Oneness, as the One Who is unfettered by any deficiency. The

surahs and supplications unanimously agreed by the Ahl al-Sunnah should be recited in the prayer. Performing the prayer in the proper manner is a great opportunity for wholeheartedly praising our Lord. Indeed, in one verse Allah states the prayer is to be performed in remembrance of Him:

I am Allah. There is no Deity but Me, so worship Me and perform prayer to remember Me. (Surah Ta Ha: 14)

65. What does a person who starts living by religious morality have to change about himself?

In addition to obeying Allah's orders and performing the rites of worship, the most important change a person who starts living by religious morality should make is adopt a life built on good morals by always following his conscience. Everyone will have the character and way of life he adopted before becoming acquainted with religion. However, when he starts living by religious morality, he must perpetuate his good character traits for the approval of Allah, and immediately abandon those that do not meet the standards of the Qur'an, or remould them in line with the morals of the Qur'an. True believers will not have different world views, life styles or viewpoints. The only criterion for them is the Qur'an and the sunnah, and the only models to be followed are the Prophet Muhammad (saas), the prophets and righteous believers whom Allah gives as examples in the Qur'an.

66. After I start living Islam, will I be responsible before Allah for the sins I have committed in my past life?

Before he is warned, a person would be considered ignorant about religion, with no knowledge of what is right or wrong. Therefore, if he repents and does not revert to the same sins and mistakes and seeks forgiveness from Allah, he will not be held responsible for his sinful past. What is important in Allah's Sight is not to try to justify any mistakes or sins. Allah has given the believers this good news:

As for those who believe and do good deeds, We will cleanse them of their sins, and recompense them for the best of their deeds. (Surat al-'Ankabut: 7)

67. Is it necessary to explain the morals of Islam to others?

Allah holds it the responsibility of all people to live the religion of Islam. Everyone who is aware of the existence of the religion will be asked in the hereafter whether he has abided by the Qur'an or not. Therefore, those who live Allah's religion must convey the good morals laid down in the Qur'an to other people, inviting them to the righteous way, urging them to do right and forbidding them to do wrong. In the Qur'an, Allah gave the following commandment:

Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who achieve success. (Surat Al 'Imran: 104)

68. In what sense does Allah appreciate patience?

In the Qur'an, Allah tells man to be patient for His sake. In a verse, it is commanded: "Be steadfast for your Lord." (Surat al- Muddaththir: 7) One of the most significant qualities of man which is inseparable from the good morals he upholds and the good deeds he performs to gain Allah's approval is patience.

Yet, we must distinguish between patience and "tolerance". Tolerance is the virtue of enduring any inconvenience that is unpleasant or painful. However, patience, as referred to in the Qur'an, is not a source of difficulty for the believer. The believer exercises patience in order to gain the approval of Allah, therefore he does not suffer any distress because of his patience; on the contrary, he derives spiritual pleasure from it.

Also, patience is an attribute that covers all the characteristics of a believer as set forth in the Qur'an, for a person may be humble, generous, sacrificing and obedient, but these qualities will be truly valuable only if he perseveres with patience in maintaining them. This means that patience is an attribute which renders all other attributes of a believer valuable and valid.

69. What does "putting trust in Allah" mean?

Putting trust in Allah is counting on Allah knowing that everything on the earth takes place under Allah's control and that no one can help or harm the individual unless He so wills. The believers know that Allah is the Almighty and anything He desires will happen just by His saying "Be!" and they never lose heart in the face of difficulties. They know that Allah will help them no matter what, and that He wishes comfort for them in this world and in the hereafter. They live a life of inner peace and joy caused by this awareness.

What falls to a believer is just to give the reactions Allah wants him to give and to wait the result from Allah. In verses, this great secret only understood by the believers is explained as follows:

...Whoever goes in fear of Allah—He will give him a means of salvation and provide for him from sources which he does not expect. Whoever puts his trust in Allah—He will be enough for him. Allah always achieves His aim. Allah has appointed a measure for all things. (Surat at-Talaq: 2-3)

70. What is taqwa? Who are those who have taqwa?

Taqwa (piety) is to abide by the commands and recommendations of Allah and to avoid adverse thoughts and acts. The believers who believe with certainty and who show unremitting perseverance in this are called "the pious ones" in the Qur'an. Allah informs us of the significance of piety:

...Provide well for yourselves; but the best provision is piety. So fear Me, those of you who are endowed with intelligence! (Surat al-Bagara: 197)

71. What is superiority based on in the Sight of Allah?

In the Sight of Allah, superiority is not based on the race, possessions, position, beauty or anything else a person may possess, but only on his nearness to Allah, that is, his piety:

Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in Allah's Sight is the one with the greatest piety. Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware. (Surat al-Hujurat)

72. What is deep thinking?

One of the most important characteristics of those who believe in Allah is their ability to see the signs created by Allah. A believer sees the power and artistry of Allah in every subtlety around him, he glorifies His praise and takes this as a way to draw nearer to him. Believers having this characteristic are thus defined in the Qur'an:

Those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: 'Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire.' (Surat Al 'Imran: 191)

Allah emphasizes the importance of deep thinking to the believers in many places in the Qur'an with the phrases "Will you not reflect?", "There are signs for those who reflect". The subjects to be reflected on are unlimited. A believer ponders upon many subjects, like the extraordinary order in universe,

the living beings on the earth, the perfect systems in these living beings, any event he experiences, the blessings Allah creates ceaselessly, disasters sent down to the unbelievers, Paradise, Hell, and eternity, and with profound thinking, he makes a better appraisal of the existence, might and infinite wisdom of Allah.

73. Religion and science are in agreement.

Religion never conflicts with science. Science is the means to see Allah's artistry. Allah created both religion and science, therefore any discord or conflict between them is impossible. In the Qur'an which Allah sent down 1,400 years ago, there are certain scientific explanations which have now been verified by means of 20th century technology. The claim that religion conflicts with science is a lie made up by those who deny Allah, imagining that they would thus create doubt in people's minds about religion.

74. Who are the scientists who believe in Allah and religion?

Many people who do scientific research see with their own eyes and in full detail the extraordinarily complex structures and the perfect order in living beings, and the great harmony between them. These people inevitably come to the realization of the existence and greatness of Allah. This truth is pointed out by the following verse:

...Only those of His servants with knowledge go in fear of Allah... (Surah Fatir: 28)

Some scientists who refuse to heed their consciences

and who persist in denial, despite seeing the clear proofs of creation by Allah, are making a grave error. The reason for such people's attitude is purely ideological.

Many renowned scientists of our day and the past are known by their belief and devotion to Allah and religion. Some of these scientists are: Einstein, Newton, Galileo, Max Planck, Kelvin, Maxwell, Kepler, William Thompson, Robert Boyle, Iona William Petty, Michael Faraday, Gregory Mendel, Louis Pasteur, John Dalton, Blaise Pascal, John Ray.

In our day, many scientists confirm the existence of Allah and more, they see science as a means of becoming acquainted with Allah.

These include Francis Collins, one of the directors of the Human Genome Project, and the philosopher Anthony Flew, who stated that he now believed after years of being an atheist.

75. How does one give thanks to Allah?

To give thanks for all the blessings Allah has given is an important act of worship. In addition to the verbal expression of thanks, using Allah's blessings in a way that He will be pleased, for charity and good purposes without being extravagant, will also be giving thanks through one's deeds. Also, the individual must know that he needs everything coming from Allah, nothing he owns belongs to him, and everything has been given to him by Allah, and he must at all times give thanks for these things. It is stated in the Qur'an:

So eat the good and lawful (halal) things that Allah has provided for you, and be thankful for the blessing of Allah if you truly worship Him. (Surat an-Nahl: 114)

76. What kind of a being is satan?

Satan is one of the jinn Allah created. After Allah created Adam, who was the first human being, Allah ordered all the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam. Only satan among them did not obey Allah's order, because he was boastful and said:

My Lord, because You misled me, I will make things on the earth seem good to mankind and I will mislead them all, every one of them. (Surat al-Hijr: 39)

Satan, who was expelled out of the Sight of Allah, asked Allah to give him time until the day of resurrection to keep all of mankind away from Allah's path and to misguide them all. In the meantime, satan will try to cause people go astray from Allah's path and he will do his best to achieve this. Therefore, satan is the greatest danger to the successful after life of every human being and he is thus everyone's greatest enemy.

77. How does satan reach people? By what methods does he try to make them stray from their course?

Allah mentions in the Qur'an that satan whispers evil suggestions in people's hearts. Believers are advised to seek refuge in Allah "from the evil of the surreptitious whisperer who whispers in people's breasts." (Surat an-Nas: 4-5)

This is the most insidious tactic of satan. Most people do not realize that the thoughts in their minds are from satan. They think that all their thoughts are their own. For instance, someone who is just learning religion is an important target for satan. He may make religion seem difficult to this person. Or he may tell him that what he already does is enough and more is not required. This person may think that all this is true. Or satan induces feelings like fear, anxiety, stress, and distress in people, and aims to exhaust their energy. He tries to prevent them from doing good and charitable deeds and thinking soundly. One must be aware that all these things come from satan, seek refuge in Allah and pay no heed to satan's whisperings.

Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that satan's influence on people lies at the root of all evil, wars, massacres and debauchery in the world.

78. Does satan have independent power of his own?

The most important point to be grasped about satan is that he has no power of his own. Like all other beings, he has also been created by Allah and is under His control. He can do nothing unless Allah so wills. Satan performs his task of causing people to go astray with the permission of Allah. In this way, Allah tests who will and who will not obey satan in the life of this world, which He created to test people. Allah states this truth:

He had no authority over them except insofar as We might be enabled to distinguish one who believes in the hereafter from one who is in doubt about it. Your Lord is the Preserver of all things. (Surah Saba': 21)

79. On whom does satan have no influence?

Satan can have no influence on true believers. Allah tells us of this truth in the 99th and 100th verses of Surat an-Nahl:

He has no authority only over those who believe and who put their trust in their Lord. He has authority only over those who take him as a friend and who associate others with Allah. (Surat an-Nahl: 99-100)

80. What is "the religion of the ignorant?"

Do they then seek the judgement of the Time of Ignorance? Who could be better at giving judgement than Allah for those whose faith is steadfast? (Surah al-Ma'ida: 50)

There is a common false "religion" on earth that all people, regardless of their ideologies, philosophies or world views, who have strayed from the religion of truth, adopt. This false religion is conformed to in all societies where the religion of truth is not adhered to. In such societies, people accept the value judgements, norms and mindset offered by this false religion as a result of the intense inculcation they receive from their environment from the moment they come into this world. The name of this religion is "the religion of the ignorant".

The basic characteristic of people who live the religion of the ignorant is their seeking the approval of the society they live in rather than the approval of Allah, and their building their lives around the axis of this aim.

What is expected of the individuals living in such societies is to "become a man." What is meant by the term "to

become a man" is to adopt certain type of culture, attitude and mindset commonly accepted by society and to exhibit certain traits that are favoured by the members of this society. (Further reading on the subject: Harun Yahya's The Religion of the Ignorant.)

81. Is a system practiced by the majority always right?

The conventional wisdom of societies that are far removed from Allah's religion holds that the majority is always right. Yet this is a totally wrong deduction. Allah has informed us in the Qur'an that, "Most people will not become believers..." (Surah Yusuf: 103) and He has stated at other points in His verses that those who follow the unbelieving majority will also be the losers.

If you obeyed most of those on earth, they would misguide you from Allah's Way. They follow nothing but conjecture. They are only guessing. (Surat al-An'am: 116)

From the foregoing, we understand that in every age the believers will be in the minority, and those standing apart from Allah's religion will be in the majority. This situation will increase the value of those who believe in Allah and who live away from the "religion of the ignorant" many times over.

82. What does one have to do to renounce "the religion of the ignorant"?

The way to be saved from this system built on the denial of Allah is, first and foremost, to seek the approval of Allah

alone and to try to strictly practice the morals and the way of life He presents to us in the Qur'an. One who patterns his entire life on the guidance of the verses of the Qur'an automatically distances himself from the bad morality and the disagreeable modes of behaviour of a society marred by ignorance of religion.

83. What is the difference between wisdom and intelligence?

Wisdom is an important quality possessed only by believers. However, there is a great difference between the concept of wisdom as it commonly figures in society and the wisdom entailed by living by the moral values of the Qur'an. The wisdom referred to in the Qur'an is a concept totally different from intelligence. Intelligence is the brain capacity a human being biologically possesses. Intelligence neither increases nor decreases. Wisdom, on the other hand, is granted to believers, who are pious and who fear Allah, as a great blessing. The level of wisdom of the individual increases in parallel with his piety.

The primary characteristics of a man of wisdom is his fearing Allah and observing his duty to Him, following his conscience all the time, evaluating everything he sees according to the Qur'an and seeking Allah's approval every moment. No individual, be he the most intelligent, most knowledgeable and most intellectual person on earth, will possess "wisdom" if he lacks these qualities, and, lacking the ability to understand, he will not be able to see many truths. Allah has described what damage is done by a lack of wisdom:

The worst of beasts in Allah's Sight are the deaf and dumb who do not use their reason. (Surat al-Anfal: 22)

A man of wisdom also has vision. He makes correct and proper decisions. Wisdom enables him to have a grasp of the essence of events and to see the inner truth of things.

84. What are the factors clouding man's wisdom?

What vitiates a man's heart and mind are his ambitions and selfish desires. For example, fears about the future, jeal-ousy, strong obsessions felt for worldly things, and romanticism so preoccupy people that they are prevented from thinking about the really important things, such as the greatness of Allah and the perfection in His creation. Allah has advised us that success will be possible only by breaking free from the obsessions of the self:

...It is the people who are safeguarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Surat al-Hashr: 9)

85. It is stated in the Qur'an that Allah does not like those who are boastful. What is 'being boastful' according the Qur'an?

According to the Qur'an, the foremost characteristic of a person who is boastful is his forgetting that everything he owns has been given to him by Allah, and in his imagined and ignorant superiority, boasting about these things. An important misconception on this subject is thinking of only extreme persons as those who forget Allah and boast arrogantly. In fact, a person is boastful if he thinks that his beauty is of his

own making, if he is proud of his successes, if, thinking he is adequate, he never asks himself the question: "Can I be more conscientious?", and if he behaves arrogantly and conceitedly. Therefore, every individual should seriously avoid such misconduct and should realize that he is in need and impotent against Allah and that Allah may take everything away from him if He so wills. Allah has told us what the ultimate fate of such people will be:

When it is said to him, "Fear Allah," he is seized by pride which drives him to wrongdoing. Hell will be enough for him! What an evil resting-place! (Surat al-Baqara: 206)

86. What should a humble person be like according to the morals of the Qur'an?

A humble person, as opposed to a boastful person, knows that everything he owns is given to him by Allah either as a blessing or as a trial. He is aware that as a human being, he is impotent and needy and that he does not have the power to do anything unless Allah so wills. Therefore, he always turns to Allah and thanks Him for every blessing. Allah has praised the humble attitude of the believers:

The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk modestly on the earth... (Surat al-Furqan: 63)

87. Will I be responsible for my intentions?

Every individual is responsible for his intentions. Allah makes this clear when He says:

"...He will take you to task for the intention in your hearts have made..." (Surat al-Bagara: 225).

In every act, the intention must be to gain Allah's approval. An act may seem to be good but, if the intention behind it is to gain the approval of others, or some other worldly benefit, this act will not be acceptable in the Sight of Allah.

88. What is meant by "the life of this world is the enjoyment of delusion"?

One of the most serious, but largely unacknowledged misconceptions, is the supposition that the life of this world is the only real life for human beings. In fact, the world is a temporary place created by Allah to test man. What is real is the life after death. Therefore, everything that charms people and preoccupies them in the fleeting and short-lived existence of this world is an "enjoyment of delusion". As stated in the following verse, Allah warns people against this deception, reminding them that the real, beautiful abode is in the Presence of Allah:

To mankind the objects of worldly appetites are painted in glowing colours: women and children, and heaped-up mounds of gold and silver, and horses with fine markings, and livestock and fertile farmland. All that is merely the enjoyment of the life of this world. Far better is the return to Allah. (Surat al 'Imran: 14)

89. What are the Divine reasons (hiqmat) for the weaknesses people have?

There are many physical drawbacks afflicting man. First of all, man has to keep his body and his surroundings clean

and constantly look after them. The time he spares for this care takes up a large part of his life. However, no matter how much care he takes or how much cleaning he does, the effect is only temporary. A person who brushes his teeth will find that in just one hour his teeth a will feel as if he had never cleaned them. Somebody who takes a bath in the summer will feel as if he never had taken a bath at all just a couple of hours later.

What is important to understand here is that such physical drawbacks have a specific purpose. These are not inherent weaknesses but have been specially created. In the same way, old age and the changes that come along with it are also weaknesses devised by Allah to make people think about the temporary nature of human life, avoid becoming attached to this world, which is full of defects, and aim at the hereafter which is the "real abode". Allah has advised in the Qur'an that the best objective for man is the hereafter:

The life of this world is nothing but a game and a diversion. The hereafter is better for those who are pious. So will you not use your reason? (Surat al-An'am: 32)

90. What is the Divine reason for mentioning former nations in the Qur'an?

Allah states in the Qur'an that He has shown the right way to all the nations that have existed throughout the ages and that He has reminded them through His prophets that the world is temporary and that the real abode is the hereafter. Yet, again it is revealed in the Qur'an that most of the people refused to do anything except disbelieve and did not listen to

the call of the prophets. Allah, therefore, meted out a harsh punishment to them from unexpected quarters and wiped some of them off the face of the earth.

One of the most important reasons why past nations are mentioned in the Qur'an is to ensure that the people of today avoid falling into the same error. Assessing the disasters that befell past nations and their archaeological remains merely as historical data without learning any lessons from them would be very wrong. Allah ordered us to take guidance from the calamities that befell these nations:

How many generations far greater in prowess have We destroyed before them! They scoured many lands, but did they find any way of escape? There is a reminder in this for anyone who has a heart, or who listens well, having seen the evidence. (Surah Qaf: 36-37)

91. For what purposes were the jinn created?

Allah refers to the existence of jinn in many verses. Jinn, too, are beings that are created by Allah to worship Him. They live in a different dimension from that of man. As related in certain verses, people cannot see them, but they can see people. A wrong but widespread belief holds that jinn can supply information about the future. In the Qur'an, however, it is stated that they have no such ability. Also, we are told in the scriptures that the jinn are also held responsible for the safeguarding of the Qur'an. Allah states that the jinn were created with the same purpose as people:

I only created the jinn and man to worship Me. (Surat adh- Dhariyat: 56)

92. What kind of beings are angels?

Angels are beings who never err in their duty to Allah and live in a different dimension from that of human beings. Unlike people, angels are not created to be tested. Allah created them as faultless beings. Allah has assigned each one of them different tasks which they perform with precision. Gabriel has the duty of communicating the revelations of Allah to His prophets. There are writer angels on either side of every individual who write down everything he does. There are angels appointed to take a man's soul at the time of death. And there are the demons of Hell, angels who are responsible for making sure that the inmates of Hell suffer the greatest punishment.

Allah states that angels are servants to Him:

Christ would never disdain to be a servant to Allah, nor would the angels near to Him... (Surat an-Nisa': 172)

Allah bears witness that there is no Deity but Him, as do the angels and the sages. He is the Executor of justice. There is no Deity but Him, the Almighty, the All-Wise. (Surat Al 'Imran: 18)

93. How can we define time?

Time can be defined as a method by which one moment is compared to another. Let us explain this with an example. For instance, if anyone taps an object, he hears a particular sound. When he taps the same object five minutes later, he hears another sound. He perceives at that point that there is an interval between the first sound and the second and he calls this interval time.

Yet at the time he hears the second sound, the first sound he heard is no more than a figment of his imagination. He formulates the concept of "time" by comparing the moment in which he lives with what he has stored in his memory. If this comparison is not made, there can be no concept of time.

94. What does the relativity of time mean?

As mentioned above, time is apprehended through a comparison made between two events. However, this is a conclusion reached in the brain and is relative. This is plainly experienced in dreams. Although what we see in our dreams seems to last for hours, it lasts, in fact, for only a few minutes, or even a few seconds.

Many verses of the Qur'an quote various examples on this subject. Some verses indicate that people perceive time differently and that sometimes they can perceive a very short period as a very lengthy one. The following verse in which Allah addresses the wrongdoers is an example:

He will say, 'How many years did you tarry on the earth?' They will say, 'We tarried there for a day or part of a day. Ask those able to count!' He will say, 'You only tarried there for a little while, if you but knew it! (Surat al-Muminun: 112-114)

95. What is destiny?

We have created all things in due measure. Our command is only one word, like the blinking of an eye. (Surat al-Qamar: 49-50)

Destiny is Allah's apprehension of all events past or future as if they were "a single moment." Most people question how Allah can already have knowledge of events that have not yet been experienced, and this leads to their failing to understand the authenticity of destiny. However, "events not yet experienced" are only so for us. Allah is unfettered by time or space, for He Himself has created them. There is no concept of time in the Presence of Allah. For this reason, past, future, and present are all the same to Him; for Him, everything has already taken place and is finished.

96. People cannot change the destiny determined by Allah.

There is a distorted understanding of destiny which is prevalent in our society. For instance, people make superficial statements about a patient who returns from death's door, such as "he defeated his destiny". No one is able to change his destiny. The person who returned from death's door, didn't die precisely because he was destined not to die at that time. It is, ironically, the destiny of those people who deceive themselves by saying "I defeated my destiny" that they should say so and maintain such a mindset.

Destiny is the eternal knowledge of Allah and for Allah, Who perceives time as a single moment and Who prevails over the whole of time and space; everything is determined and finished as a matter of destiny. We also understand from what He relates in the Qur'an that time is one for Allah: occurrences that are going to take place after our death (from our point of view) are related in the Qur'an as past events already

experienced. Allah is unfettered by the relative time frame in which we are confined. Allah has willed these things in time-lessness: people have already performed them and all these events have been lived through and are at an end.

97. How will resurrection come about?

Allah is All-powerful and He is the Creator of every being. No doubt, Allah, Who brought everything into being out of nothing, Who created man from a single drop of fluid, has the power to create all of them once again in a similar way. Allah, castigating the disbelievers, answers this question in the Qur'an:

That (Hell) is their repayment for rejecting Our Signs and saying, 'What, when we are bones and crumbled dust, will we then be raised up as a new creation?' Do they not see that Allah, Who created the heavens and earth, has the power to create the like of them, and has appointed fixed terms for them of which there is no doubt? But the wrongdoers still persist in unbelief. (Surat al-Isra:' 98-99)

98. Why isn't the materialistic philosophy valid?

Materialist philosophy is a false system of thought that holds that everything is composed of matter, that the universe was not created, but has existed since time immemorial and will continue to exist for all eternity.

However, the scientific developments of the last century have proven that the claims of this philosophy are totally invalid. First of all, it has been accepted by the scientific community that the universe had a beginning, it was created from nothing and will have an end just as it was proclaimed in the Qur'an 1400 years ago. Later on, it was discovered by science that what we call "matter" is a "collection of perceptions," the original of which we can never reach. It was the rebuttal of these two basic claims of the materialist philosophy which ultimately invalidated it.

99. How did the universe come into being?

He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth... (Surat al-An'am: 101)

Today, scientists have reached a consensus that the universe came into being out of nothing—suddenly, with a great explosion called the Big Bang. Compelling evidence which caused the Big Bang Theory to be inevitably accepted is as follows:

Expansion of the universe: In 1929, Edwin Hubble discovered that all heavenly objects move away from each other, which is evidence that the universe constantly expands. This is conclusive proof that the universe came into being by the explosion of a single point (the Big Bang).

Cosmic Background Radiation: Since the universe emerged as a result of an explosion, there had to be some radiation left over from this explosion and this radiation should have pervaded the entire universe uniformly. Unsurprisingly, this radiation was found in 1965. Subsequently its existence was conclusively confirmed with the help of satellites.

The hydrogen-helium ratio in the universe: Another sig-

nificant place of evidence for the Big Bang is the amount of hydrogen and helium gases in space. In the latest calculations, it was understood that the hydrogen-helium concentration in the universe complied with the theoretical calculations of the hydrogen-helium concentration remaining from the Big Bang. If the universe had no beginning and if it had existed forever, its hydrogen constituent should have been completely consumed and converted to helium.

The Big Bang Theory, which implies that the universe came into being out of nothing, meaning that it was created, ultimately destroyed the claim of the materialist philosophy that the universe had always existed and would always exist.

100. How do materialists explain the human spirit?

Materialists who imagine that everything consists of matter, are never able to explain the human spirit and consciousness. As we know, the building blocks of everything on the earth, including the human body, are the atoms. This means that all beings, living or non-living, are formed by the combination of atoms in different forms. This is what troubles materialists most.

Man is a conscious being with willpower, who can think, speak, reason, judge and comprehend. It is impossible for such a being to have emerged out of random coincidences by the spontaneous combination of unconscious atoms as materialists claim. It is impossible for atoms that are not able to think, reason, and judge to come together with a sudden decision to form the human spirit.

Therefore, materialists have no explanation for the spirit man possesses.

101. What does the theory of evolution claim?

The theory of evolution claims that life is formed by chance. According to this unscientific claim, lifeless and unconscious atoms came together to form the cell and then they somehow formed other living things, including man. Let us formulate an "experiment" on this subject under the heading of "Darwinian formula" and let us examine on the behalf of evolutionists what they really claim without their actually having spelled it out:

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living beings into big barrels. Moreover, let them add to these barrels any form of matter that does not exist under normal conditions, but which they may think is necessary. Let them add to this mixture as many amino acids—which have no possibility of forming under natural conditions-and as many proteins-a single one of which has a formation probability of one in 10 to the power of 950-as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they see fit and then let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they choose. Let them wait in turn beside these barrels for billions, or even trillions of years. No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a human being. They cannot produce tigers, lions, ants, roses, lilies, magnolias, pheasants, woodpeckers, whales, kangaroos, horses, parrots, bananas, oranges, olives, pomegranates, grapes and millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they will not be able to obtain even a single cell of any one of them.

102. Do evolutionists' claims about the formation of life have any validity?

No. The claims of evolutionists holding that living beings formed by coincidence is not valid. No evolutionary process ever took place. Still, let us explain the evidence on the invalidity of the theory for those who are insistent on the subject. Evolutionists have a few classical claims which are listed below:

They claim that new living species form by natural selection and mutation.

It is impossible for the mechanism of natural selection, which is based on the idea that living beings unfitted to their habitat will become extinct, while the fit ones will survive and cause a new species to emerge. Such a mechanism only results in the selection of existing species yet never produces a new species.

Mutations, on the other hand, only causes damage in the DNA. The effect of mutations is harmful. It is not possible for them to cause a new species to be formed.

They allege that the living beings came out of the sea and on to the land.

It is impossible for a sea-dwelling living being to emerge from the sea and start living on the land, because a living being could not of its own transform itself into a totally different creature by modifying its body weight, body temperature, its system of body water usage, its kidney structure, respiration system and way of life.

They claim that birds evolved from reptiles.

This is not possible either because;

It is impossible for bird wings to be formed by the modification of the scales of reptiles.

- The lungs of birds function in a totally different way from those of land-dwelling animals.
- The bones of birds that are an important factor in birds' ability to fly are lighter than those of land-dwelling animals.
- The muscular-skeletal systems of birds and reptiles are totally different from each other.

They allege that mammals evolved from reptiles.

This, too, is a groundless claim, because the bodies of reptiles are covered with scales, they are cold blooded and they reproduce by laying eggs. Mammals, on the other hand, are warm blooded, their bodies are covered with hair and they reproduce by giving birth to their offspring.

103. What are the other pieces of evidence that refute evolution?

It is possible to delve into the details of many of these pieces of evidence, but the principal ones are the following:

- First of all, contemporary science has conclusively proved that animate matter cannot emerge from inanimate matter.
- So far, not a single transitional intermediate form of fossil has been unearthed to support the evolutionist claim that living beings have evolved from each other. Although millions of fossils belonging to normal species have been found, there

is no trace of any half reptile-half bird, half fish-half reptile or half ape-half human creatures. The 250 million fossils unearthed to date prove that evolution never happened, that living things are not descended from a common ancestor and that species do not turn into one another. The fact revealed by the fossil record is that all species are created with all the characteristics they possess and never change for so long as they survive.

- Proteins, which are the building blocks of living beings, cannot develop by coincidence. The probability of the chance formation of a protein with 500 amino acids is one in 10 to the power of 950. In short, such a possibility, which is incomprehensible to the human mind, has "0" probability of realization.

104. How does the theory of evolution explain the sudden emergence of life on earth?

The theory of evolution cannot offer any explanation for the emergence of life on earth.

When terrestrial strata and the fossil record are examined, it is seen that living organisms appeared suddenly. The oldest stratum of the earth in which fossils of living creatures have been found is that of the "Cambrian," which has an estimated age of 520-530 million years.

The fossils found in the Cambrian rocks belonged to various complex invertebrate species. Most interestingly, this wide mosaic of living creatures emerged all of a sudden without any pre-existing ancestors. This is why this miraculous event is referred to as the "Cambrian Explosion" in geological literature.

How the earth came to overflow with such a great number of animal species all of a sudden and how these distinct types of species with no common ancestors could have emerged without undergoing any evolutionary period are questions evolutionists can never answer.

105. What are the frauds committed by evolutionists to deceive the public?

The "ape-men" we see in newspapers, magazines, or films are all drawings based on the imagination of evolutionists. Inspired by a single tooth, evolutionists sometimes give shape to features that do not actually leave any fossil traces, such as the structure of the nose and lips, the shape of the hair, the form of the eyebrows, and they prepare illustrations of half ape/half men creatures and even draw false pictures depicting the families and social lives of these creatures. They try to mislead the public by this method.

Evolutionists also "produce" fossils which they are unable to find, whereby they commit fraud. A few of the most famous of these forgeries are the following:

Piltdown man: Evolutionists deceived the world of science by this forgery by attaching the jaw of a recently dead orangutan to a 500-year-old human skull. The teeth were added later in order to make the skull resemble that of a man, and the joints were filed. Then all the pieces were stained with potassium dichromate to make them look old.

Nebraska man: In 1922, evolutionists claimed that a molar tooth fossil, which they unearthed, bore the common characteristics of both man and ape. Extensive scientific research was carried out on this subject and the tooth was called the Nebraska man. Based on this single tooth, reconstructions of the Nebraska Man's head and body were drawn. Moreover, the Nebraska Man was even pictured along with his wife and children, as a whole family in a natural setting. However, in 1927, other parts of the skeleton were found and it was established that the tooth belonged to a wild pig.

106. The "primitive man" concept is an evolutionist nonsense.

There is no such thing as "primitive man". A few of the numerous proofs on this subject are the following:

- The human fossil unearthed in Spain in 1995 utterly destroyed the tale of the "evolution of man". The 800,000 year-old human skull fossil unearthed in the Atapuerca Region belongs to the era in which half-ape creatures allegedly existed according to evolutionists, and it is no different from the modern man. This means that there is no difference between the man of 800,000 years ago and the man of today.
- A news item published in the New Scientist on March 14th, 1998, titled "Early humans were much smarter than we suspected..." tells us that the humans called Homo Erectus by evolutionists were practicing seamanship 700 thousand years ago. These humans, who had enough knowledge and technology to build a vessel and possessed a culture that made use of sea transport, can hardly be called "primitive."
- The 26 thousand year old needle fossils that were unearthed show that the being which the evolutionists call the Neanderthal man, had knowledge of clothing tens of thou-

sands of years ago. This reveals that Neanderthals, who were deliberately pictured as ape-like creatures in false illustrations, were in fact no different from modern man.

107. Can the formation of complex systems in living beings be explained by evolution?

No, it cannot. Complex systems in living beings, like the eye and the ear, which are made up of multiple components, can function only when all its components are intact. For instance, for an eye to see, it is necessary that its approximately 40 components be intact. The eye would not be able to see if any one of these, for instance the eye retina or the tear glands, was missing. The conclusion we must arrive at, therefore, is that all the parts of such systems must have been created simultaneously. This, of course, proves the invalidity of evolution once again.

So, what would it mean if a complex structure were to come into being in a single moment?

Unquestionably, the emergence of many components at the same time, at the same place could only be the result of a special creation.

108. Why is the theory of evolution defended so persistently by certain circles although it has no scientific validity whatsoever?

People who disregard the existence of Allah and are reluctant to admit that they are responsible to Him seek a logical justification for their stance and a means of convincing other people to agree with them. Claiming that everything has

been formed by chance, they try to make people deny the evident existence of Allah and therefore they are not responsible to anyone.

At this juncture, the theory of evolution serves as a socalled scientific mainstay for nonbeliever philosophies. This is why people, who are obdurate in denying Allah, defend this theory as an ideological and philosophical possibility although it has no scientific validity, and no matter whether they believe that it is right or not.

THE DECEPTION OF EVOLUTION

Darwinism, in other words the theory of evolution, was put forward with the aim of denying the fact of Creation, but is in truth nothing but failed, unscientific nonsense. This theory, which claims that life emerged by chance from inanimate matter, was invalidated by the scientific evidence of miraculous order in the universe and in living things, as well as by the discovery of about 300 million fossils revealing that evolution never happened. In this way, science confirmed the fact that Allah created the universe and the living things in it. The propaganda carried out today in order to keep the theory of evolution alive is based solely on the distortion of the scientific facts, biased interpretation, and lies and falsehoods disguised as science.

Yet this propaganda cannot conceal the truth. The fact that the theory of evolution is the greatest deception in the history of science has been expressed more and more in the scientific world over the last 20-30 years. Research

carried out after the 1980s in particular has revealed that the claims of Darwinism are totally unfounded, something that has been stated by a large number of scientists. In the United States in particular, many scientists from such different fields as biology, biochemistry and paleontology recognize the invalidity of Darwinism and employ the fact of Creation to account for the origin of life.

We have examined the collapse of the theory of evolution and the proofs of Creation in great scientific detail in many of our works, and are still continuing to do so. Given the enormous importance of this subject, it will be of great benefit to summarize it here.

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

As a pagan doctrine going back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced extensively in the nineteenth century. The most important development that made it the top topic of the world of science was Charles Darwin's The Origin of Species, published in 1859. In this book, he opposed, in his own eyes, the fact that Allah created different living species on Earth separately, for he erroneously claimed that all living beings had a common ancestor and had diversified over time through small changes. Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption." Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties on Theory," the theory failed in the face of many critical questions.

Darwin invested all of his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve these difficulties.

However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties. The defeat of Darwinism in the face of science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

- 1) The theory cannot explain how life originated on Earth.
- 2) No scientific finding shows that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any evolutionary power at all.
- 3) The fossil record proves the exact opposite of what the theory suggests.

In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

The theory of evolution posits that all living species evolved from a single living cell that emerged on the primitive Earth 3.8 billion years ago. How a single cell could generate millions of complex living species and, if such an evolution really occurred, why traces of it cannot be observed in the fossil record are some of the questions that the theory cannot answer. However, first and foremost, we need to ask: **How did this "first cell" originate?**

Since the theory of evolution ignorantly denies Creation, it maintains that the "first cell" originated as a product of blind coincidences within the laws of nature, without any plan or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coin-

cidences. Such a claim, however, is inconsistent with the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life Comes From Life"

In his book, Darwin never referred to the origin of life. The primitive understanding of science in his time rested on the assumption that living beings had a very simple structure. Since medieval times, spontaneous generation, which asserts that non-living materials came together to form living organisms, had been widely accepted. It was commonly believed that insects came into being from food leftovers, and mice from wheat. Interesting experiments were conducted to prove this theory. Some wheat was placed on a dirty piece of cloth, and it was believed that mice would originate from it after a while.

Similarly, maggots developing in rotting meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, it was later understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye.

Even when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, that disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said: "Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."

For a long time, advocates of the theory of evolution resisted these findings. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

Inconclusive Efforts of the Twentieth Century

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the origin of life in the twentieth century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses he advanced in the 1930s, he tried to prove that a living cell could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure, and Oparin had to make the following confession:

Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms.²

Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve this problem. The best known experiment was carried out by the American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial Earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, for the atmosphere used in the experiment was very different from the real Earth conditions.3

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.4

All the evolutionists' efforts throughout the twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended in failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada, from the San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in Earth magazine in 1998:

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?⁵

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a great impasse regarding the origin of life is that even those living organisms deemed to be the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living thing is more complex than all of our man-made technological products. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing organic chemicals together.

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of a cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10⁹⁵⁰ for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10⁵⁰ is considered to be impossible in practical terms.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of a

cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. If the information coded in DNA were written down, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of encyclopedias consisting of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: DNA can replicate itself only with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can be realized only by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.6

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated spontaneously as a result of blind coincidences, then it has to be accepted that life was "created." This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny Creation.

Imaginary Mechanism of Evolution

The second important point that negates Darwin's the-

ory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power.

Darwin based his evolution allegation entirely on the mechanism of "natural selection." The importance he placed on this mechanism was evident in the name of his book: *The Origin of Species, By Means of Natural Selection...*

Natural selection holds that those living things that are stronger and more suited to the natural conditions of their habitats will survive in the struggle for life. For example, in a deer herd under the threat of attack by wild animals, those that can run faster will survive. Therefore, the deer herd will be comprised of faster and stronger individuals. However, unquestionably, this mechanism will not cause deer to evolve and transform themselves into another living species, for instance, horses.

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book The Origin of Species:

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur ⁷

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favorable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science at that time. According to the French biologist Chevalier de Lamarck (1744-1829), who lived before Darwin, living creatures

passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation. He asserted that these traits, which accumulated from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, he claimed that giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples. In his book The Origin of Species, for instance, he said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.⁸

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Gregor Mendel (1822-84) and verified by the science of genetics, which flourished in the twentieth century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favor as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

In order to find a solution, Darwinists advanced the "Modern Synthetic Theory," or as it is more commonly known, Neo-Darwinism, at the end of the 1930s. Neo-Darwinism added mutations, which are distortions formed in the genes of living beings due to such external factors as radiation or replication errors, as the "cause of favorable variations" in addition to natural mutation.

Today, the model that Darwinists espouse, despite their own awareness of its scientific invalidity, is neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living beings formed as a result of a process whereby numerous complex organs of these organisms (e.g., ears, eyes, lungs, and wings) underwent "mutations," that is, genetic disorders. Yet, there is an outright scientific fact that totally undermines this theory: Mutations do not cause living beings to develop; on the contrary, they are always harmful.

The reason for this is very simple: **DNA** has a very complex structure, and random effects can only harm it. The American geneticist B. G. Ranganathan explains this as follows:

First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.⁹

Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful, that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living things, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer.) Of course, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself," as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary

mechanism exists, no such any imaginary process called "evolution" could have taken place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record.

According to the unscientific supposition of this theory, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else over time and all species have come into being in this way. In other words, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years.

Had this been the case, numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles should have lived in the past which had acquired some reptilian traits in addition to the fish traits they already had. Or there should have existed some reptile-birds, which acquired some bird traits in addition to the reptilian traits they already had. Since these would be in a transitional phase, they should be disabled, defective, crippled living beings. Evolutionists refer to these imaginary creatures, which they believe to have lived in the past, as "transitional forms."

If such animals ever really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should

be present in the fossil record. *In The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained:

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.¹⁰

However, Darwin was well aware that no fossils of these intermediate forms had yet been found. He regarded this as a major difficulty for his theory. In one chapter of his book titled "Difficulties on Theory," he wrote:

Why, if species have descended from other species by insensibly fine gradations, do we not everywhere see innumerable transitional forms? Why is not all nature in confusion instead of the species being, as we see them, well defined?... But, as by this theory innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth?... Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and gravest objection which can be urged against my theory.

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the nineteenth century all over the world, **no transitional forms** have yet been uncovered. All of the fossils, contrary to the

evolutionists' expectations, show that **life appeared on Earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.**

One famous British paleontologist, Derek V. Ager, admits this fact, even though he is an evolutionist:

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.¹²

This means that in the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between. This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, this is very strong evidence that all living things are created. The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without any evolutionary ancestor is that it was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biologist Douglas Futuyma:

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence. ¹³

Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the Earth. That means that "the origin of species," contrary to Darwin's supposition, is not evolution, but Creation.

The Tale of Human Evolution

The subject most often brought up by advocates of the theory of evolution is the subject of the origin of man. The Darwinist claim holds that man evolved from so-called ape-like creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started 4-5 million years ago, some "transitional forms" between present-day man and his imaginary ancestors are supposed to have existed. According to this completely imaginary scenario, four basic "categories" are listed:

- 1. Australopithecus
- 2. Homo habilis
- 3. Homo erectus
- 4. Homo sapiens

Evolutionists call man's so-called first ape-like ancestors Australopithecus, which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various *Australopithecus* specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, shows that these apes belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.¹⁴

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to their claim, the living beings in the *Homo series* are more developed than Australopithecus. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has

never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the twentieth century's most important evolutionists, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of *Homo sapiens*, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation." ¹⁵

By outlining the link chain as *Australopithecus > Homo habilis > Homo erectus > Homo sapiens*, evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus* lived at different parts of the world at the same time. ¹⁶

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as Homo erectus have lived up until very modern times. Homo sapiens neandarthalensis and *Homo sapiens sapiens* (present-day man) co-existed in the same region.¹⁷

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. The late Stephen Jay Gould explained this deadlock of the theory of evolution although he was himself one of the leading advocates of evolution in the twentieth century:

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (A. africanus, the robust australopithecines, and H. habilis), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth. ¹⁸

Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is "upheld" with the help of various drawings of some "half

ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific foundation.

Lord Solly Zuckerman, one of the most famous and respected scientists in the U.K., who carried out research on this subject for years and studied Australopithecus fossils for 15 years, finally concluded, despite being an evolutionist himself, that there is, in fact, no such family tree branching out from ape-like creatures to man.

Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science" ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific"-that is, depending on concrete data-fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "extrasensory perception"-concepts such as telepathy and sixth sense-and finally "human evolution." Zuckerman explains his reasoning:

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible - and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time. ¹⁹

The tale of human evolution boils down to nothing but the prejudiced interpretations of some fossils unearthed by certain people, who blindly adhere to their theory.

Darwinian Formula!

Besides all the technical evidence we have dealt with so far, let us now for once, examine what kind of a superstition the evolutionists have with an example so simple as to be understood even by children:

The theory of evolution asserts that life is formed by chance. According to this irrational claim, lifeless and unconscious atoms came together to form the cell and then they somehow formed other living things, including man. Let us think about that. When we bring together the elements that are the building-blocks of life such as carbon, phosphorus, nitrogen and potassium, only a heap is formed. No matter what treatments it undergoes, this atomic heap cannot form even a single living being. If you like, let us formulate an "experiment" on this subject and let us examine on the behalf of evolutionists what they really claim without pronouncing loudly under the name "Darwinian formula":

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living things such as phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, iron, and magnesium into big barrels. Moreover, let them add in these barrels any material that does not exist under normal conditions, but they think as necessary. Let them add in this mixture as many amino acids and as many proteins-a single one of which has a formation probability of 1 in 10 -as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they like. Let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they like. Let them put the foremost sci-

beside these barrels. Let these experts wait in turn beside these barrels for billions, and even trillions of years. Let them be free to use all kinds of conditions they believe to be necessary for a human's formation. No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a human, say a professor that examines his cell structure under the electron microscope. They cannot produce giraffes, lions, bees, canaries, horses, dolphins, roses, orchids, lilies, carnations, bananas, oranges, apples, dates, tomatoes, melons, watermelons, figs, olives, grapes, peaches, peafowls, pheasants, multicoloured butterflies, or millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they could not obtain even a single cell of any one of them.

Briefly, unconscious atoms cannot form the cell by coming together. They cannot take a new decision and divide this cell into two, then take other decisions and create the professors who first invent the electron microscope and then examine their own cell structure under that microscope. Matter is an unconscious, lifeless heap, and it comes to life with Allah's superior creation.

The theory of evolution, which claims the opposite, is a total fallacy completely contrary to reason. Thinking even a little bit on the claims of evolutionists discloses this reality, just as in the above example.

Technology in the Eye and the Ear

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of how we see. Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the eye's retina. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain, the "center of vision." These electric signals are perceived in this center as an image after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that its inside is completely dark, and that no light reaches the place where it is located. Thus, the "center of vision" is never touched by light and may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the twentieth century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding it, and then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a threedimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective with depth.

For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV and achieve the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system, but it is not possible to watch it without putting on special 3-D glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality.

Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by chance. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of chance, that all of its atoms just happened to come together and make up this device that produces an image, what would you think? How can atoms do what thousands of people cannot?

If a device producing a more primitive image than the eye could not have been formed by chance, then it is very evident that the eye and the image seen by **the eye could not have been formed by chance.** The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear, the middle ear transmits the sound vibrations by intensifying them, and the inner ear sends these vibrations to the brain by translating them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalizes in the center of hearing

in the brain.

The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, the brain is insulated from sound just as it is from light. It does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside, the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In your completely silent brain, you listen to symphonies, and hear all of the noises in a crowded place. However, were the sound level in your brain measured by a precise device at that moment, complete silence would be found to be prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all of this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavor, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality hi-fi systems produced by the largest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a hi-fi you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the human body's technology are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does a hi-fi; rather, it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no man-made visual or recording apparatus has

been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear. However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater truth lies beyond all this.

To Whom Does the Consciousness that Sees and Hears within the Brain Belong?

Who watches an alluring world in the brain, listens to symphonies and the twittering of birds, and smells the rose?

The stimulations coming from a person's eyes, ears, and nose travel to the brain as electro-chemical nerve impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact: Who perceives these electro-chemical nerve impulses as images, sounds, odors, and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for an eye, an ear, and a nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? Of course it does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer, and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot answer these questions.

For this consciousness is the spirit created by Allah, which needs neither the eye to watch the images nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, it does not need the brain to think.

Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty Allah, and fear and seek refuge in Him, for He squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimeters in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is incompatible with scientific findings. The theory's claim regarding the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the required intermediate forms have never existed. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas, such as the Earth-centered universe model, have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

However, the theory of evolution is kept on the agenda of science. Some people even try to represent criticisms directed against it as an "attack on science." Why?

The reason is that this theory is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are **blindly devoted** to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward to explain the workings of nature.

Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well-known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine [intervention]...²⁰

These are explicit statements that **Darwinism is a dogma** kept alive just for the sake of adherence to materialism. This dogma maintains that there is no being save matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter brought life into being. It insists that millions of different living species (e.g., birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales, and human beings) originated as a result of the interactions between matter such as pouring rain, lightning flashes, and so on, out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary both to reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue to ignorantly defend it just so as not to acknowledge, in their own eyes, the evident existence of Allah.

Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice sees this evident truth: **All living beings are works of a Creator,** Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise, and All-Knowing. **This Creator is Allah**, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, designed it in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

The Theory of Evolution: The Most Potent Spell in the World

Anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his or her reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible.

As explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors and university students; such scientists as Einstein and Galileo; such artists as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti; as well as antelopes, lemon trees, and carnations. Moreover, as the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people, it is quite justifiable to speak of this theory as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically, and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of Prophet Ibrahim (as) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or some among the people of Prophet Musa (as) worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, Allah has pointed to this lack of reason in the Qur'an. In many verses, He reveals that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who do not believe, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Surat al-Baqara, 6-7)

... They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A'raf, 179) Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say: "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Surat al-Hijr, 14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, "magic" is the only possible explanation for people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason, and consciousness; a planet named Earth with all of its features so perfectly suited to life; and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, the Qur'an relates the incident of Prophet Moses

(as) and Pharaoh to show that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told Prophet Moses (as) to meet with his own magicians. When Moses (as) did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

He said: "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Surat al-A'raf, 116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from Musa (as) and those who believed in him. However, his evidence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as revealed in the verse:

We revealed to Musa: "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Surat al-A'raf, 117-8)

As we can see, when people realized that a spell had been cast upon them and that what they saw was just an illusion, Pharaoh's magicians lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who, under the influence of a similar spell, believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them, abandon their superstitious beliefs, they also will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, world-renowned British writer and philosopher Malcolm Muggeridge, who was an atheist defending evolution for some 60 years, but who subsequently realized

the truth, reveals the position in which the theory of evolution would find itself in the near future in these terms:

I myself am convinced that **the theory of evolution**, especially the extent to which it's been applied, **will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future**. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.²¹

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a deity, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see its true face are wondering with amazement how they could ever have been taken in by it.

They said, "Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."

(Surat al-Bagara, 32)

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم







TO THE READER

A special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution because this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation-and therefore, Allah's existence-over the last 150 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. It is therefore an imperative service, a very important duty to show everyone that this theory is a deception. Since some readers may find the opportunity to read only one of our books, we think it appropriate to devote a chapter to summarize this subject.

All the author's books explain faith-related issues in light of Qur'anic verses, and invite readers to learn Allah's words and to live by them. All the subjects concerning Allah's verses are explained so as to leave no doubt or room for questions in the reader's mind. The books' sincere, plain, and fluent style ensures that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand them. Thanks to their effective, lucid narrative, they can be read at one sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts these books document and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.

This and all the other books by the author can be read individually, or discussed in a group. Readers eager to profit from the books will find discussion very useful, letting them relate their reflections and experiences to one another.

In addition, it will be a great service to Islam to contribute to the publication and reading of these books, written solely for the pleasure of Allah. The author's books are all extremely convincing. For this reason, to communicate true religion to others, one of the most effective methods is encouraging them to read these books.

We hope the reader will look through the reviews of his other books at the back of this book. His rich source material on faith-related issues is very useful, and a pleasure to read.

In these books, unlike some other books, you will not find the author's personal views, explanations based on dubious sources, styles that are unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, pessimistic arguments that create doubts in the mind and deviations in the heart.





QUICK GRASP OF FAITH

-2-

This is the path of your Lord—straight.

We have made the Signs clear for people who remember. (Surat al-An'am: 126)

Goodword

HARUN YAHYA

October, 2003

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Now writing under the pen-name of HARUN YAHYA, Adnan Oktar was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, he has published many books on political, scientific, and faith-related issues. Harun Yahya is well-known as the author of important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, their invalid claims, and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and such bloody ideologies as fascism and communism.

Harun Yahya's works, translated into 60 different languages, constitute a collection for a total of more than 45,000 pages with 30,000 illustrations.

His pen-name is a composite of the names Harun (Aaron) and Yahya (John), in memory of the two esteemed Prophets who fought against their peoples' lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the Final Scripture) and Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet [may Allah bless him and grant him peace]), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of irreligious ideologies and to have the "last word," so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the final Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of his intention to offer the last word.

All of Harun Yahya's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur'an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as Allah's existence and unity and the Hereafter; and to expose irreligious systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies.

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, Spain to Brazil, Malaysia to Italy, France to Bulgaria and Russia. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Chinese, Swahili, Hausa, Dhivehi (spoken in Mauritius), Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, Indonesian, Bengali, Danish and Swedish.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering faith in Allah and gaining deeper insights into their faith. His books' wisdom and sincerity, together with a distinct style that's easy to understand, directly affect anyone who reads them. Those who seriously consider these books, can no longer advocate atheism or any other perverted ideology or materialistic philosophy, since these books are characterized by rapid effectiveness, definite results, and irrefutability. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence, since these books refute such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the books written by Harun Yahya.

This is no doubt a result of the Qur'an's wisdom and lucidity. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for Allah's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Those who encourage others to read these books, to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of Allah, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological confusion, and that clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the Qur'an's moral values. The success and impact of this service are manifested in the readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and other ordeals endured by the vast majority of people is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This can be ended only with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, leading into a downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, clearly this service must be provided speedily and effectively, or it may be too late.

In this effort, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of Allah, these books will be a means through which people in the twenty-first century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.





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1. What does modesty signify in believers?

Modesty is mentioned in the Qur'an as an important attribute of believers. Allah, in His verses, commands believers to be modest. It is also related in Qur'anic verses that Allah does not love those who are haughty and boastful.

Believers are those who are aware of the fact that Allah is the Creator and the only Lord of everything, and that it is He Who bestows His blessings on mankind. A believer is cognisant of his weakness before Allah, and therefore never displays an unjust arrogance. No matter how beautiful, how rich, how intelligent or how esteemed he may be, he does not boast of these things, because he knows that it is Allah Who grants them to him. For that reason his behaviour towards other believers is also modest. He does not try to emphasise his own abilities or good features; he expects the recompense for all he does only from Allah.

Contrary to the arrogance of unbelievers, believers behave with a humility, which is also reflected in their appearance. The modesty of their manner is described in the following verse:

The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk lightly on the earth [i.e., with dignity but without arrogance] and, who, when the ignorant speak to them, say, "Peace". (Surat al-Furqan: 63)

As a result of this attitude, Allah gives believers the glad tidings of Paradise:

... Your God is One God so submit to Him. Give good news to the humble-hearted. (Surat al-Hajj: 34)

2. How can one turn away from worthless and useless things? What is the meaning of "worthless and useless"?

One can turn away from worthless and useless things if one acts in order to gain the good pleasure of Allah alone. Believers know that they need to use the time granted to them in this world in the most efficient way because what they do in the world determines their permanent abode. Therefore, in every deed they perform, they aim to gain a good deed for the Hereafter. Naturally they talk, have fun, eat, laugh, think and work just as everyone else does; but in doing these things they always have good intentions which are likely to be of benefit to other people and to the religion.

Apart from these things, all believers' acts serve a purpose. They always turn towards good deeds that will gain them Allah's approval the most. For example, anyone can talk about automobiles. Yet a believer would not spend hours in such conversation while there are other urgent things to do. Likewise, a believer would not chat for a long time about which team will be the winner in a football match when talking to someone to whom he can communicate the religion of Allah. That is because the crucial thing at that moment would be to enlighten that person about the existence and the greatness of Allah, and about what he has to do in order to deserve Paradise and to avoid Hell.

In brief, believers neither plunge into long discussions on topics that are not relevant to the benefit of the religion and of Muslims, nor spend more than a sufficient and reasonable time on these subjects. They use their time efficiently by properly distinguishing between all worldly matters. They do this by use of their conscience and reason.

They decide what is "worthless" and what is useful, and do not compromise this. The attitude adopted by believers when they hear "worthless talk" is related in the Qur'an in these words:

When they hear worthless talk they turn away from it and say, "We have our actions and you have your actions. Peace be upon you. We do not desire the company of the ignorant." (Surat al-Qasas: 55)

3. What is the concept of cleanliness in the Qur'an?

Believers are people who are physically very clean. The cleanliness and tidiness of their bodies, of the food they eat, of the clothes they wear, and of the environments they live in always attract the attention of others. They try to make the places they are in similar to the elegant environment of Paradise described in the Qur'an. Allah has stressed in a number of verses what a believer's idea of cleanliness should be:

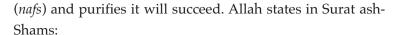
Purify your clothes. Shun all filth. (Surat al-Muddaththir: 4-5)

You who believe! Eat of the good things we have provided for you... (Surat al-Baqara: 172)

... Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House for those who circle it, and those who stand and bow and prostrate. (Surat al-Hajj: 26)

4. What does moral cleanliness mean?

In the Qur'an Allah states that people should be morally clean too. It is stated that he who avoids the evil of his soul



By the soul and the One Who proportioned and inspired it with knowledge of depravity and with its sense of duty, he who purifies it has succeeded, he who covers it up has failed. (Surat ash-Shams: 7-10)

Moral purity is attainable, as we are informed in the verse, when one avoids the evil that one's soul commands one to commit. Someone who is morally pure has a sincere faith and a peaceful spirit. All his thoughts and all his deeds are righteous. In every event he encounters, he behaves in a manner that shows that he is well pleased with Allah. He is sincere and genuine. He well knows that there is definitely goodness in everything Allah creates.

Such people are purified from the corruption in their soul. Allah heralds the good end that these people will meet:

... You can only warn those who fear their Lord in the Unseen and establish prayer. Whoever is purified, is purified for himself alone. Allah is your final destination. (Surah Fatir: 18)

He who has purified himself will have success. (Surat al-A'la: 14)

5. How is jealousy mentioned in the Qur'an?

Envy is condemned in the Qur'an. Allah has revealed that He created the soul of mankind prone to selfishness, but that believers should be wary of it:

... But people are prone to selfish greed. If you do good and guard against evil, Allah is aware of what you do. (Surat an-Nisa': 128)

Some people answer "yes" or "a bit" when they are asked if they are jealous. Yet they do not think much about the meaning hidden behind this answer. Jealousy comes as a result of not accepting that somebody else is superior to oneself in a particular aspect. This, indeed, is an extremely wrong attitude which may lead a person even to haughtiness against Allah, because it is Allah Who grants people everything they possess; He gives as He wills and no one can ever prevent this.

The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) also warns believers against envy:

Beware of envy because envy consumes (destroys) the virtues just as the fire consumes the firewood. (Abu Dawud)

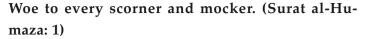
Apart from this, it is also related in the Qur'an that satan rebelled against Allah by not prostrating himself before Adam. We are informed that he regards himself superior to Adam. So we face an important fact at this point: jealousy is, in fact, an attribute of satan, and anyone who fears Allah should strictly avoid it.

In the Qur'an, Allah tells believers to take refuge in Him to protect themselves from the evil of the envious:

[Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of Daybreak] from the evil of an envier when he envies." (Surat al-Falaq: 5)

6. What does the Qur'an say about "mockery"?

Mockery is an example of poor morality which Allah certainly does not approve of. There are many manifestations of mockery in irreligious societies in which the values of ignorance are predominant, including mocking the imperfections or defects of others, and calling one another by unpleasant nicknames. In the Quran, Allah warns people against this evil act as follows:



Another type of mockery referred to by Allah in the Qur'an is that of believers by unbelievers. It is revealed in the Qur'an that because they were unable to grasp that the believers were on the true path, those who believed themselves to be superior to the believers used to mock them, displaying the greatest unreason. Some of the verses on this subject read:

Those who did evil used to laugh at those who believed. When they passed by them, they would wink at one another. (Surat al-Mutaffifin: 29-30)

Yet, Allah reveals that these people are greatly mistaken and heralds the tragic end they will come to as follows:

So today those who believe are laughing at the disbelievers, on couches, gazing in wonder. Have the disbelievers been rewarded for what they did? (Surat al-Mutaffifin: 34-36)

Furthermore, Allah describes in the Qur'an those who ignorantly hold Islam and His revelations up to mockery, and reveals that these people reject every warning from Allah and His messengers. They are the people who do not measure the power of Allah to its full extent and ignore the fact that they will be judged in His presence. Yet, these people will be bewildered in the Hereafter and will be repaid for the mockery they used to engage in. This fact is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an:

Those are the people who reject their Lord's Signs and the meeting with Him. Their actions will come to nothing and, on the Day of Rising, we will not assign them any weight. That is their repayment—Hell—because they disbelieved and made a mockery of My

Signs and of My Messengers. (Surat al-Kahf: 105-106)

Follow the best that has been sent down to you from your Lord before the punishment comes upon you suddenly when you are not expecting it; lest anyone should say, "Alas for me for neglecting what Allah was due, and being one of the scoffers!" (Surat az-Zumar: 55-56)

7. Where does calling others by offensive nick-names stand in the Qur'an?

People who do not live by the moral values of the Qur'an deride other people by calling them by offensive nicknames in an attempt to dishonour them and thus exalt themselves. Believers, on the other hand, never behave in such a poor manner. Allah strictly prohibits believers from doing so, stating that those who do not obey this injunction are wrongdoers:

You who believe! People should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves. And do not find fault with one another or insult each other with derogatory nicknames. How evil it is to have a name for evil conduct after coming to faith! Those people who do not turn from it are wrongdoers. (Surat al-Hujurat: 11)

Those who conform to the morals of the Qur'an never behave in this indecent way, which is disapproved of by Allah. They address each other in the most pleasing way and deeply respect each other as sincere servants of Allah.

8. What is the place of gossip in the Qur'an?

In the Qur'an, Allah forbids believers backbiting, and refers to it as an indecency:

... and do not backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat his brother's dead flesh? No, you would hate it. Heed Allah. Allah is Ever-Returning, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Hujurat: 12)

As commanded by this verse, people who live by Islamic morals and are like brothers and sisters to each other strictly avoid this behaviour. On the contrary, believers remember only each other's good intentions and always try to highlight their good attributes. They do not try to find defects or faults in believers—people who are submissive to the will of Allah. Gossip, which indeed causes great distress to people in societies remote from Islamic morals, is a corruption that never exists among believers who maintain the limits set by Allah. When believers notice an imperfection or other defect in another, they do not backbite, but instead advise the person directly so that he will amend his unacceptable behaviour.

The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) also said to the believers:

If he/she is as you've said (and you've spoken about it behind his/her back), then you have committed the gross sin of backbiting, and if what you have said is not found in him, then you have slandered him/her. (Muslim)

9. Why is despair not an approved state?

Despair is unthinkable for a person who is aware of the fact that Allah is the creator of every being and every event, and who measures the power of Allah by its true measure.

Because Allah is the One Who removes difficulties for His servants, is most forgiving, is full of mercy and has complete power and knowledge. Every incident that people may regard as a reason for despair, including all impediments, unexpected obstacles, diseases, accidents or mistakes, in fact occurs under the complete control of Allah. Allah is All-Knowing and nothing is absent from His knowledge. Being aware that one's destiny is designated by His endless knowledge is the greatest comfort one can ever have. Knowing this fact, one can never give way to despair.

Besides this, believers, knowing that it is possible that their mistakes may be remitted in this world, do not lose hope. Indeed, people are commanded in the Qur'an not to despair of the mercy of Allah:

... Do not despair of solace from Allah. No one despairs of solace from Allah except for those who disbelieve. (Surah Yusuf: 87)

Say: "My servants, you who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Truly Allah forgives all wrong actions. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful." (Surat az-Zumar: 53)

10. Is being sentimental approved of in the Qur'an?

Being sentimental is not approved of in the Qur'an, although being a man of "wisdom" is essential. Allah bestows intelligence and understanding upon those who heed Him. Believers who possess wisdom consider all events within the framework of absolute truths specified in the Qur'an.

They make appropriate decisions acting in the light of their reason and conscience, thereby easily resolving all matters, whereas sentimentality plays a significant role in confounding one's understanding. If one approaches events emotionally instead of using reason, the ability to discriminate between right and wrong becomes impaired. One's decision-making and judgments can no longer be relied upon to be impartial or just. Since one attributes importance to what other people think, one cannot make quick and appropriate decisions. Evaluations made in an emotional state would be based on personal value judgements instead of the criteria of the Qur'an.

11. What is the concept of sincerity in the Qur'an?

"Sincerity", literally, has the meaning of being pure and unadulterated. The concept of sincerity mentioned in the Qur'an denotes turning to Allah in devoutness. A sincere believer devotes all his deeds throughout his entire life to seeking the pleasure of Allah and expects his reward only from Him. He does not make devious calculations orientated around the opinions of other people or trying to find favour with them. Therefore all of his actions are sincere and candid, such as would earn the pleasure of Allah.

A sincere person is honest first with Allah and then with people; because he well knows that Allah hears and sees all things, and that he will be judged in His presence and will be held responsible for all of his deeds, words and thoughts. For this reason the sincerity and candour of believers are among the most significant signs of the firmness of their faith.

Allah has made the sincere attitudes of the messengers, who always sought to earn the good pleasure of Allah, an example for believers:

And remember Our servants Ibrahim, Ishaq and Ya'qub, men of true strength and inner sight. We purified their sincerity through sincere remembrance of the Abode. In Our eyes they are among the best of chosen men. (Surah Sâd: 45-47)

Those who turn to Allah in sincerity are praised in the Qur'an. The Qur'an heralds the good outcome of these people as follows:

Those who shun the worship of false gods and turn towards Allah will have good news. So give good news to My servants. Those who listen well to what is said and follow the best of it, they are the ones whom Allah has guided, they are the people of intelligence. (Surat az-Zumar: 17-18)

The importance of deeds performed solely for Allah's sake is mentioned in the hadith below:

Allah accepts those deeds which were performed purely for His sake and which were meant to seek His pleasure. (Abu Dawud)

12. Do believers grieve over events?

Believers do not grieve over events, because they know that Allah will try them with all manner of circumstances. They put their trust in Allah and maintain their steadfastness. They remember that Allah creates everything with wisdom. An example is given in the Qur'an as follows:

If you do not help him, Allah did help him when the disbelievers drove him out and there were two of them in the Cave. He said to his companion, "Do not be despondent, Allah is with us." ... (Surat at-Tawba: 40)

As stated in the verse, our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) advises his companion, even in the very midst of hardship, not to be despondent. Since believers have an excellent model in the messenger, they behave accordingly in difficult situations.

Among the most important reasons why believers never despair is that they know that every incident Allah brings about will ultimately turn out to be good for them. Allah has promised believers a good life in this world. During this good life, believers hope Allah will place them in the eternal Hereafter in an outstandingly splendid abode, which is much more beautiful than this world and where Allah's blessings never diminish. This is certainly the best news one can ever receive and is the greatest source of joy. Therefore believers never become despondent. Allah gives believers the good news as follows:

Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah", and then remained on a right course—the angels descend upon them [saying]: "Do not fear and do not grieve but rejoice in the Garden [i.e., Paradise] you have been promised. We are your protectors in the life of this world and the Hereafter. You will have there all that your selves could wish for. You will have there everything you demand. (Surah Fussilat: 30-31)

13. Do believers feel anger?

Believers, like anyone else, may naturally feel anger at certain events. However one of the most important indications of their virtuous character is their ability to control their anger. They know that no good will come of an uncontrolled, intense fury, and that they will just lose their ability to act reasonably or to be just. They avoid making wrong decisions that may harm both themselves and those around them. They abstain from it most importantly because they know that Allah will not approve of such a reaction and form of behaviour. For that reason believers exhibit steadfastness and forgiveness. Allah praises this feature of believers in the Qur'an in these words:

Those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people—Allah loves the good-doers. (Surah Al 'Imran: 134)

Yet, "controlling rage" should not be misunderstood: it does not mean to accept everything as it is or being passive. Believers certainly take the necessary precautions, and try to prevent any wrongdoing or situations that may cause harm to other believers. However, they do not react emotionally; instead they try to find sensible ways to influence people's behaviour, or otherwise limit whatever damage is being caused.

Our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has this to say on controlling anger:

The strong is not the one who overcomes the people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger. (Bukhari)

14. Do believers make mistakes?

As informed in the Qur'an believers may make mistakes.

But, since they fear Allah and are sincere to Him, they do not knowingly persist with their wrongdoing, and immediately try to make amends for it. They seek forgiveness and self-improvement in the areas they were wrong, with the aim of not falling into the same error again. They are well aware of the fact that this world is a place of testing; therefore they draw lessons from their mistakes. Allah praises this commendable attribute of believers in many verses and promises them forgiveness:

Those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions (and Who can forgive bad actions except Allah?) and do not knowingly persist in what they were doing. (Surah Al 'Imran: 135)

15. What is the concept of justice in the Qur'an that believers are commanded to possess?

Allah has commanded believers to evaluate all events with justice and within the boundaries stated in the Qur'an. He has instructed them to be absolutely just while judging between people and always to be on the side of justice.

When believers bear witness, they are the most honest and just in their witnessing. A decision one makes or evidence one gives may sometimes be to one's own disadvantage, or may affect the interests of a friend or relative. However, this is of no importance for one who fears Allah because the measure for the deeds of believers is the good pleasure of Allah. In the moment, the most convenient thing to do may appear to be to bear witness or to make a judgement in a way that Allah does not approve. A worldly expediency, however, never affords believers serenity or happiness, on the contrary becomes a source of compunction, as long as

Allah is not pleased with it.

For that reason believers render justice even if it is against themselves or their relatives. Allah forbids believers the contrary as follows:

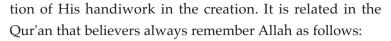
You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for Allah alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, Allah is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, Allah is aware of what you do. (Surat an-Nisa': 135)

Another risk that is likely to prevent people from being just in their judgements is the anger they may feel towards other people. If one bears anger or malice towards someone else, then he would be unlikely grant that person the benefit of the doubt or to act in his favour. Believers, however, consider the pleasure of Allah to be of paramount importance and do not cease acting with justice no matter who the other party may be, because Allah has commanded believers:

... Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to heedfulness... (Surat al-Ma'ida: 8)

16. How should the remembrance of Allah be?

Believers are aware of the fact that Allah sees and hears them at every instant, and that Allah has created every event they encounter. For that reason they always bear Allah in mind. At every instant of their lives they internally reflect on Allah, and in their dialogues with other believers they remember our Lord's might, His exaltedness, and the perfec-



Those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying]: "Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire." (Surah Al 'Imran: 191)

One remembers Allah by being aware of the fact that every occurrence is created by Him, reflecting on the meaning of those occurrences in one's own life, trying to see and understand the wisdom in the creation of Allah, trying to grasp His exaltedness at every instant and transmitting all these to other people. A person can steadfastly put his trust in Allah when he is facing an apparently difficult situation only if he remembers Allah at that very moment. Therefore, one who is constantly mindful of Allah, is constantly aware of Him and His power, and hence behaves properly.

17. How is the Day of Judgement described in the Qur'an?

As stated in the Qur'an, "the Hour is coming..." (Surah Ta Ha: 15). On that day all living things, along with the stars, planets and galaxies, in short, everything in the heavens and the earth will vanish. Some of the occurrences that are due to take place are depicted in the Qur'an as follows:

Heaven will be split apart, for that Day it will be very frail. (Surat al-Haqqa: 16)

The stars will fall in rapid succession. (Surat at-Takwir: 2)

The sun and moon will be fused together. (Surat al-Qiyama: 9)

The oceans will surge into each other. (Surat at-Takwir: 6)

The mountains will become like shifting dunes. (Surat al-Muzzammil: 14)

The mountains will be like tufts of coloured wool. (Surat al-Qari'a: 5)

The earth will be crushed and ground to dust. (Surat al-Fajr: 21)

The earth will disgorge its charges. (Surat az-Zilzal: 2)

These are only a few of the terrifying happenings that will occur on the Day of Judgement. On that day, essentially everything that man values will vanish, and everyone will understand that nothing, other than the right actions done for the pleasure of Allah, is of any value.

18. How will the unbelievers be on the Day of Judgement?

The Day of Judgement is the most dreadful and terrifying day one can ever imagine living through. On that day unbelievers will meet a manifest truth which they never thought about even though they were promised it, and it will be impossible to be sent back again to compensate for what they did in the world. On that day, unbelievers will understand in terror that death is not a destruction, but on the contrary, the beginning of a painful punishment which will last forever. Allah has stated in the Qur'an that people will be like drunkards on



... and you will think people drunk when they are not drunk; it is just that the punishment of Allah is so severe. (Surat al-Hajj: 2)

On that day, all value judgements of unbelievers will change at once because of the terror of the occurrence. Wealth and sons they used to consider the most valuable won't be of any importance any more. Allah heralds in the Qur'an that on that day people will seek only for their own rescue and will flee from each other:

The Day a man will flee from his brother and his mother and his father, and his wife and his children: on that Day every man among them will have concerns enough of his own. (Surah 'Abasa: 34-37)

Some of the details related in verses about how people will be on that day are as follows:

- ... the eyes of those who disbelieved will be transfixed... (Surat al-Anbiya': 97)
- ... Every nursing woman will be oblivious of the baby at her breast, and every pregnant woman will abort the contents of her womb... (Surat al-Hajj: 2)

How will you safeguard yourselves, if you disbelieve, against a Day which will turn children grey... (Surat al-Muzzammil: 17)

19. Are believers in great numbers?

Allah states in many verses that real believers will be very small in number. For that reason the numbers of believers have always been small throughout history and unbelievers have always been the majority. This is also an indication of the pre-eminence, value and superiority of believers. The following verse affirms that most people will not be believers:

But most people, for all your eagerness, are not believers. (Surah Yusuf: 103)

For that reason it would be a big loss for one to take the majority as one's role model, and to believe the way the majority believes. These people, no matter how great they are in number, will not find a way of escape from Hell in the Hereafter, unless they change their attitude and bad manners in this world.

20. How will believers be welcomed in the Hereafter?

Believers, unlike unbelievers, will be cordially welcomed to their lives in the Hereafter. As stated in the verse "those the angels take in a virtuous state...." (Surat an-Nahl: 32), they are taken in death in a good state. They are safe from every kind of fear. They are given an easy reckoning thanks to Allah's favour and mercy to them. They are given by the angels the glad tidings of Paradise that Allah promised them, and are eventually escorted there:

And those who heed Lord will be driven to Paradise in companies and when they arrive there, finding its gates open, its custodians will say to them, "Peace be upon you! You have done well so enter it timelessly, for ever." They will say, "Praise be to Allah Who has fulfilled His promise to us and made us the inheritors of this land, letting us settle in Paradise wherever we want. How excellent is the wage of those who work!" (Surat az-Zumar: 73-74)

21. How will the unbelievers be recognised on the Day of Judgement?

The evildoers will be recognised by their marks and seized by their forelocks and their feet. (Surat ar-Rahman: 41)

In the above verse Allah states that unbelievers will be recognised on the Day of Judgement by their marks. A person might have a beautiful or an innocent face in this world. Nevertheless, these people's faces after being raised up on the Day of Reckoning are described in the Quran as "downcast", "dust-covered" and "overcast with gloom". It is related in the verses that unbelievers will be gathered blind. Apart from blindness, their eyes will be horrible in appearance and, as related in the Qur'an, evildoers will be "blue-eyed" with terror. Every unbeliever will be raised up on the Day of Judgement in such a horrible state.

22. How do believers react to diseases or hardships?

Believers know that Allah tries men with hardships or diseases. For that reason they are always steadfast. They put their trust in Allah even at the time of a severe disease or a hardship, and never give way to despair. Being aware of the fact that it is Allah Who gives the disease or the hardship and that only He will cause it to cease, they turn towards Him. They hope for the reward for their good behaviour both in this world and in the Hereafter only from Allah. Allah informs us of the virtuous manner of believers faced with hardships as follows:

We will test you with a certain amount of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and life and fruits. But give good news to the steadfast: Those who, when disaster strikes them, say, "We belong to Allah and to Him we will return." Those are the people who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord; they are the ones who are guided. (Surat al-Baqara: 155-157)

23. What are the advantages of consultation among believers?

Allah relates in the Qur'an that believers "respond to their Lord and establish prayer, and manage their affairs by mutual consultation..." (Surat ash-Shura: 38). Such consultation has both physical and spiritual benefits. Before all else, consulting another person and asking for his or her opinion is a sign of that person's modesty, which Allah approves. Besides this, a number of people working in unison are more likely to arrive at wise decisions than one acting alone. One party may consider a point that another might not have, eliminating any gaps, so that a much more productive and effective result ensues. The consequent success attained in the affair belongs to a number of people, and not only to a single person. This protects the soul from boasting of the success or claiming it as his own.

24. What is the reason for the narration of stories mentioned in the Qur'an?

There is instruction in their stories for people of intelligence. This is not a narration which has been invented but confirmation of all that came before, a clarification of everything, and a guidance and a mercy for people who believe. (Surah Yusuf: 111)

Allah states that there is instruction in the stories related in the Qur'an. Events narrated in these stories provide an example for believers in many respects. These stories assume great importance for believers, in terms of enabling them to recognise and not to repeat the mistakes of those who have passed away; to discern how past messengers and believers behaved in particular cases, and to take them as role models; to discern and adopt their virtuous characters; and to evaluate current events by considering past events and their outcomes.

25. How were past nations destroyed?

Allah sent messengers to nations who have passed away and warned them of the presence of the Hereafter and the Day of Reckoning. Yet most of these nations did not pay heed to these warnings, they opposed Allah and His messengers and forgot their Islamic morals, upon which Allah struck them with disasters as a reminder, and destroyed those who did not take heed of the warning. The punishments that befell these nations were varied in nature. However, what is common is that it came to them from where they did not expect, and at an unexpected time, usually while they were asleep.

These punishments sometimes destroyed a whole city or an entire nation, they did not leave any trace of the city, and were painful and fearful. Allah refers to such perished nations in many verses in the Qur'an as a reminder to people:

Do they not see how many generations before them We have destroyed and that they will not return to them? (Surah Ya Sin: 31)

Of the punishments mentioned in the Qur'an some are listed as follows:

- Drowning, (Surat al-Isra': 103)
- Plague sent down from heaven, (Surat al-Baqara: 59)
- Earthquake, (Surat al-A'raf: 78)
- Gushing springs, (Surat al-Qamar: 12)
- A great blast, (Surah Hud: 67)
- Raining down stones of hard baked clay, (Surah Hud: 82)
- Howling wind, (Surat al-Qamar: 19)
- Thunderbolt, (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 44)
- Overturning, turning upside down... (Surat an-Najm: 53)

26. Who should be reminded?

Allah has informed us in the Qur'an whom shall take heed and remember, and in the verse, "Remind, then, if the reminder benefits" (Surat al-A'la: 9) He commands believers to remind those who are of such character. Some of the attributes of those who shall benefit from a reminder are as follows:

... This is admonishment for all who believe in Allah and the Last Day... (Surat at-Talaq: 2)

He who has fear will be reminded; (Surat al-A'la: 10)

- ... It is only people of intelligence who pay heed. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 19)
- ... But none pay heed save those who repent. (Surah Ghafir: 13)

... So remind, with the Qur'an, whoever fears My Threat. (Surah Qaf: 45)

And remind them, for truly the believers benefit from being reminded. (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 55)

27. What is the best response to a reminder?

In the verse, "The reply of the believers when they are summoned to Allah and His Messenger so that he can judge between them, is to say, 'We hear and we obey.' They are the ones who are successful." (Surat an-Nur: 51). Allah points out here how believers should respond to a reminder. Allah promises Paradise to those who hear and unhesitatingly obey the reminder of Allah and His messengers. In another verse Allah states that, "Those who listen well to what is said and follow the best of it, they are the ones whom Allah has guided, they are the people of intelligence", (Surat az-Zumar: 18). On the advice of this verse, believers are open to all reminders from those who have faith in Allah. They remember that believers always command them the right and forbid the wrong, and sincerely put it into practice.

28. What does "giving in the way of Allah" mean?

Giving away means spending the wealth and opportunities one has in the way of Allah. In recompense for spending in His way as defined in the verse, "Whatever is surplus to your needs" (Surat al-Baqara: 219), Allah promises this person Paradise in the Hereafter and to compensate for what he gives in this world:

Say: "My Lord expands the provision of any of His servants He wills or restricts it. But anything you ex-

pend will be replaced by Him. He is the Best of Providers." (Surah Saba': 39)

... [those who] give of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a transaction which will not prove profitless. (Surah Fatir: 29)

29. What is the best attitude while giving away? How should one give?

Allah informs us that one may give away his wealth "secretly and openly" (Surat al-Baqara: 274). Besides this, Allah states that those who give away should not do so to "show off", nor should they demand gratitude or insult others after spending their wealth. Allah reminds us that those who spend their wealth just to show off to other people shall have no reward:

Correct and courteous words accompanied by forgiveness are better than a charitable deed followed by insulting words. Allah is Rich Beyond Need, All-Forbearing. You who believe! Do not nullify your charitable deeds by demands for gratitude or insulting words, like him who spends his wealth, showing off to people and not believing in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is that of a smooth rock coated with soil, which, when heavy rain falls on it, is left stripped bare. They have no power over anything they have earned. Allah does not guide disbelieving people. The metaphor of those who spend their wealth, desiring the pleasure of Allah and firmness for themselves, is that of a garden on a hillside. When heavy rain falls on it, it doubles its produce; and if heavy rain does not fall, there is dew. Allah sees what you do. (Surat al-Baqara: 263-265)

30. What is the reprisal in the sight of Allah for hoarding wealth or being tight-fisted?

Some people hoard up their wealth and money throughout their entire life and do not use it for good causes as defined in the Qur'an. With insatiable greed, they persistently try to possess more and more wealth. As for what they gain, they do not spend it in the way of Allah, or to feed those in need, but just to enjoy themselves. They hoard up much more than they will ever need and do not use it for good deeds apart from some small expenditures which serves as a means to show off. These people will have a terrible reprisal in the Hereafter, which is related in the Surat at-Tawba as follows:

... As for those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in the Way of Allah, give them the news of a painful punishment on the Day it is heated up in the fire of Hell and their foreheads, sides and backs are branded with it [when it will be said]: "This is what you hoarded for yourselves, so taste what you were hoarding!" (Surat at-Tawba: 34-35)

Those who hoard their wealth and are parsimonious are in fact those who are greedily attached to this world with what they possess and who cannot grasp that Allah has given them wealth and assets to try them in this world. Yet Allah is the One Who is rich beyond need, and is the true owner of all wealth. It is man who needs a reward from Allah by spending in His way. This fact is related in a Qur'anic verse as follows:

Here you are then: people who are called upon to spend in the Way of Allah and then some of you are tight-fisted! But whoever is tight-fisted is only tight-fisted to himself. Allah is Rich and you are poor. If you turn away, He will replace you with a people other than yourselves and they will not be like you. (Surah Muhammad: 38)

31. Will wealth be of any use in the Hereafter?

Neither being rich nor possessing power in this world will be of any use in the Hereafter. No matter how much money or wealth one has in the world, this wealth will not be of any use when one is dead and buried in the earth. If he is a disbeliever, he will be treated in the same way as all other unbelievers and will be flung into the punishment of Hell. These people who used to get special treatment due to their wealth will be humiliated in the Hereafter with an incomparable humiliation. This is because they were too proud because of their worldly wealth and rejected the signs of Allah. In the Hereafter people will be treated based on their faith in Allah, fear and awareness of Him and the intention behind the deeds they performed. The wealth or power which they used to have in the world will not grant them any privilege. The following verse confirms that wealth is of no value in the presence of Allah:

We never sent a warner into any city without the affluent people in it saying, "We reject what you have been sent with." They also said, "We have more wealth and children. We are not going to be punished." Say: "My Lord expands the provision of any-

one He wills or restricts it. But the majority of mankind do not know it." It is not your wealth or your children that will bring you near to Us—only in the case of people who believe and act rightly; such people will have a double recompense for what they did. They will be safe from all harm in the high halls of Paradise. (Surah Saba': 34-37)

32. How does one avoid the dangers of self-exoneration?

The self commands man to do evil. This fact is related in Surat ash-Shams as follows:

By the soul and the One Who proportioned and inspired it with knowledge of depravity and with its sense of duty, he who purifies it has succeeded, he who covers it up has failed. (Surat ash-Shams: 7-10)

Another verse pointing out the capacity of the soul to command to do evil is about the Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him), It is told in the verse that when a lie was forged against him though he was innocent, he said:

I do not say my self was free from blame. The self indeed commands to evil acts—except for those my Lord has mercy on. My Lord, He is Forgiving, Merciful. (Surah Yusuf: 53)

As it is told in the verse, the self always commands to evil. For that reason it would not be appropriate to try to defend oneself or to prove one's rightness immediately, for one might have momentarily and unawares followed what the self desired. What should indeed be done in such a case is to stop and reflect first before acting. When a person reflects

sincerely and honestly, he may see that he in fact did wrong in many instances in which he assumed himself to be right.

Perceiving things in this way is an enormous gain to the believer, because seeing and admitting one's own mistakes and amending one's wrongdoing is the first step in seeking the forgiveness of Allah. Otherwise, no matter how right a person may appear to be in the eyes of people, however hard he tries to vindicate his soul and avoids attributing any mistakes to himself, Allah knows the truth. And this truth he will meet in the Hereafter.

It is a good action in the sight of Allah to reproach oneself, to admit one's own imperfections and failings and to turn to Allah in order to eliminate them, rather than to defend one's lower self.

33. How can one avoid being swept away by the life of this world?

This world is a particular place created by Allah where man is being tested and is being prepared for the abode of the Hereafter. Part of this test is that it is made to seem fair and attractive to man. Some features of this world that are alluring to people are stated in a Qur'anic verse as follows:

To mankind the love of worldly appetites is painted in glowing colours: women and children, and heaped-up mounds of gold and silver, and horses with fine markings, and livestock and fertile farmland. All that is merely the enjoyment of the life of this world. The best homecoming is in the presence of Allah. (Surah Al 'Imran: 14)

As stated in the verse, invaluable ornaments, wealth, profitable commerce, charming and wealthy mates, healthy

children, pleasing houses, cars in any colour or model, assorted food are the values that attach man to this world. Yet man should remember that these are bestowed by Allah as a temporary benefit, all of them are merely the perishable goods of this world and, as announced in the verse above, "the best homecoming" is in the Hereafter. As for these benefits he is given, he should not squander them during his worldly life, but use them in making preparation for the Hereafter. Those who behave in accordance with this absolute truth are not swept away by the life of the world.

34. What will be the end of those who are satisfied with the life of this world?

Some people are greedily attached to the world, forgetting that it is imperfect and short-lived. Allah characterises these people in the Qur'an as follows:

As for those who do not expect to meet Us and are content with the life of this world and at rest in it, and those who are heedless of Our Signs, their shelter will be the Fire because of what they earned. (Surah Yunus: 7-8)

Those who are blindly attached to this world, forgetting their Creator, should know that in reprisal for what they do, they will suffer the eternal punishment of Hell. These people, on account of preferring a very short life of enjoyment, will lose an endless life of bliss. In the Hereafter they will not, even for a single instant, be able to enjoy those benefits which they are so greedily attached to in this world.

35. Can a person spend his entire life for Allah? In order to understand how to spend one's entire life for

Allah, one first needs to know the real meaning of life. Allah informs us about the real meaning of the life of this world in the Qur'an:

He Who created death and life to test which of you is best in action. He is the Almighty, the Ever-Forgiving. (Surat al-Mulk: 2)

As stated in this verse, everybody is tested in his deeds. Those who do good desire to earn the pleasure of Allah and to enter Paradise. And they know that they therefore need to spend every moment of their lives engaged in such an effort.

Some people, however, are mistaken on this point. They think that only observing some religious practices and avoiding what is forbidden are for the pleasure of Allah, and that the rest of the time is not connected to the religion. In fact man should try to earn the good pleasure of Allah at every single moment, in every word, in every thought and in every deed. Someone who intends to devote every moment of his life to Allah always speaks in a manner that will be pleasing to Him. For example, everyone in the world works and earns money. Yet he who lives for Allah works in order to serve His religion and, setting aside of his earnings for himself only what he needs, spends the rest in deeds that would please Him. This person always talks in the way that would please Allah most. He reminds people of Allah, forbids them what is wrong and commands them to do what is right. He makes friendships with those whom Allah would be pleased with. While making this selection, he does not take into consideration his worldly interests or the criteria of people who do not live by Islamic morals. At every instant, he considers how he can best earn the good pleasure of Allah.

To spend one's entire life for Allah is among the basic demands of the religion. Therefore Allah commands believers to:

Say: "My prayer and my rites, my living and my dying, are for Allah alone, the Lord of all the worlds." (Surat al-An'am: 162)

36. Why should man not deem himself self-sufficient?

The main purpose of a person who fears Allah is to be pleasing to Him. This person knows that he needs to improve himself and to engage in a continual effort to be better in behaviour; virtues such as sincerity, honesty, diligence, self-sacrifice and modesty have no "upper limits". In other words no one can say, "I have achieved model behaviour, it couldn't be any better than this."

A person's spiritual improvement will be rapid if he sees himself as imperfect and seeks to become better. Such a person purifies himself of his wrongdoings and progresses towards even better behaviour every single day. If someone sees himself as sufficient in any matter, then he will not attempt to seek or make any improvement. As a matter of fact, he is unable to find his faults and imperfections and so cannot amend them, which prevents improvement. Allah states in the Qur'an, that imagining oneself to be self-sufficient is a serious mistake:

No indeed! Truly man is unbridled seeing himself as self-sufficient. (Surat al-'Alaq: 6-7)

For that reason man should not deem himself sufficient, neither in performing good deeds that would please Allah nor in spiritually improving himself. Using the reason and conscience that Allah granted him he should always ask for what is better and the superior, and make a sincere effort to attain it.

37. Is there any compulsion in religion?

The answer to this question is given clearly in a Qur'anic verse as follows:

There is no compulsion where the religion is concerned. Right guidance has become clearly distinct from error. Anyone who rejects false gods and believes in Allah has grasped the Firmest Handhold, which will never give way. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Surat al-Baqara: 256)

As stated in the verse, no-one can be compelled to live by Islamic morals. Conveying the existence of Allah and the morals of the Qur'an to other people is a duty that believers are charged with. Believers who desire to perform their duty spread the message of religion in order to guide other people; yet knowing that they cannot do anything unless Allah wills, they leave the rest to Him. Since the existence of Allah and of the Hereafter is evident, it is extremely easy to discriminate between the path that Allah calls to and the indecency that satan calls to. Everyone can easily see which of these is better and beneficial. Therefore, those who fear Allah follow the right path most willingly and with pleasure.

Allah states in many verses that believers' only duty is to convey the truth. This is related in a Qur'anic verse as follows:

If they argue with you, say, "I have submitted myself completely to Allah, and so have all who follow me." Tell both those who have been given the Book as well as the unlettered, "Have you become Muslim?" If they become Muslim, they have been guided. If they turn away, you are only responsible for transmission. Allah sees His servants. (Surah Al 'Imran: 20)

38. What does "competing to do good deeds" mean?

People are distinguished from each other by their level of faith. There are people who have no faith in Allah, whereas there are those who, due to the strong fear and awareness of Allah they have, always try to do good deeds and serve the religion. These people who aim to attain the contentment of Allah in each instant of their lives are characterised in the Qur'an as follows:

Such people are truly racing to good deeds, and they outstrip [others] therein. (Surat al-Muminun: 61)

These people, at every instant, aim to serve the religion and perform deeds that will be beneficial both to the religion and to believers. In brief, in every step they take, they try to do good which Allah will be pleased with. They, hence, know that they need to reflect, pray, seek and put into practice the behaviour which earns the good pleasure of Allah. For that reason they are profound thinkers who honour Allah's greatness with the reverence that is due to Him to draw nearer to Him. They do not let themselves spend even a minute without thinking of the Hereafter, and are never oblivious to it. Therefore do not engross themselves in the temporal goods of this world. Since they possess pure faith, they spend every instant of their lives for Allah and are not heedless. It strengthens their awareness of Allah to reflect on Him and on His greatness. As Allah commands in the

Qur'an, they work on and still toil when they finish a task. These people are the "forerunners", whom Allah promises Paradise:

And the forerunners, the forerunners. Those are the ones brought near in Gardens of Delight. (Surat al-Waqi'a: 10-12)

39. What do believers show patience in?

One of the distinguishing attributes of believers is their patience. However, the concept of patience that we learn from the Qur'an does not mean endurance at times of hardship. What is recommended in the Qur'an is to display patience when it comes to choosing the kind of behaviour that will be pleasing to Allah, in all situations and at all times.

Allah tests believers with a variety of situations, such as hunger, fear and loss of goods or prosperity. The believer described in the Qur'an perseveringly seeks the good pleasure of Allah regardless of the circumstances. In prosperity he gives thanks to Allah; in case of difficulty and hardship he puts his trust in Him. For him the benefits of the religion always take precedence over personal benefits. He patiently fulfils every detail of a virtuous character throughout his entire life. He is sincere, honest, generous, diligent and eager; he always speaks with generosity and gentleness, and always tries to serve the religion. In short, he applies everything that Allah points out as being good. As a reward for this, Allah gives His patient servants glad tidings:

We will test you with a certain amount of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and life and fruits. But give good news to the patient: Those who, when disaster strikes them, say, "We belong to Allah and to Him we will return." Those are the people who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord; they are the ones who are guided. (Surat al-Baqara: 155-157)

40. What is the purpose of the wealth granted to unbelievers?

The wealth and power that unbelievers possess have always led them to even further insolence. This is a mystery explained in the Quran. Allah informs believers that the wealth of unbelievers is only worldly and commands believers not to be impressed by them in any way. He also promises that He will increase their disbelief with this wealth, and ultimately drive them altogether into Hell.

A Qur'anic verse relating to this significant fact states:

Do not let their wealth and children impress you. Allah merely wants to punish them by them during their life in this world and for them to expire while they are disbelieving. (Surat at-Tawba: 55)

41. Why aren't unbelievers repaid with immediate destruction for their disbelief?

Since this world is a testing place, Allah lets everyone live long enough to pay heed and to correct their behaviour. Until this specified time expires, the punishment of unbelievers in the Hereafter is deferred, so that they won't have any excuse to offer when they enter the Fire. Those who are resolute in their disbelief are given opportunities to reveal their evil as much as possible. Thus enough evidence is gathered for them to meet the reprisal in Hell for what they have earned.

Those who disbelieve should not imagine that the extra time We grant to them is good for them. We only allow them more time so they will increase in evildoing. They will have a humiliating punishment. (Surah Al 'Imran: 178)

42. What end awaits unbelievers in this world?

Allah has made ready for the unbelievers a painful punishment in the Hereafter which is everlasting. Yet besides this, there are various punishments for unbelievers in this world too. These are a sort of preliminary to the endless punishment that they will receive later. They also come in the nature of a warning from Allah to lead them to regret, to pay heed and to reorient themselves to the right path. Allah announces the punishment He will give in the world and the reason for it as follows:

We will give them a taste of lesser punishment before the greater punishment, so that hopefully they will turn back. (Surat as-Sajda: 21)

The most significant reason for the disbelief of unbelievers is their passionate attachment to the life of this world and the fact that they repudiate the truth. The punishment that Allah has made ready for the unbelievers in this world deprives them of all worldly blessings. Some of these punishments mentioned in the Qur'an are as follows:

- On a nation of unbelievers animals such as locusts, lice and frogs are sent down. (Surat al-A'raf: 133)
- Unbelievers are seized with drought and scarcity of fruits, with trouble in economics. (Surat al-A'raf: 130, Surat an-Nahl: 112)

- Those who gloat with their wealth and property, such as Qarun and the wealthy garden owner, lose all their wealth with personal destruction. (Surat al-Qasas: 76-82, Surat al-Kahf: 32-43)
- Unbelievers are made the most miserable. (Surat al-A'la: 11-12)
- They live filled with false hopes. (Surat an-Nisa': 120)
- Allah makes their breast narrow and constricted; He defiles them. (Surat al-An'am: 125)

43. Who will enter the Fire?

In many verses of the Qur'an those who will enter Hell are classified with certain characteristics. Some of the characteristics of these people can be listed as follows: those who disbelieve in Allah: who associate others with Allah: those who take other gods together with Allah; those who claim to be god (Surely Allah is beyond that); those who take others as false gods, saviours or guides instead of Allah; those who hinder men from the path of Allah; those who look for crookedness in the path of Allah; those who conceal any of the revelations of the Book of Allah; those who prevent His name from being celebrated; those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully; those who do wrong to people; those who devour usury; those who slayed the prophets unjustly; those who slay those among men who enjoin justice; those who oppose the messengers of Allah; those who kill men deliberately; those who devour the property of men by false means; those who treat their religion as a game and a diversion; those who make a mockery of Allah's Signs and of His

messengers; those who do not believe that they will be raised up and do not believe in the Hereafter; those who do not believe that they will be gathered to Allah; those who are pleased with the life of this world and are content with it; those who do not strive to perform the prayers that Allah ordains for them without any acceptable excuse; those who do not fear Allah in the way they should fear Him; those who do not establish regular prayer; those who devise evil plots; those who cause corruption; those who seek discord; who deny Allah's Signs; those who are too proud to worship Allah; those who slander believers; those who spread fornication: those who conceal the truth and are liars: those who do not preserve the limits of Allah; those who consume forbidden foods; those who do not give full measure and full weight with justice; those who are arrogant, tight-fisted, coarse, selfish, ungrateful, treacherous, boastful, indecent and obdurate...

Allah has announced that every unbeliever who possesses these attributes and remains so until death will enter Hell and will be repaid with painful punishment for what he used to do. It is stated in Surah Qaf as follows:

Hurl into Hell every obdurate disbeliever, impeder of good, doubt-causing aggressor, who set up another god together with Allah. Hurl him into the terrible punishment. (Surah Qaf: 24-26)

44. Will remorse in Hell be of any benefit?

Allah informs all mankind through His messengers and His revelations about what they should do. He does not destroy any city without giving it prior warning as a reminder (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 208). Everyone lives long enough to take

heed and to learn what to do. People who persist in their unbelief despite being cognisant of everything they have to do and having enough time to be mindful, thus, deserve to stay in Hell forever. However, having entered Hell, these people will feel a deep regret for what they did in the world, which cannot possibly be compensated for. Begging to return to the world in order to compensate for the things they did will be of no help to the unbelievers, for they refused to grasp the opportunity they were given before and will have missed their chance forever. Allah relates the helplessness of these unbelievers in the Qur'an as follows:

They will shout out in it, "Our Lord! Take us out! We will act rightly, differently from the way we used to act!" Did We not let you live long enough for anyone who was going to pay heed? And did not the warner come to you? Taste it then! There is no helper for the wrongdoers. (Surah Fatir: 37)

45. Are there any other punishments in Hell apart from the Fire?

Allah informs us in the Qur'an that unbelievers will be flung into Hellfire, and will have garments of fire and tar. (Surat al-Hajj: 19) Yet the punishment of Hell is not limited to fire:

- There are cudgels made of iron (Surat al-Hajj: 21);
- people will be yoked together in chains (Surah Ibrahim: 49);
- they will be dragged along and will have shackles and chains around their necks (Surah Ghafir: 71);
- the punishment of boiling water will be poured on

their heads (Surat ad-Dukhan: 48);

- they will wear shirts of tar (Surah Ibrahim: 50);
- they will be flung into a narrow place in it, shackled together in chains (Surat al-Furqan: 13);
- they will be firewood and fuel for Hellfire (Surat al-Jinn: 15, Surah Al 'Imran: 10).

What is listed here is in fact only a small portion of the types of punishment of Hell. In Hell there are punishments that are so painful that no one on earth can ever imagine. Besides the regret they feel, the spiritual pain that Allah inflicts on the companions of the Fire will everlastingly burn their hearts. Allah draws attention to this spiritual pain in the Qur'an as follows:

And what will convey to you what the Shatterer is? The kindled Fire of Allah reaching right into the heart. (Surat al-Humaza: 5-7)

46. What will the unbelievers be given as food and drink in Hell?

The companions of Hell, who are removed from the mercy and grace of Allah on account of their excesses in the world, will not be given any blessing in the Hereafter. Unbelievers who will meet only the punishment of Hell will call out to believers, begging them to throw down some of the blessings that are endlessly bestowed on them (Surat al-A'raf: 50).

Nevertheless, instead of these blessings which are forbidden to them, the unbelievers will be given food which chokes, causes pain, and in no way satisfies hunger, and drinks which intensify their thirst. What is more, although they are of no good to them, they will long for this agonising food and drink.

Descriptions in the Qur'an of the food and drink that are prepared for unbelievers in Hell convey the indescribable punishment and the sickening horror of their situation:

The tree of Az-Zaqqum (Surat ad-Dukhan: 43-46) and bitter thorny bush (Surat al-Ghashiyya: 6-7) are among the food of Hell. Scalding water (Surat al-Waqi'a: 54-55), pus to drink (Surah Ibrahim: 16-17) and exuding pus (Surat al-Haqqa: 36) are among the drinks of Hell.

47. Is Hell divided into ranks?

In Hell, everyone will be repaid in full for what they did. Certainly people will be ranked according to the intensity of their disbelief, the confusion they stirred up concerning the believers and Allah's religion, and according to the seriousness of the wrongdoing they used to commit in the world. For example, it is declared in the Qur'an that hypocrites, the main enemies of believers against whom they hatch secret plans, will be in the lowest level of the Fire (Surat an-Nisa': 145). Likewise, it is stated in the verse below that all unbelievers will certainly enter the Fire and, with the justice of Allah, will be paid in full for what they did:

Those are people of whom the statement about the nations, both of jinn and men, who passed away before them, has also proved true; truly they were the lost. Everyone will be ranked according to what they did. We will pay them in full for their actions and they will not be wronged. (Surat al-Ahqaf: 18-19)

Besides this, unless Allah wills otherwise, people will not be forgiven and released from Hell after a given period of punishment for their wrong actions. Every unbeliever who enters Hell will remain in it for eternity, forever (Surat al-Baqara: 80-81).

48. Do the people of Paradise and the people of Hell see each other?

Allah mentions in the Qur'an that the people of Paradise and the people of the Fire will see each other and narrates the dialogues between them. Seeing each other brings a great increase in gratitude for those in Paradise, while for those in Hell it increases their yearning and regret. It is stated in the Qur'an that the people of Paradise see those in Hell. A part of the dialogue between them is narrated as follows:

One of them will say, "I used to have a friend who would say to me, 'Are you one of those who say that it is true: that when we have died and are turned to dust and bones, we will face a Reckoning?" [And] he will add, "Would you like to look [and see him]?" So he will look down and see him in the midst of the Blazing Fire and say, "By Allah, you almost ruined me! If it were not for the blessing of my Lord, I would surely be [now] among those who are given over [to suffering]." (Surat as-Saffat: 51-57)

The Companions of the Fire will call out to the Companions of the Garden, "Throw down some water to us or some of what Allah has given you as provision." They will say, "Allah has forbidden them to the disbelievers." (Surat al-A'raf: 50)

49. What will life in Paradise be like?

Descriptions of Paradise in the Qur'an use terms that are familiar to us from the world we live in. Residences in Paradise are described, magnificent furniture and dazzlingly beautiful goods are mentioned. Besides these, descriptions are given of the jewellery and the garments worn in Paradise, and of the food and drink provided there. Great emphasis is placed on the surpassing beauty and incomparable magnificence of what the believers will enjoy. It is also declared that, in Paradise, man will be given anything that he may think of and beauties that he cannot even imagine. The biggest difference between the life of this world and the life of Paradise is undoubtedly the fact that none of the imperfection of this world exists in the Garden. Some of the delicacies and wonders of Paradise are mentioned as follows:

- A great and magnificent kingdom;
- Lofty chambers and residences;
- Raised couches:
- Finest garments made of silk and brocade;
- Bracelets made of gold and silver; jewels and pearls;
- Gardens with rivers flowing under them;
- Cool, refreshing shade;
- Platters and cups of gold;
- Couches lined with rich brocade;
- Green quilts and exquisite rugs;
- Rivers of milk whose taste will never change, rivers of honey of undiluted purity;

• Vessels of crystalline silver and many others...

Paradise is evidently a place of extraordinary perfection where man can find the greatest of pleasures. Allah relates in a verse of Qur'an the splendour of Paradise as follows:

Wherever you look, you will see pleasure and great dominion. (Surat al-Insan: 20)

50. What will the spiritual environment of Paradise be like?

Paradise is a blessing that Allah bestows on believers in return for their good behaviour and good actions which they performed in the world. It is stated in the Qur'an that in Paradise, where all kinds of beauty are presented, there is nothing at all to disturb people:

- There is complete security;
- There is no rancour or hatred;
- There is no chatter or lies;
- There is no tiredness or weariness;
- There is no fear or sadness;
- There are sweet and lovely people;
- There is no growing old, everybody is of the same age;
- Paradise is a place where people will be surrounded by the greatest pleasures.

What is listed here is certainly only a few examples which illustrate the security and peace of Paradise. Allah declares that whereas unbelievers will suffer indescribable torment, believers will be in a great physical and spiritual comfort and peace:

You will see the wrongdoers afraid of what they have earned, when it is about to land right on top of them, whereas those who believe and do right actions will be in the lush Meadows of the Gardens. They will have whatever they wish for with their Lord. That is the great favour. (Surat ash-Shura: 22)

51. How does one take one's self as one's god?

One who unwisely takes his self to be his god is one who considers his self-interests and his comfort more important than the common interests of the religion, whereas a truly and sincerely devout person takes only Allah as his god and acts only in ways that would please Him. This applies to all conditions. Such a person would never ignore the benefits of the religion and the limits of Allah even when he is sick, or suffering hardship or even if his self-interests would be completely ruined.

However, if a person cannot make even a minor self-sacrifice for the sake of religion, or if he prefers what appears fine to his self leaving the religion aside when he faces a difficulty, then this person is seeking to please his self and thus has taken his self as a false deity.

Allah describes those who, in deviance, take their own selves to be their god in the Qur'an as follows:

Have you seen him who takes his whims and desires to be his god—whom Allah has misguided knowingly, sealing up his hearing and his heart and placing a blindfold over his eyes? Who then will guide him after Allah? So will you not pay heed? (Surat al-Jathiyya: 23)

52. Is satan continuously trying to misguide man?

Satan is endlessly occupied in trying to misguide man from the path of Allah. He does not cease from it even for a single moment and tries all kinds of methods. He approaches man via his weaknesses, trying to make him behave the way he wants him to. It is related in the Qur'an that satan will actively strive to delude mankind:

... Satan wants to misguide them far away. (Surat an-Nisa': 60)

He [i.e., satan] said [to Allah], "By Your misguidance of me, I will lie in ambush for them on your straight path. Then I will come at them, from in front of them and behind them, from their right and from their left. You will not find most of them thankful." He [Allah] said, "Get out of it, reviled and driven out. As for those of them who follow you, I will fill up Hell with every one of you." (Surat al-A'raf: 16-18)

Satan is the greatest enemy of mankind. He strives to keep mankind away from Islamic morals by means of whisperings and presenting right as wrong and wrong as right. As stated in the above verse, he seeks to prevent people from being thankful to Allah. Those who follow satan, however, as declared in the Qur'an, will certainly be the losers. That is why people should be alert to the sly ambushes of satan and studiously avoid obeying him.

It should be remembered that satan can influence only those who do not have sincere faith. People who have certain faith in Allah, have certainty about the Hereafter and the Day of Reckoning and are not affected by satan's attempts to influence them. If ever they feel such an effect, they immediately take refuge in Allah. Allah states that Satan is extremely weak against believers:

As for those who guard against evil, when they are bothered by visitors from satan, they remember and immediately see clearly. (Surat al-A'raf: 201)

Satan himself, admits that he would not have a misguiding power over believers who are sincerely devoted to Allah. This fact is stated in the Qur'an as follows:

He said, "My Lord, because You misled me, I will make things on the earth seem good to them and I will mislead them all, every one of them, except Your servants among them who are sincere." (Surat al-Hijr: 39-40)

53. Is everything I think about known to Allah?

Allah knows about everything, including what one is thinking about because one of the attributes of Allah is "Al Habir" (All-Aware), which means that Allah knows the inside truth and concealed aspects of everything. One can hide one's thoughts from the people who surround one but not from Allah. As stated in the verse, "Allah—Him from Whom nothing is hidden, either on earth or in heaven." (Surah Al 'Imran: 5) In another verse it is stated as follows:

He is Allah in the heavens and in the earth. He knows what you keep secret and what you make public and He knows what you earn. (Surat al-An'am: 3)

Man is dependent on time and space, whereas Allah is exalted above all these deficiencies. It is Allah Who creates time, space, all mankind and all the events that people see occurring. He alone determines the fate of everyone and everything. Therefore, Allah knows man inside out, including all our thoughts. As stated in the Qur'an, "... He knows what the heart contains." (Surat al-Mulk: 13)

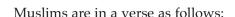
54. Is it enough for one to have a chaste heart and to be benevolent in order to enter Paradise?

Every person or every society has its own understanding of "goodness" and "kindness". It is "goodness" for some people to raise children to a high educational standard, or to be a member of a charity for some others, or to work for an animal-rights movement for others.

Deceiving themselves in this way, people try to escape their true responsibility. In fact, everyone well knows that on the Day of Reckoning he will be judged according to whether he followed the Qur'an or not. However, as he avoids following the commands of Allah, he pretends to be ignorant of this fact. One who does not run away from this responsibility and who accepts the reality that he is accountable according to Qur'anic criteria knows that the real meaning of "goodness" can only be found in the Qur'an since the Qur'an contains the commands of our Creator Allah.

"Having a chaste heart" is not what one essentially needs in order to gain Paradise, but to strictly follow the Book which contains the commands of Allah. In other words, living in one's own world, without causing any harm or being covetous of the property, wealth or honour of others does not qualify one for Paradise. In addition to these things, one also needs to possess other good traits and attributes that Allah has specified in the Qur'an.

Allah informs us what real goodness is and who the real



It is not a virtue to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, the truly virtuous are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who establish prayer and pay alms; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who guard against evil. (Surat al-Baqara: 177)

The measure of goodness in the sight of Allah is explained with an example in another verse as follows:

Do you make the giving of water to the pilgrims and looking after the Masjid al-Haram the same as believing in Allah and the Last Day and striving in the Way of Allah? They are not equal in the sight of Allah. Allah does not guide wrongdoing people. (Surat at-Tawba: 19)

Those who believe and emigrate and strive in the Way of Allah with their wealth and themselves have a higher rank with Allah. They are the ones who are victorious. (Surat at-Tawba: 20)

55. How does one emigrate to Allah?

To emigrate to Allah means to turn only to Allah and live in the way He wills, leaving all past wrongdoing, wrong thoughts or habits, in short, leaving behind everything that does not accord with a proper understanding of Allah and His Book.

The Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was a Muslim who emigrated to Allah, quitting the life style of his people once he saw the truth. The Prophet Lut (pbuh) is another messenger who turned towards Allah, showing a virtuous character like the Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh). This conduct of the Prophet Lut (pbuh) is related in the Qur'an as follows:

And Lut believed in him [Ibrahim]. He said, "I will emigrate to [the service of] my Lord. He is the Almighty, the All Wise." (Surat al-'Ankabut: 26)

56. What does the phrase "the religion of our fathers" mean in the Qur'an?

The commands of Islam and how a believer should behave are thoroughly defined in the Qur'an. The phrase "religion of fathers" means a made-up religion based on past habits, traditions or hearsay, acting by many rules that have nothing to do with the commands of the Qur'an. It is this "religion of fathers" which is the source of superstitious beliefs and practices that are not mentioned anywhere in the Qur'an and in the hadiths.

People who live by the "superstitious religion of fathers" are found in great numbers within ignorant societies. People who live in these societies follow various prayers and rituals without questioning why they do it, or examining the way they have been inherited from their forefathers, and simply assume that they are performing satisfactory and acceptable religious acts. Quite clearly, their purpose is not to gain the good pleasure of Allah, but instead to preserve the corrupt inheritance they have received from previous generations. The example of the people of the Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh)



Recite to them the story of Ibrahim when he said to his father and his people, "What do you worship?" They said, "We worship idols and will continue to cling to them." He said, "Do they hear you when you call or do they help you or do you harm?" They said, "No, but this is what we found our fathers doing." He said, "Have you really thought about what you worship, you and your fathers who came before? They are all my enemies—except for the Lord of all the worlds: He Who created me and guides me; He Who gives me food and gives me drink; and when I am ill, it is He Who heals me; He Who will cause my death, then give me life; He Who I sincerely hope will forgive my mistakes on the Day of Reckoning." (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 69-82)

As seen in the above verses, the Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) departed from the false religion of his people, turned only to Allah and communicated to his people that Allah is the only God and the only religion to follow is His religion.

Many messengers have been accused by their people of rejecting the religion of their fathers and of aiming to destroy the religion of that time, and have been threatened by its followers. The following Qur'anic verses relate to this theme:

They said, "Have you come to us to turn us from what we found our fathers doing, and to gain greatness in the land? We do not believe you." (Surah Yunus: 78)

When they are told: "Follow what Allah has sent down", they say, "No, we will follow what we found our fathers doing." What! Even if satan is calling them to the punishment of the Blazing Fire? (Surah Luqman: 21)

No, in fact they say, "We found our fathers following a religion and we are simply guided in their footsteps." (Surat az-Zukhruf: 22)

57. Are man and woman equals in Islam?

In the Qur'an, Allah refers to believers who have faith and do deeds of righteousness. In the sight of Allah the measure of value and superiority is not being a man or a woman, but to have faith and to perform good deeds. Everyone, with no exception, is responsible for their own fulfilment of Allah's commands and the precepts of Islam. It is stated in the Qur'an that the reward for people's good actions, whether male or female, will be paid on equal terms:

Anyone, male or female, who does right actions and is a believer, will enter Paradise. They will not be wronged by so much as the tiniest speck. (Surat an-Nisa': 124)

Besides this, Allah has informed us in other verses that a person's heedfulness (*taqwa*) is the important thing; not their gender. In other words, fearing Allah, protecting the self from all kinds of sin, disobedience, corruption and deviation, and avoiding all kinds of evil which will lead to destruction in the Hereafter are of the real issues of importance:

Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in Allah's sight is the one who best performs his duty. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Surat al-Hujurat: 13)

58. How can the heart and eyes of a person be sealed?

The commands of Allah are clear in the Qur'an and anyone who is aware of them should fulfil these commands. If a person does not behave as he should in spite of being aware of Allah's guidance in the matter, then it means that he does not pay heed to his conscience. Therefore, his heart becomes hardened, his reason and conscience decline and after a while he can no longer see right from wrong. He cannot understand what is described in the Book of Allah and cannot see the truth. He cannot even perceive the end that awaits him.

Allah, in His verses, states that the hearts, ears and eyes of those who prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter, who use fallacious arguments to deny Allah's Signs, who fabricate lies against Allah, who only obey their lower selves, who become disbelievers after believing, who prefer to stay behind at the time of battle and who do not want to spend their wealth in the way of Allah although they are rich, will be sealed up and there will be heaviness on them. The Qur'an also states that these people are the people of Hell:

Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Surat al-Baqara: 7)

Those are the people whose hearts, hearing and sight Allah has sealed up. They are the unaware. There is no doubt that in the Hereafter they will be the losers. (Surat an-Nahl: 108-109)

59. What does corruption mean in the Qur'an?

Many examples are given in the Qur'an of corrupt people and their characteristics. Yet the basic attribute of a corrupt person is that they oppose Allah, His messengers and His books, attempt to set up obstacles to the religion and Muslims according to their own vile minds, and reject the limits of Allah. The attributes common to such people are described in the following verse:

As for those who disbelieved and barred access to the way of Allah, We will heap punishment on top of their punishment because of the corruption they brought about. (Surat an-Nahl: 88)

It is mentioned in the Qur'an that these people, who try to prevent others from the way of Allah, disturb peace and harmony on earth, stir up trouble, undermine the commands and prohibitions of Allah, and give short weights and measures. Allah repays these people both in the world and in the Hereafter. He punishes them in many ways as declared in the above verse, and with His endless justice, repays with the punishment due to them everyone who tries to bring corruption.

60. Who are the hypocrites?

Hypocrites are defined in the Qur'an as people who pretend to believe, when in fact they don't, and who hope to take advantage of the believers among whom they live. Allah has informed us that hypocrites are corrupt people, who attempt to cause dissension among believers. In other words, they secretly aim to disturb the peace and harmony of believers. On account of this trait of theirs, they are described as "hypocrites" (*munafiqun*), meaning those who bring dissension and corruption (*nifaq*).

Another significant attribute of the hypocrites is that their real character only shows itself when the believers are facing difficulties, but at no other time do they reveal themselves. These people, who think that they are deceiving the believers are, in fact, themselves deceived. In the verse below Allah mentions the mistake that the hypocrites make:

Among the people there are some who say, "We believe in Allah and the Last Day", when they are not believers. They think they deceive Allah and those who believe. They deceive no one but themselves but they are not aware of it. There is a sickness in their hearts and Allah has increased their sickness. They will have a painful punishment on account of their denial. (Surat al-Baqara: 8-10)

Allah has promised them the most painful punishment since they have demonstrated how vile they are. Out of arrogance and for the sake of some worldly benefit, they rejected faith after accepting it, even though full knowledge about religion and the Hereafter had been conveyed to them and even though they knew the messenger and lived together with believers. Their punishment is also because they attempted to cause dissension, were hostile to the messenger and to the believers, and provoked the unbelievers into acting against the believers:

The hypocrites are in the lowest level of the Fire. You will not find anyone to help them. (Surat an-Nisa': 145)

61. Are there any signs that characterise hypocrites?

Allah has described various characteristics of the hypocrites in the Qur'an, and has warned the believers against this group of disbelievers. For this reason, the features of these vicious, furtive people are obvious to anyone who knows the Qur'an well. A cautious believer who is familiar with the Book of Allah never misses the signs of the hypocrites, who have sickness in their hearts. No matter how hard they try to conceal them, the signs they bear of their disbelief reveal themselves in their actions, in their speech and in the way they react to events. Believers cannot name a person who reveals such signs as a "definite hypocrite", but would be cautious of this person. Some of the signs that help to identify hypocrites are mentioned in the verses below:

The hypocrites think they deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them. When they get up to pray, they get up lazily, showing off to people, and only remembering Allah a very little. (Surat an-Nisa': 142)

The verse makes it clear that seeking to impress people by their behaviour and trying to show off are signs that can be perceived by believers. It is stated in a verse of the Qur'an that the real face of these people will ultimately be revealed and if Allah wills, they will be known by their features and by their manner of speech:

Or did those with sickness in their hearts imagine that Allah would not expose their malevolence? If We wished, We would show them to you and you would know them by their mark and know them by

their ambivalent speech. Allah knows your actions. (Surah Muhammad: 29-30)

Our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) defines the signs that characterise hypocrites thus:

The signs of the hypocrite are three: when he speaks he lies, when he promises he breaks his promise and when he is entrusted he betrays the trust. (Bukhari and Muslim)

62. Who is an "ignorant person" according to the Qur'an?

The adjective "ignorant" as used in the Qur'an has a different meaning to what is generally understood. Ignorance expressed in the Qur'an means being unaware of the reason for one's creation, being unaware of the exalted attributes of our Creator Allah and the knowledge and wisdom contained in the Book which He has sent down, and being unaware of matters concerning the Hereafter and as a result of this ignorance adopting an unconscious life style.

The "ignorance" of people who do not accept Allah as the only true god and who do not follow the way He has sent with His messengers, is pointed out in the Qur'an as follows:

They said, "Have you come to us to divert us from our gods? Bring us what you have promised us if you are telling the truth." He said, "All knowledge is with Allah. I only transmit to you what I have been sent with. But I see that you are a people who are ignorant." (Surat al-Ahqaf: 22-23)

63. How is the creation of mankind related in the Qur'an?

Allah gives ample information in the Qur'an about the creation of mankind. Most of this information contains facts that could not be known by the people of that time, but have recently been discovered by modern science; which is one of the innumerable scientific miracles of the Qur'an. Information given in the Qur'an about the creation of mankind can be summarised as follows:

• The nutritive fluid called semen, which contains sperm, is not composed only of sperms. On the contrary, semen is composed of a mixture of different fluids. It is pointed out in the Qur'an that semen is a "mingled" fluid. This fact was recently revealed through the aide of modern science.

We created man from a mingled drop to test him, and We made him hearing and seeing. (Surat al-Insan: 2)

• Only one of the millions of sperms in the semen fertilises the ovum. In other words, the essence of man is not the whole semen, but only a little part of it. It is stated in the Qur'an that man is not created from the whole semen, but from a mere part of it as follows:

Was he not a drop of ejaculated sperm? (Surat al-Qiyama: 37)

• Without wasting any time, the "zygote", the cell resulting from the union of the sperm and the ovum, starts duplicate to become a "piece of flesh". The zygote does not spend this developmental stage in a cavity, but clings to the mother's uterine wall and sticks there by means of its extensions, like roots anchoring a plant to the ground. This fact,

which has been recently revealed, was described in the Qur'an centuries ago:

Recite: In the Name of your Lord Who created, created man from alaq [i.e., something that clings]. (Surat al-'Alaq: 1-2)

• The womb is filled with the "amniotic fluid" surrounding the zygote which has started to develop. The importance of this fluid in which the foetus grows is to protect the foetus from external impact. The fact that the foetus develops in a secure place is also mentioned in the Qur'an:

Did We not create you from a base fluid, then place it in a secure repository for a recognised term? (Surat al-Mursalat: 20-22)

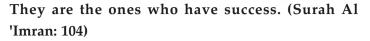
• Allah has given information about some of the stages of man's creation in Surat al-Muminun. Today it is a biologically proven fact that the developmental stages of man are exactly the same as what is described in the Qur'anic verses:

We created man from the purest kind of clay; then made him a drop in a secure receptacle; then formed the drop into an alaq (embryo) and formed the alaq into a lump and formed the lump into bones and clothed the bones in flesh; and then brought him into being as another creature. Blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators! (Surat al-Muminun: 12-14)

64. How can one call to the religion of Allah?

To communicate Islamic morals and good conduct to people is a command of Allah:

Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong.



In one verse Allah commands us to "Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition..." (Surat an-Nahl: 125). Calling to the religion of Allah is done by means of spreading the commands of the Qur'an with "wisdom and fair admonition". During this communication process, topics such as the existence and unity of Allah, and His matchless perfection in creation are explained so that the respect, love and fear that the person who is invited to religion has for Allah are enhanced. How a right acting person should react to events is described in detail. The nature of man's existence in this world is that he is tried here, that death is near, that he will be judged after death, and that he will either enter Paradise or Hell according to this judgement. All of this is also explained by showing how Allah has prepared the Garden and the Fire with His infinite justice, it is ensured that the listener will strive to avoid coming to an evil end. If people who learn about Allah, the Qur'an and the Hereafter through these descriptions act according to their consciences, then they will try to fulfil the commands of Allah to the best of their ability.

65. How can one think deeply in daily life?

Man thinks about so many things during the flow of daily life. For example, he may think about the things to be done on that day, where to go, the pleasant or the unpleasant things said about him, what he has done or will do at his job or school, or about long term plans. Many such thoughts may keep one's mind busy during the day. These are surely necessary thoughts, yet they should occupy the person only

as is necessary because there are much more important subjects on which man needs to reflect, things that concern one's eternal life.

Man should first think about how he and all the living beings that surround him have come into existence and how they continue to exist. Following this he should reflect on the attributes of Allah, Who created all these beings out of nothing and who maintains their existence. Then he should consider why our powerful and knowledgeable Lord, created him and what He wants him to do. He should develop the resolve to fulfil the commands of Allah in the best possible manner. In the meantime, he should always remember and act with awareness of the inescapable end which awaits him; death and the Hereafter. He should avoid frivolous thoughts, behaviour and speech which would distract him from these urgent matters, leading to heedlessness and thankless pursuits that are of no advantage to him in the next life.

The mental capacity of man is, in fact, very great. What is important is to know how to use it and not to let unnecessary thoughts occupy one's mind.

One can reflect on these important matters while continuing with daily life. One can even consider each separate topic quite deeply in relation to the relevant Qur'anic verses. For example, a person who spends 9 or 10 hours a day at work or at school encounters so many things that he could think about during that time; different people whose characteristics are described in the Qur'an, or factors concerning the various circumstances he may find himself in throughout the day. One's daily experiences give rise to hundreds of thought-provoking matters such as heeding the voice of

one's own conscience, not giving way to the urges of the self, struggling with feelings of jealousy, striving for modesty, putting trust in Allah and trying to be steadfast. Furthermore, one can ponder on these subjects in such a way as to increase the profundity of one's understanding. Therefore, the important point is to seize these opportunities whenever they present themselves.

In addition, one can also give thought to the kind of things that we often take for granted, varying from the blossoming of plants, to birds flying in the sky, from the benefit of the oxygen we breathe, to our hearts which continuously beat. One who has an enquiring mind that does not stop at the most obvious or facile explanations, will start to think deeply. Allah states in the Qur'an that believers are people of reflection:

In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are Signs for people with intelligence: those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth [saying]: "Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire." (Surah Al 'Imran: 190-191)

66. What prevents deep thinking?

One's attention may easily be distracted from a particular subject by other things. While thinking about an important matter, one may find oneself distracted by the ordinary things one intends to do the following day, or even by the pen one is holding in one's hand. Such distractedness him-

ders one from profound thinking.

Besides this, if a person does not have sufficient knowledge about a subject, the results of his thinking can only go so far. However, this need not represent a permanent obstacle to profound thinking. So long as one knows where to look and how one should go about it, one can always enhance one's knowledge if necessary.

Certainly one of the most significant barriers to proper thinking is over-familiarity with things and looking at things from a fixed perspective. A person who has constantly seen certain things happening since the day he was born will regard all these events as nothing unusual if he does not reflect on them thoroughly. Since he is used to seeing them everyday, he will be unable to appreciate the exceptional signs of creation in living things. He will not think about the ant, for instance, who easily carries 200-300 times its own weight for many metres, which means that he will never reflect on who has given the ant this physical mechanism which enables it to perform such hard work. By the same token, it will never dawn on him even for a single instant, that he could never achieve a comparable feat of strength. Another example might be the fine details in the structure of a bird's wing. He does not realise that the wing mechanism of the bird is an eminently unique work of creation. On the other hand, a person who is capable of thinking deeply can arrive at far reaching conclusions by taking up and examining even a single feather. He may even discover many significant new details ranging from the order in the feather, to the structure of the material that the feather is made of. His examination of this single feather can reveal to him the evidence of Allah's creation.

Yet it should be noted that one does not necessarily need to have great knowledge in order to break free from the common, habitual way of thinking. It would be sufficient to take a careful look at the living things one is surrounded by, the sky or one's own body. Allah draws attention to this point in the Qur'an with an example as follows:

Have they not looked at the sky above them: how We structured it and made it beautiful and how there are no fissures in it? And the earth: how We stretched it out and cast firmly embedded mountains onto it and caused luxuriant plants of every kind to grow in it, an instruction and a reminder for every penitent human being. And We sent down blessed water from the sky and made gardens grow by it and grain for harvesting and soaring datepalms with layered spathes, as provision for Our servants; by it We brought a dead land to life. That is how the Emergence will take place. (Surah Qaf: 6-11)

67. What is the loss of those who refrain from thinking?

In the Qur'an, Allah, advises man to think. In many verses He gives examples and asks "will you not pay heed?"

In fact, man has many opportunities in a day to take heed, to see the handiwork of Allah, to grasp the proofs in His creation and to praise Him with the understanding due to His glory and greatness. People who do not think, however, would fail to appreciate the importance of these openings, since to them they appear to be no more than ordinary events occurring in the flow of daily life.

For example, when such a person has an accident or catches a disease, it does not occur to him that it might be a special condition given to him to make him turn towards Allah. Yet, in the Qur'an, Allah mentions the hardships inflicted on people in order to make them think:

Do they not see that they are tried once or twice every year? But still they do not turn back. They do not pay heed. (Surat at-Tawba: 126)

Ignoring such reminders are disadvantageous only to the person himself. Furthermore, this would be only one of the innumerable losses incurred because of failure to reflect.

One who does not think cannot recognise the beauty that surrounds him. He cannot take pleasure in the subtleties of Allah's creation. He cannot grasp the proofs of the existence of Allah, the Creator of everything, and His exaltedness. This is the loss of a significant gift for man because he who cannot grasp that Allah is the Creator of everything of beauty in the world has only little faith, if any, in the Hereafter. Since he assumes that everything in this world will vanish with death, it is not possible for him to experience a genuine enjoyment of these temporary things either. On the contrary, he sees these pleasures merely as things that he will ultimately lose some day. This leads to feelings of distress and anxiety, instead of enjoying the gifts that Allah has bestowed on him.

68. What are the advantages of reflecting on created things?

Unlike people who refrain from thinking, one who

thinks that everything is created by Allah, sees His traces in every detail, and understands that everything is specifically created for mankind.

For example, reflecting on the exquisite systems possessed by living beings, including mankind, and remembering that the planet he lives on and the whole universe has been built by a supreme power, brings the person to a better knowledge of Allah. This softens the heart of the individual, and enhances the respect, love and awe that he feels for Allah. His faith increases, since he sees the signs of Allah's power and exaltedness in all living things, from trees to birds, to ants, to butterflies, and in every mechanism of their beings. Allah draws attention to the fact that only people who reflect will see and appreciate the evidence of the truth that is all around them:

In the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the night and day, and the ships which sail the seas for people's benefit, and the water which Allah sends down from the sky—by which He brings the earth to life when it was dead and scatters about in it creatures of every kind—and the varying direction of the winds, and the clouds subservient between heaven and earth, there are Signs for people who use their intellect. (Surat al-Baqara: 164)

A person who has certain faith in Allah comprehends that the world is not without a purpose and that there are important things he should reflect on. He knows that everything given to him is what Allah has bestowed on him, for which he gives thanks. He always thinks about the Hereafter and asks for forgiveness in order to be protected from the terror of that day.

The most important point about thinking is surely the fact that it is a gain which everyone makes with his own personal efforts. No one can force another to think. That is why one who thinks thoroughly helps only himself. Allah points out in the Qur'an that only people who reflect will take proper heed of the events they encounter, and that people who pay attention in this way can save their eternal lives. Allah states that some people avoid being reminded, and therefore will end up feeling endless regret:

Remind, then, if the reminder benefits. He who has fear will be reminded; but the most miserable will shun it, those who will roast in the Greatest Fire and then neither die nor live in it. (Surat al-A'la: 9-13)

69. How can one consider Allah with the consideration that is due to Him?

From the moment we wake up, we meet with the gifts that Allah has given to us. We can breathe, see, hear and think, our hearts beat, our cells are renewed. When we are hungry, we eat, enjoy the flavour and become stronger. When we are thirsty, we can quench our thirst. We can speak.

These are but a few of the gifts bestowed by Allah on mankind. The real important thing for a person who is aware of these gifts is to measure Allah with His true measure. Allah is the Glorious One, He is the Owner and Creator of everything. One needs to try to know Allah, reflecting on Him with His exalted attributes. Allah mentions the greatness of His glory in the Qur'an as follows:

They do not measure Allah with His true measure. The whole earth will be a mere handful for Him on

the Day of Rising, the heavens folded up in His right hand... (Surat az-Zumar: 67)

In the universe, from the creation of man to the stages of the occurrence of the Day of Rising, from the creation of the heavens to the existence of the seas and the mountains, there is a magnificence and infinite power, which belong to Allah alone, Who possesses all knowledge.

Allah has sent mankind revelations and prophets. He makes Himself known to us both by the matchless knowledge and artistry manisfested in every living thing that He creates, and by means of His books and prophets. The responsibility of mankind is to think as profoundly as one can in order to measure the exaltedness and greatness of Allah with the measure that is due to Him.

70. What should one do when one makes a mistake or forgets?

Man is created weak; he may forget things or may make mistakes. Not to forget and not to be wrong are peculiar only to Allah. What is important is to act on it when one remembers what is right. Allah gives an example of this behaviour in Surat al-An'am as follows:

... And if satan should ever cause you to forget, once you remember, do not stay sitting with the wrongdoers. (Surat al-An'am: 68)

As stated in the verse, one may, unawares or as a result of forgetting, behave in a way which is not good. That is why it would be inappropriate to feel sad or to be anxious because of things forgotten or because of mistakes made. What believers should do in such cases is to take refuge in the infinite mercy and forgivingness of Allah, and to pray as He has advised us in the Qur'an, "... Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake..." (Surat al-Baqara: 286).

71. Were messengers sent to every past nation?

Allah has informed us in the Qur'an that He sent a messenger to every past nation. Allah's messengers have invited their people to the religion of Allah, showed them the right way, conveyed the prohibitions of Allah, explained to them the closeness of death, the reason for their existence in the world and the existence of Paradise and Hell. With the justice of Allah, all mankind was warned and given good news by means of His messengers. This is a very important point which shows that everybody has heard the call of Allah, and that people will not be able to plead ignorance in the Hereafter. Allah enlightens mankind about this point in the following verse:

We have sent you with the truth bringing good news and giving warning. There is no community to which a warner has not come. (Surat Fatir: 24)

72. Why have unbelievers cast aspersions on all prophets throughout history?

The fact that prophets always communicate the religion of Allah never pleases unbelievers. This is because people who understand and fulfil what they are told demonstrate a change in themselves and move away from the superstitious systems of the unbelievers. For instance, since they know that they should fear only Allah after they become believers, it is no longer possible to frighten them with any other thing.

Since they always consider the benefits of the religion in every action they take, it becomes very difficult to intimidate them or lead them astray. These people, no matter what the conditions are and no matter what they are offered in return, do not hesitate to say what is right and just, and do not diverge from what they believe to be right.

This annoys unbelievers, because it endangers their personal worldly interests. For instance, whereas unbelievers try to live and make others live according to their own ideas, believers who adhere to the example of the prophet follow only the commands of Allah. They teach people the inappropriateness of the ignorant system that unbelievers live in, and the beauty of the religion which will bring peace and happiness to people both in this world and in the Hereafter.

For these reasons, in every age, unbelievers have attempted to hinder messengers by using various methods. Examples of this are related in the Qur'an. By means of inconsistent and irrational arguments, unbelievers attempt to deny what Allah's messengers convey. They try to stop them with verbal threats. When verbal means fail, they try to make believers revert from the right way by means of real physical methods. However none of these methods works; they can never bring forth convincing evidence against the truths that messengers and sincere believers convey; nor can they put forward ideas that successfully oppose ideas based upon truth.

In many verses Allah has given examples of the verbal assaults of unbelievers, and of groundless allegations they made against prophets:

The ruling circle of those of his [Nuh's] people who disbelieved said, "This is nothing but a human being like yourselves who simply wants to gain ascendancy over you. If Allah had wanted He would have sent angels down. We never heard of anything like this among our ancestors, the earlier peoples. He is nothing but a man possessed so wait a while and see what happens to him." (Surat al-Muminun: 24-25)

What is he [i.e., Nuh] but a man who has invented a lie against Allah? We do not believe in him. (Surat al-Muminun: 38)

... But they said [for Musa], "A lying magician." (Surah Ghafir: 24)

Allah relates in one verse that such aspersions have almost been a tradition among unbelievers:

Equally, no Messenger came to those before them without their saying, "A magician or a madman!" Did they bequeathe this to each other? Indeed they are an unbridled people. (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 52-53)

73. Will the efforts of the unbelievers result in anything?

The verbal or physical opposition that unbelievers put up against the messengers of Allah and believers never results in anything positive. This is because Allah has declared that it is only His followers who will be the uppermost both in this world and in the Hereafter, stating "... you shall be uppermost if you are believers" (Surah Al 'Imran: 139).

We see that unbelievers have carried on their struggle against believers all throughout world history. Yet all these struggles have always come out in favour of the believers. This is what Allah has promised. Allah has mentioned this in the Our'an as follows:

Allah has written, "I will be victorious, I and My Messengers." Allah is Most Strong, Almighty. (Surat al-Mujadala: 21)

74. Who are the true friends of the believers in this world?

Allah is the friend of believers. He is the protector and guardian of believers who take Him as their friend, and who seek only His good pleasure. There is the aid and support of Allah behind all the deeds of the believers. Every act that believers perform, seeking the pleasure of Allah, results in an absolute goodness. It is stated in one verse that "Allah is with those who fulfil their duty and with those who are gooddoers." (Surat an-Nahl: 128). In another verse Allah gives the good news of His support to believers as follows:

Allah is the Protector of those who believe. He brings them out of the darkness into the light... (Surat al-Baqara: 257)

Besides this, believers are the friends and protectors of one another. They invite each other to goodness and forbid evil. They aim to direct each other to Paradise, and to raise each other's rank in the Hereafter. Allah has informed believers in the Qur'an whom they should take as friends:

Your friend is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe: those who establish prayer and pay alms, and bow. As for those who make Allah their friend, and His Messenger and those who believe: it is the party of Allah who are victorious! (Surat al-Ma'ida: 55-56)

75. Why can't anyone other than a believer be taken as a friend?

People who do not have sincere faith in Allah, who do not comply with His limits and do not fear Him can never be friends to believers. Certainly good relations based on respect may be established with these people but it is not possible to have close friendship with them. A believer who seeks the friendship, love and pleasure of Allah, surely, considers only those whom He takes as friends his friends. He knows that the contrary could lead to the loss of the friendship and pleasure of Allah. Allah has warned believers against such behaviour as follows:

You who believe! Do not take the disbelievers as friends rather than the believers. Do you want to give Allah clear proof against you? (Surat an-Nisa': 144)

Apart from this, it is also technically impossible to take those who do not believe as friends. Before all else, most of them are not reliable. Faithfulness and loyalty in friendship cannot be expected from a person who does not mind losing the friendship of Allah. Undoubtedly, such a person would abandon his friend, should this friendship collide with his personal interests. What is more, he would not hesitate to betray this "friend" when it suited his interests.

Unbelievers can never be truly self-sacrificing, because their entire lives and mentalities are based on selfishness. They are not concerned with the reckoning of their so-called friend in the Hereafter, hence they do not urge him to what is right or discourage him from wrong in order to protect him from Hell. More concisely, they do not possess the attributes that a friend should possess. In a verse Allah reveals as follows:

You who believe! Do not take any outside yourselves as intimates. They will do anything to harm you. They love what causes you distress. Hatred has appeared out of their mouths, but what their breasts hide is far worse. We have made the Signs clear to you if you use your intellect. (Surah Al 'Imran: 118)

76. Who takes satan as a friend?

The most significant aspect of satan is that he promised that he will divert mankind from the path of Allah. Therefore, anyone who rejects belief in Allah and His messenger, who tries to hinder people from the way of Allah, opposes Allah and the religion, or causes people to forget Allah, the Hereafter and the religion, is the supporter and friend of satan. However, these people will be bitterly disappointed both in the world and in the Hereafter because of what they do. Allah has stated that satan would aim to mislead mankind, and related the end of those who make him their friend as follows:

What they call on is a rebellious satan whom Allah has cursed. He said, "I will take a certain fixed proportion of Your servants. I will lead them astray and fill them with false hopes. I will command them and they will cut off cattle's ears. I will command them and they will change Allah's creation." Anyone who takes satan as his protector in place of Allah has clearly lost everything. (Surat an-Nisa': 117-119)

77. Can man be assured of entering Paradise while he is in this world?

No one can be sure of entering Paradise while he is still in the world. Allah tells us that man should be filled both with fear and with hope stating "... pray to Him with fear and hope..." (Surat al-A'raf: 56). Everyone should try to attain the good pleasure of Allah by trying their utmost to fulfil the commands of the Qur'an, and by implementing the good conduct approved by Allah in every moment of one's life. In return for these efforts he can hope for Paradise, yet can never be absolutely certain of it.

78. Who are the "ruling elite" mentioned in the Qur'an?

Each time messengers called their people to the religion of Allah, there has always been a section who opposed them, trying to impede their actions and causing difficulties for believers. The Qur'an tells us that these people were mainly among the ruling elite of that community. This is because of the fact that these people possess wealth, power and authority within their society. The reason for their furious opposition to the messengers of Allah is that they worry about losing this worldly power, and the influence and reputation they hold. It is stated in the Qur'an that there will be such people in every age:

And likewise in every city We set up its greatest wrongdoers to plot in it. They plot against themselves alone, but they are not aware of it. (Surat al-An'am: 123)

In fact these people, too, being people created by Allah

in order to reveal the superiority of believers, completely yield to the fate decreed for them by Allah. As mentioned in the Qur'an, Allah has caused the evil purposes of the schemes these people hatched to backfire on them, and has taken what they possessed when they were still in the world and has bequeathed it to the believers. Allah describes the outcome of Pharaoh's opposition and that of his leading people, who had great power and authority in Egypt but were succeeded by the Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) and the believers who followed him:

And We bequeathed to the people who had been oppressed the easternmost part of the land We had blessed, and its westernmost part as well. The most excellent Word of your Lord was fulfilled for the tribe of Israel on account of their steadfastness. And We utterly destroyed what Pharaoh and his people made and the buildings they constructed. (Surat al-A'raf: 137)

We expelled them [Pharaoh and his people] from gardens and springs, from treasures and a splendid situation. So it was! And We bequeathed them to the tribe of Israel. (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 57-59)

This word of Allah which is for all believers is related in another verse as follows:

We wrote down in the Psalms, after the Reminder came: "It is My servants who are righteous who will inherit the earth." (Surat al-Anbiya': 105)

On the other hand, what these leading unbelievers shall meet in the Hereafter will be an inescapable and painful punishment unless they repent and change their manners.

79. What does "right action" mean?

Right actions are deeds, which are performed utterly in order to earn the good pleasure of Allah. A person may perform some actions which seem to be remarkable in their goodness or self-sacrifice. For instance, he may give considerable amounts of help, money etc. to those in need. The amount of his aid, however, does not indicate that it is a right action because people may provide such help in order to be known as "good" by others, or to show off or to gain people's trust in a business transaction. For a deed to be a "right action", it should be performed only to please Allah.

One exerts oneself to do one's best while performing right actions not because one's aim is to show off, but to attain the result which would please Allah the most. On account of these sincere efforts, Paradise and a good life are promised to believers who do good deeds:

As for those who believe and do right actions and humble themselves before their Lord, they are the Companions of Paradise remaining in it timelessly, for ever. (Surah Hud: 23)

Anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a believer, We will give them a good life and We will recompense them according to the best of what they did. (Surat an-Nahl: 97)

80. How do believers behave when they are given wealth?

A believer knows that Allah is the real owner of the entire Kingdom, and that He gives sovereignty to whoever He wills. Therefore, he does not become insolent and arrogant

because of what he has, but thanks Allah for what He has bestowed on him and spends what he has in the way that would please Him the most.

In the Qur'an, Allah makes an example of a man of wealth and property. That man owns gardens which are remarkably fertile. However, boasting of what he possesses, he pretends not to understand that it is Allah Who has given these to him and becomes ungrateful. His companion, who is a believer, warns him about this attitude of his as follows:

His companion, with whom he was debating, said to him, "Do you then disbelieve in Him Who created you from dust, then from a drop of sperm, and then formed you as a man? He is, however, Allah, my Lord, and I will not associate anyone with my Lord. Why, when you entered your garden, did you not say, 'It is as Allah wills, there is no strength but in Allah?' "... (Surat al-Kahf: 37-39)

As exemplified in the verse, the behaviour of believers is to remember Allah and give thanks to Him for the gifts given to them.

81. What does being "wise" mean?

Being "wise" means to talk and behave rationally, concisely and fittingly. A wise person has the insight, the ability to see the true aspects of events, and possesses profound understanding. For that reason all his decisions and actions are to the point. His words are striking and moving. Everything he says produces a profound effect on the hearts of others.

Wisdom is a virtue given by Allah to truly sincere people who in every instant turn towards Allah, who live and think according to the Qur'an. Allah has stated that wisdom is a great gift in the verse, "He gives wisdom to whoever He wills and he who has been given wisdom has been given great good..." (Surat al-Baqara: 269)

82. How is extravagance referred to in the Qur'an?

Allah has forbidden His servants to be extravagant, revealing what the criterion should be when spending:

Those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor mean, but take a stance mid way between the two. (Surat al-Furqan: 67)

Muslims spend everything they have in the way of Allah and in the way that would please Him most. They do not forget that what they have is what Allah has given them as a blessing and that they are not the real owners of any of it. When they have to make sacrifices they spend everything they have as commanded by the Qur'an; yet when expenditure is unnecessary they avoid spending even a single penny wastefully. Allah, in the Qur'an, has commanded believers to give their goods to those in need, but not to squander them:

Give your relatives their due, and the very poor and travellers but do not squander what you have. Squanderers are brothers to the satans, and satan was ungrateful to his Lord. (Surat al-Isra': 26-27)

On the other hand, avoiding extravagance should not be misunderstood to mean avoiding the gifts of Allah. He states in the Qur'an "... eat and drink but do not be profligate. He does not love the profligate." (Surat al-A'raf: 31) In this verse Allah has told believers to enjoy His gifts, and has for-

bidden them only to spend wastefully. Today, however, in societies remote from Islamic morals, extravagance is not paid the attention it is due. In restaurants and houses, plates of food and huge amounts of bread, fruits and vegetables are thoughtlessly thrown away. But Allah has forbidden extravagance, whether in significant or insignificant amounts. Therefore people should try to find a way to make use of all such provision before they spoil, instead of throwing them away saying, "this has gone off" or "we cannot use this". Only in this way can they give these gifts their due; otherwise the result is scarcity and ingratitude to Allah.

83. How do angels take people in death? Does the person see the angel when his soul is being taken?

Death is a sort of transformation in dimension. The connection between the soul of the person and his worldly body becomes severed when he dies. Beginning from the moment man dies, he passes to a dimension where he can see the angels of death. This transition is also the beginning of man's eternal life. Along with passing to a different dimension, the person sees the angel who has come to take his soul, who even talks to him. However, not everybody is taken in death in the same way. What the angels who come to take the soul of believers do and say is entirely different from those who come to take soul of the unbelievers.

The angels take the soul of believers in a virtuous state, saying "peace be upon you!" At the same time they give the glad tidings of Paradise they will enter. (Surat an-Nahl: 32)

On the other hand, the angel who comes to take an unbeliever in death beats his face and his back when he least expects it (Surah Muhammad: 27). They pluck his soul out harshly, while the unbeliever's legs are entwined together (Surat al-Qiyama: 29). When the angels stretch out their hands to him, they give him the news of the punishment of humiliation and fire, which will last forever. (Surat al-An'am: 93)

84. What is the provoking whisper of satan?

Satan approaches man from all directions, aiming to distract him from the path of Allah. He plays various tricks on man in order to achieve his goal. Satanic suggestion is one of these tricks. Satanic suggestions are delusions, doubts cast in the heart, vain hopes, disturbing thoughts or words whispered by satan in order to keep people occupied with vain things, and to divert them from matters that they really should be preoccupied with. This characteristic of satan is related in the Qur'an as follows:

Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the insidious whisperer who whispers in people's breasts." (Surat an-Nas: 1-5)

Satan whispers to man against the Qur'an, desiring to prevent him from thinking soundly and to keep him occupied with illusions about his religion that will be harmful to him both in this world and in the Hereafter. He attempts to cause the person to lose his self-confidence by the influence of senseless and inconsistent ideas projected as the person's own thoughts. One who does not hold to the Qur'an has no protection against this trick of satan, and becomes distracted by his whisperings and starts to waver. These whispers corrupt one's knowledge of religion, and causes the individual

to consider Allah in a manner inappropriate to His exaltedness and causes him to be in continual doubt. As a result of this, instead of pondering on the greatness of Allah and on the meaning of his life in the world, he wastes his time with things that are of no benefit either to himself or to other people. Consequently, satan achieves success with this person, whose unawareness of the Qur'an and remoteness from Islamic morals lead him to endless punishment. It is stated in the Qur'an that unbelievers and wrongdoers are always susceptible to the influence of satan, and act under the direction of his whisperings:

Shall I tell you upon whom the satans descend? They descend on every evil liar. They give them a hearing and most of them are liars. (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 221-223)

85. How can man escape from the whisperings of satan?

As Allah informs us in the Qur'an, satan's scheming is always feeble (Surat an-Nisa': 76). He has no authority over those who believe and put their trust in our Lord. Allah has informed believers about what they should do when satan whispers to them and about how to escape from his whispering. Believers, who obey the Qur'an, immediately seek refuge in Allah from satan when he whispers to them. Very quickly they see that the thought crossing their mind is, in fact, a whisper of satan. Without being distressed at all, they remember Allah and escape this evil trick. The Qur'an informs us of this:

If an evil impulse from satan provokes you, seek ref-

uge in Allah. He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. As for those who guard against evil, when they are bothered by visitors from satan, they remember and immediately see clearly. (Surat al-A'raf: 200-201)

86. What should one do when the Qur'an is recited?

Allah commands people to seek refuge with Him from satan, be quiet and listen to the Qur'an when it is recited:

When the Qur'an is recited listen to it and be quiet so that hopefully you will gain mercy. (Surat al-A'raf: 204)

Many people do not know about this commandment of Allah, and continue to live their daily lives and to talk with others when the Qur'an is being recited on TV or on the radio. Yet what should be done in such a situation is to be quiet and to listen to it. If silence cannot be maintained under the circumstances, then the TV or radio may be turned off, since to do otherwise would be to neglect what Allah has commanded.

87. Is it sufficient to recite the Qur'an?

Today, many people who characterise themselves as Muslims, in fact, do not know what Allah wants them to do nor how they can be true Muslims. This is because they have not read the holy book that Allah has sent to them even once throughout their lives. However, Allah has sent the Qur'an to inform us why He has created mankind and what He wants us to do. Those who desire to know Allah, and to enter His Paradise earning His good pleasure, should have a thorough knowledge of the Qur'an.

However in societies of ignorance there is an erroneous opinion of the Qur'an. Some of these people merely read the Qur'an, yet do not reflect on the advice that Allah offers them and neither do they follow it. Reading the Qur'an is certainly a form of worship, but the Qur'an is read in order to know Allah and to learn and act upon what He wants. Again, some of these people think that the Qur'an is merely a book of prayers. While praying, they recite the verses they previously memorised, but do not understand their meaning. Allah has given examples in the Qur'an of the prayers of prophets; no doubt the believers should take them as a model. However, it would be a mistake to consider the Qur'an as merely a book of prayers.

The Qur'an was sent by Allah as a guidance for believers, and its clear verses deliver believers from darkness to light. Allah relates this feature of the Qur'an as follows:

... A Light has come to you from Allah and a Clear Book. By it, Allah guides those who follow what pleases Him to the ways of Peace. He will bring them from the darkness to the light by His permission, and guide them to a straight path. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 15-16)

... This is a Book We have sent down to you so that you can bring mankind from the darkness to the light, by the permission of their Lord, to the Path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy. (Surah Ibrahim: 1)

An erroneous belief that these people hold about the Qur'an is that it was sent to past nations. Yet despite the passing time, developing technology, or living in the space age or in the computer age does not change anything at all. The greed, passions, opinions and ignorance of people who

lived 1400 years ago are identical with those of the people of today or of the people of the future. On the other hand, the source of true knowledge that these behaviours should be replaced with is always the Qur'an. Those who, in order not to obey the Qur'an, assert that it is "the legends of previous people", are warned of Hell as follows:

When Our Signs are recited to him, he says, "Just myths and legends of the previous peoples!" No indeed! Rather what they have earned has rusted up their hearts. No indeed! Rather that Day they will be veiled from their Lord. Then they will roast in the Blazing Fire. (Surat al-Mutaffifin: 13-16)

88. What aspects of religion ensure peace and harmony?

Religion, before all else, requires people to live according to their conscience. In an environment where everyone acts conscientiously, there will not be any quarrels, fighting or behaviour that would disturb the peace.

Those who live by Islamic morals have wisdom and common sense; thus their approach to events are also in line with this. Therefore, they always exhibit positive and reassuring behaviour, which make their environment easy and comfortable.

There is justice in Islamic morals. Everybody is given his due perfectly, therefore, no one needs to struggle for his rights or to apply various methods to achieve them. His rights are at any rate protected by other devout and conscientious people in the most decent manner.

Since they fear Allah, people of faith do not get involved in actions which Allah has forbidden, such as murder, suicide or theft. They never do things which they will not be able to account for in the Hereafter.

Where people live by Islamic morals, there is no greed for personal interests. Every man is liable to do the best he can for the common benefit of religion. Therefore, a disturbance that may result from the clash of interests does not exist.

There is no compulsion where religion is concerned. Believers are responsible only to communicate the truths which are revealed by religion.

In addition to these, it is stated in the Qur'an that Allah sends down peace of reassurance into the hearts of believers. This is a great gift of Allah to righteous believers. This fact is related in the Qur'an as follows:

It is He Who sent down serenity into the hearts of the believers thereby increasing their faith with more faith—the legions of the heavens and the earth belong to Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Surat al-Fath: 4)

What has been mentioned so far is only a general description of the delightful environment that Islamic morals offer to mankind. Religion produces the most peaceful, the most ideal and the most perfect environment that could ever be in the world, both for the individual and for communities.

89. What are the morals of trade as advised in the Qur'an?

A believer performs every deed in order to earn the good pleasure of Allah. No matter what he is engaged in, he does not let it divert him from his real aim. Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an that trade or commerce does not make believers forget their real goal:

... There are men who proclaim His glory morning and evening, not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah and the establishment of prayer and the payment of alms; fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil. (Surat an-Nur: 36-37)

Allah wants believers to be of virtuous character, and believers strive to fulfil the requirements of this character whatever activity they are engaged in. Hence, they are honest, sincere, diligent, fair and modest even while they are conducting trade. Their attention is again focused on the pleasure of Allah and on the limits of what He permits and what He forbids. Besides this, Allah has also commanded believers not to encroach on the rights of others, to give full measure and full weight, and not to cheat people of their belongings (Surah Hud: 85).

In Surat al-Isra', Allah states that it is better to be honest, to be fair and to please Him by means of exhibiting such good behaviour:

Give full measure when you measure and weigh with a level balance. That is better and gives the best result. (Surat al-Isra': 35)

90. How does not putting trust in Allah destroy the soul?

Putting one's trust in Allah means to trust in and rely on Allah in every matter, and to yield to Him knowing that He is the unique protector. Believers, who are aware of the fact that events take place under the whole control of Allah, know that He always supports and helps those who believe in Him. People who are in this frame of mind, surely feel peace and secu-

rity. On the other hand, people who do not put their trust in Allah and do not yield themselves to Him, spend their entire lives in fear, anxiety, distress, panic, insecurity, dissatisfaction, greed, anger, depression, regret, envy etc. Allah places turmoil in the hearts of those people on account of their disbelief. He does not let them enjoy the ease, comfort and peace of putting their trust in Him. The distress of those who do not rely on Allah is described in the Qur'an as follows:

When Allah desires to guide someone, He expands his breast to Islam. When He desires to misguide someone, He makes his breast narrow and constricted as if he were climbing up into the sky. That is how Allah defiles those who have no faith. (Surat al-An'am: 125)

Be people of pure natural belief in Allah, not associating anything else with Him. As for anyone who associates others with Allah, it is as though he had fallen from the sky and the birds had seized him and carried him away or the wind had dropped him in a distant place. (Surat al-Hajj: 31)

91. How does one pray in action?

Prayer in action is to keep on asking for something by means of verbal prayer while exerting oneself and doing everything needed to bring about the desired result. For example, when a person wants to drink some water, he does not sit and wait for it to appear in front of him; instead he pours some water into a glass and then drinks it. In other words, in order to get what he asks from Allah, he acts according to the causes and rules that Allah has taught him and then expects the best result from Allah. Likewise, one may want to

pass an exam, so he prays to Allah, studies hard, learns the things that he should, avoids being in environments that may distract his attention or hinder him from studying, and as a result of these efforts, Allah gives him success.

Some people have an erroneous way of thinking about prayer. According to these people, after praying to Allah, one should isolate oneself and wait for the outcome of that prayer. However, this is not sincere behaviour because someone who really wants something should pray for it both in words and actions. Yet one should not fall into the error of those who say, "I did everything necessary" performing all kinds of physical efforts, yet forgetting to pray to Allah verbally. Both kinds of prayer should be performed together.

92. What is the connection between lack of Islamic morals and the degeneration of some communities?

People who do not submit to the religion that Allah has sent for mankind do not have the good manners described in the Qur'an and do not preserve the limits stated in the Qur'an. Since they do not fear Allah and do not believe in the Hereafter, they are not affected by the fear of being judged for what they do. For that reason, societies without Islamic morals are full of individuals who perform all kinds of immoralities and evil without any fear and without thinking of the consequences. A rapid and extensive process of degeneration is inevitable for such societies.

This social decline can be seen in the ease and frequency with which people commit robbery, cause damage to other people, lose their temper, kill people, violate the rights of others, lie, never appreciate anyone other than themselves, never do anything except in return for material benefit, and always oppress those who are weaker than themselves. A person who says, "I may not be religious, but I am not a violent person either" may one day find himself in a situation that he can no longer endure, and claim to have the right to do all kinds of wrong actions. He may get so angry that he may even attempt to kill someone.

Irreligiousness, since it does not accept any limits, destroys all humane feelings in society and leads to a terrible degeneration. In irreligious societies, the justice, humility, good manners, compassion and affection that religion brings to mankind never exist. Therefore, lack of Islamic morals is the main source of a community's moral and social decline.s

93. What kind of beings are the jinn? Are there believers and unbelievers among the jinn? Will there be Paradise and Hell in the Hereafter in which they will live?

Jinn are beings who are created, like human beings, to worship Allah, but are created out of fire, unlike man who is created from dust (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 56, Surat al-Hijr: 27). Allah sends messengers to the jinn, too, in order to make them believe (Surat al-An'am: 130). There are believers and disbelievers among them. Allah relates this fact about the jinn in the Qur'an as follows:

[A band of the jinn said:] "Some of us are Muslims and some are deviators. Those who have become Muslim are those who sought right guidance." (Surat al-Jinn: 14)

Besides this, among them are those who oppose the pro-

phets, like their human counterparts:

In this way We have appointed as enemies to every Prophet satans from both mankind and from the jinn... (Surat al-An'am: 112)

Consequently the jinn, just like people, will be fully paid in the Hereafter for what they do. Those who believe in Allah, and pay heed to the warnings of the prophets will be repaid for their deeds and will not be wronged. On the other hand, jinn who disbelieve will be thrown into Hell together with disbelieving people. Allah has related this fact in the Our'an as follows:

We created many of the jinn and mankind for Hell. They have hearts they do not understand with. They have eyes they do not see with. They have ears they do not hear with. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A'raf: 179)

94. Can the jinn foretell the future?

Allah has stated in many verses in the Qur'an that no one, other than Himself, has knowledge of the unseen and will never have the capacity to acquire it. One of these verses states as follows:

Say: "No one in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen except Allah." They are not aware of when they will be raised. (Surat an-Naml: 65)

Jinn can never, unless Allah wills, gain knowledge about the future. There are verses in the Qur'an relating that the jinn will attempt to gain knowledge of the unseen, but will not succeed and will themselves admit that they cannot. These verses of Surat al-Jinn abolish the erroneous beliefs that people have about the jinn. In addition, the jinn who served the Prophet Sulayman (peace be upon him) are also mentioned in the Qur'an, and it is mentioned that these jinn learned that the Prophet Sulayman (pbuh) had died much later on. Therefore, people who seek refuge in the jinn—hoping to find favour with them—should know that they falling into great error; it is not possible, unless Allah wills, for jinn to gain any knowledge about the future. The fact that jinn do not have any knowledge of the future is pointed out in the story of Prophet Sulayman (peace be upon him) in the Qur'an:

Then when We decreed that he should die, nothing divulged his death to them except the worm which ate his staff; so that when he fell down it was made clear to the jinn that if they had truly had knowledge of the unseen they need not have stayed there suffering humiliating punishment. (Surah Saba': 14)

Other verses in Surat al-Jinn which relate to the fact that the jinn cannot know the unseen are as follows:

We tried, as usual, to travel to heaven in search of news but found it filled with fierce guards and meteors. We used to sit there on special seats to listen in. But anyone listening now finds a fiery meteor in wait for him. We have no idea whether evil is intended for those on the earth, or whether their Lord intends them to be rightly guided. (Surat al-Jinn: 8-10)

95. Can the question of how life emerged on earth be answered by the fossil record?

We can easily find the answer to the question of how liv-

ing beings originated in the fossil record. The oldest fossils of complex living creatures are found is the stratum of the Cambrian era, which has an estimated age of 520-530 million years.

The fossils found in the Cambrian rocks belonged to snails, trilobites, sponges, earthworms, jellyfish, marine crustaceans and sea lilies. All of these invertebrates emerged suddenly and completely without previous ancestors, which is contrary to what the theory of evolution claims. This miraculous and sudden emergence of living beings is referred to as the "Cambrian Explosion" by scientists.

How such a great number of animal species could have emerged all of a sudden is a question that remains unanswered by evolutionists. An English biologist Richard Dawkins, one of the foremost advocates of evolutionist thought in the world, comments on this as follows:

For example the Cambrian strata of rocks, vintage about 600 million years, are the oldest ones in which we find most of the major invertebrate groups. And we find many of them already in an advanced state of evolution, the very first time they appear. It is as though they were just planted there, without any evolutionary history. Needless to say, this appearance of sudden planting has delighted creationists. (Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*, London: W. W. Norton 1986, p. 229.)

As Dawkins, who is an evolutionist, is forced to acknowledge, the Cambrian Explosion is strong evidence for creation.

96. What structures did the creatures that lived millions of years ago have?

Creatures that lived about 500 million years ago had

complex structures no different from those of today. Fossils that appeared in the Cambrian period have been shocking for scientists, especially for the evolutionists. Because according to the theory of evolution, creatures of that period should have had "primitive" systems, different from the living things of today.

However the complex systems they have like eyes, gills and circulatory system are evidence of the fact that these creatures were not primitive. For example, the trilobites of the Cambrian period had compound eyes with multifaceted eye lenses as do some insects today. These complexly structured eyes of the trilobites consisted of hundreds of hexagonal lenses forming a structure resembling a honeycomb. This perfect eye structure which appeared 530 million years ago forced evolutionists to express their amazement.

David Raup, an evolutionist professor of geology at Harvard, Rochester, and Chicago Universities, is forced to acknowledge the impossibility of the formation of the trilobite eye by chance saying: "the trilobites 450 million years ago used an optimal design which would require a well trained and imaginative optical engineer to develop today". (David Raup, "Conflicts Between Darwin and Paleontology", *Bulletin*, Field Museum of Natural History, Vol 50, January 1979, p. 24.)

97. Can evolutionists, who assert that dinosaurs took wing while hunting flies, explain the origin of flies?

Evolutionists cannot come up with an explanation for the origin of flies. Yet, surprisingly, though they cannot explain the formation of a tiny fly, they attempt to explain the transformation of gigantic dinosaurs into birds. Moreover, they fabricate an imaginary scenario asserting that dinosaurs who flapped their front legs to hunt flies took flight. It is, undoubtedly, senseless for a theory which cannot come up with an explanation even for a tiny fly, to comment on how completely flightless creatures managed to take to the air.

Evolutionists have valid reasons for not mentioning the origin of flies. First of all, flies have a perfect flight mechanism, which cannot be wholly imitated even with today's technology. An average fly has a wing system that enables it to flutter its wings 500 times a second. Moreover, this system is planned so perfectly that it is able to move both its wings simultaneously at such an amazing speed. Apart from this, it has a complex respiratory system. It can use the oxygen it needs to fly in a much quicker and much more efficient way than other living things.

English biologist Robin Wootton describes the perfect creation of the fly as follows:

The better we understand the functioning of insect wings, the more subtle and beautiful their designs appear. . . . Structures are traditionally designed to deform as little as possible; mechanisms are designed to move component parts in predictable ways. Insect wings combine both in one, using components with a wide range of elastic properties, elegantly assembled to allow appropriate deformations in response to appropriate forces and to make the best possible use of air. They have few if any technological parallels – yet. (Robin J. Wootton, "The Mechanical Design of Insect Wings", *Scientific American*, v. 263, November 1990, p.120)

98. Are elephants, squirrels and other mammals derived from a common origin?

According to the claims of the theory of evolution, reptiles are the ancestors both of birds and of mammals. When mammals are considered, it can easily be seen how impossible such a claim is. For example, let's think about tigers, cows, bears, elephants, dolphins, whales, mice and bats. There are great structural differences between these mammal species. Furthermore, each of these living things possesses systems specifically designed for their own needs. For example, dolphins have a very sensitive sonar system. Bears have mechanisms which are appropriate to the climatic conditions of their habitat.

Evolutionist zoologist R. Eric Lombard expresses what great difficulty these differences cause to evolutionists as follows:

Those searching for specific information useful in constructing phylogenies [evolutionary development] of mammalian taxa will be disappointed. (R. Eric Lombard, "Review of Evolutionary Principles of the Mammalian Middle Ear, Gerald Fleischer," *Evolution*, vol. 33, December 1979, p. 1230)

Apart from these differences, the fossil record demonstrates that mammals, like all living things, appeared on earth suddenly and fully formed with their present perfect structures, without any evolutionary process.

99. Can living cells come into being by chance?

No, they cannot. Cells have such a complex structure that it is not possible for them to have come into existence sponta-

neously or by chance. In a small space which can only be seen by a microscope, there are incredibly complex structures such as specialised working systems, communication systems, systems for incoming and out-going transportation, control systems for the exchange of materials and centres where information is recorded. W. H. Thorpe, an evolutionist scientist, acknowledges the exquisiteness in the structure of a cell saying: "the most elementary type of cell constitutes a 'mechanism' unimaginably more complex than any machine yet thought up, let alone constructed, by man." (W. R. Bird, *The Origin of Species Revisited*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Co., 1991, pp. 298-99.)

The probability of the spontaneous formation of such a perfect structure, which mankind, with 20th century technology at its disposal cannot succeed in producing, is "zero". The cell is created by Allah with its complete perfect structure.

100. Could the molecule called DNA, which is found in the nucleus of cells, have come into being by chance?

DNA is a molecule, which has an extremely complex structure. This molecule contains the complete information of the human body, which is recorded by means of a special coding system. In addition to features like height, eye, hair and skin colours, the DNA of a single cell also contains the design of 206 bones, 600 muscles, a network of 10,000 auditory muscles, a network of 2 million optic nerves, 100 billion nerve cells and 100 trillion cells in the body. If we were to write down the information coded in the DNA, we would end up with a giant library consisting of 900 volumes of encyclopaedias of 500 pages each. Yet this incredibly voluminous information is not encoded in volumes of encyclopaedias, but in the components of DNA called "genes".

Genes are made up of four special bases called nucleotides, which occur in a particular sequence. An error in this sequence would render the gene completely useless. There are 200,000 genes in the human body, and each of the millions of nucleotides making up these genes must be in the right sequence. When mathematical calculations are done to measure the probability of this sequence being formed by chance, its impossibility becomes evident. For example according to the calculations of Frank Salisbury, an evolutionist biologist, the possibility is one in $4^{1,000}$. The number $4^{1,000}$ is the equivalent of 10^{600} , which gives the figure 1 followed by 600 zeros! This number is completely beyond our comprehension.

The impossibility of the formation of RNA and DNA by a coincidental accumulation of nucleotides is expressed by the French scientist Paul Auger in the following way:

We have to sharply distinguish the two stages in the chance formation of complex molecules such as nucleotides by chemical events. The production of nucleotides one by one—which is possible—and the combination of these within very special sequences. The second is absolutely impossible. (Paul Auger, *De La Physique Theorique a la Biologie*, 1970, p. 118)

They said, "Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."

(Surat al-Baqara: 32)





THE DECEPTION OF EVOLUTION

Darwinism, in other words the theory of evolution, was put forward with the aim of denying the fact of Creation, but is in truth nothing but failed, unscientific nonsense. This theory, which claims that life emerged by chance from inanimate matter, was invalidated by the scientific evidence of miraculous order in the universe and in living things, as well as by the discovery of about 300 million fossils revealing that evolution never happened. In this way, science confirmed the fact that Allah created the universe and the living things in it. The propaganda carried out today in order to keep the theory of evolution alive is based solely on the distortion of the scientific facts, biased interpretation, and lies and falsehoods disguised as science.

Yet this propaganda cannot conceal the truth. The fact that the theory of evolution is the greatest deception in the history of science has been expressed more and more in the scientific world over the last 20-30 years. Research carried out after the 1980s in particular has revealed that the claims of Darwinism are totally unfounded, something that has been stated by a large number of scientists. In the United States in particular, many scientists from such different fields as biology, biochemistry and paleontology recognize

the invalidity of Darwinism and employ the fact of Creation to account for the origin of life.

We have examined the collapse of the theory of evolution and the proofs of Creation in great scientific detail in many of our works, and are still continuing to do so. Given the enormous importance of this subject, it will be of great benefit to summarize it here.

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

As a pagan doctrine going back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced extensively in the nineteenth century. The most important development that made it the top topic of the world of science was Charles Darwin's The Origin of Species, published in 1859. In this book, he opposed, in his own eyes, the fact that Allah created different living species on Earth separately, for he erroneously claimed that all living beings had a common ancestor and had diversified over time through small changes. Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption." Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties on Theory," the theory failed in the face of many critical questions.

Darwin invested all of his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve these difficulties. However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties. The defeat of Darwinism in the face of science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

1) The theory cannot explain how life originated on Earth.

- 2) No scientific finding shows that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any evolutionary power at all.
- 3) The fossil record proves the exact opposite of what the theory suggests.

In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

The theory of evolution posits that all living species evolved from a single living cell that emerged on the primitive Earth 3.8 billion years ago. How a single cell could generate millions of complex living species and, if such an evolution really occurred, why traces of it cannot be observed in the fossil record are some of the questions that the theory cannot answer. However, first and foremost, we need to ask: **How did this "first cell" originate?**

Since the theory of evolution ignorantly denies Creation, it maintains that the "first cell" originated as a product of blind coincidences within the laws of nature, without any plan or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. Such a claim, however, is inconsistent with the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life Comes From Life"

In his book, Darwin never referred to the origin of life. The primitive understanding of science in his time rested on the assumption that living beings had a very simple structure. Since medieval times, spontaneous generation, which asserts that non-living materials came together to form living organisms, had been widely accepted. It was commonly believed that insects came into being from food leftovers, and mice from wheat. Interesting experiments were conducted to prove this theory. Some wheat was placed on a dirty piece of cloth, and it was believed that mice would originate from it after a while.

Similarly, maggots developing in rotting meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, it was later understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye.

Even when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, that disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said: "Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."

For a long time, advocates of the theory of evolution resisted these findings. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

Inconclusive Efforts of the Twentieth Century

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the ori-

gin of life in the twentieth century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses he advanced in the 1930s, he tried to prove that a living cell could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure, and Oparin had to make the following confession:

Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms.²

Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve this problem. The best known experiment was carried out by the American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial Earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, for the atmosphere used in the experiment was very different from the real Earth conditions.³

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.⁴

All the evolutionists' efforts throughout the twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended in failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada, from the San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in Earth magazine in 1998:

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?⁵

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a great impasse regarding the origin of life is that even those living organisms deemed to be the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living thing is more complex than all of our man-made technological products. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing organic chemicals together.

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of a cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10⁹⁵⁰ for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10⁵⁰ is considered to be impossible in practical terms.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of a cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. If the information coded in DNA were written down, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of encyclopedias consisting of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: DNA can replicate itself only with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can be realized only by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that

life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.6

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated spontaneously as a result of blind coincidences, then it has to be accepted that life was "created." This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny Creation.

Imaginary Mechanism of Evolution

The second important point that negates Darwin's theory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power.

Darwin based his evolution allegation entirely on the mechanism of "natural selection." The importance he placed on this mechanism was evident in the name of his book: *The Origin of Species, By Means of Natural Selection...*

Natural selection holds that those living things that are stronger and more suited to the natural conditions of their habitats will survive in the struggle for life. For example, in a deer herd under the threat of attack by wild animals, those that can run faster will survive. Therefore, the deer herd will be comprised of faster and stronger individuals. However,

unquestionably, this mechanism will not cause deer to evolve and transform themselves into another living species, for instance, horses.

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book The Origin of Species:

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.⁷

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favorable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science at that time. According to the French biologist Chevalier de Lamarck (1744-1829), who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation. He asserted that these traits, which accumulated from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, he claimed that giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples. In his book The Origin of Species, for instance, he said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.⁸

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Gregor Mendel (1822-84) and verified by the science of genetics, which flourished in the twentieth century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favor as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

In order to find a solution, Darwinists advanced the "Modern Synthetic Theory," or as it is more commonly known, Neo-Darwinism, at the end of the 1930s. Neo-Darwinism added mutations, which are distortions formed in the genes of living beings due to such external factors as radiation or replication errors, as the "cause of favorable variations" in addition to natural mutation.

Today, the model that Darwinists espouse, despite their own awareness of its scientific invalidity, is neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living beings formed as a result of a process whereby numerous complex organs of these organisms (e.g., ears, eyes, lungs, and wings) underwent "mutations," that is, genetic disorders. Yet, there is an outright scientific fact that totally undermines this theory: Mutations do not cause living beings to develop; on the contrary, they are always harmful.

The reason for this is very simple: **DNA has a very complex structure**, **and random effects can only harm it.** The American geneticist B. G. Ranganathan explains this as follows:

First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.

Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful,

that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living things, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer.) Of course, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself," as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary mechanism exists, no such any imaginary process called "evolution" could have taken place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record.

According to the unscientific supposition of this theory, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else over time and all species have come into being in this way. In other words, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years.

Had this been the case, numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles should have lived in the past which had acquired some reptilian traits in addition to the fish traits they already had. Or there should have existed some reptile-birds, which acquired some bird

traits in addition to the reptilian traits they already had. Since these would be in a transitional phase, they should be disabled, defective, crippled living beings. Evolutionists refer to these imaginary creatures, which they believe to have lived in the past, as "transitional forms."

If such animals ever really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In The Origin of Species, Darwin explained:

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.¹⁰

However, **Darwin was well aware that no fossils of these intermediate forms had yet been found.** He regarded this as a major difficulty for his theory. In one chapter of his book titled "**Difficulties on Theory**," he wrote:

Why, if species have descended from other species by insensibly fine gradations, do we not everywhere see innumerable transitional forms? Why is not all nature in confusion instead of the species being, as we see them, well defined?... But, as by this theory innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth?... Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and gravest objection which can be urged against my theory.¹¹

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the nineteenth century all over the world, **no transitional forms** have yet been uncovered. All of the fossils, contrary to the evolutionists' expectations, show that life appeared on Earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.

One famous British paleontologist, Derek V. Ager, admits this fact, even though he is an evolutionist:

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.¹²

This means that in the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between. This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, this is very strong evidence that all living things are created. The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without any evolutionary ancestor is that it was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biologist Douglas Futuyma:

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.¹³

Fossils show that living beings emerged fully devel-

oped and in a perfect state on the Earth. That means that "the origin of species," contrary to Darwin's supposition, is not evolution, but **Creation**.

The Tale of Human Evolution

The subject most often brought up by advocates of the theory of evolution is the subject of the origin of man. The Darwinist claim holds that man evolved from so-called apelike creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started 4-5 million years ago, some "transitional forms" between present-day man and his imaginary ancestors are supposed to have existed. According to this completely imaginary scenario, four basic "categories" are listed:

- 1. Australopithecus
 - 2. Homo habilis
 - 3. Homo erectus
 - 4. Homo sapiens

Evolutionists call man's so-called first ape-like ancestors Australopithecus, which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various *Australopithecus* specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, shows that these apes belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.¹⁴

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to their claim, the living beings in the *Homo series* are more developed than

Australopithecus. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the twentieth century's most important evolutionists, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of *Homo sapiens*, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation." ¹⁵

By outlining the link chain as *Australopithecus* > *Homo habilis* > *Homo erectus* > *Homo sapiens*, evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus* lived at different parts of the world at the same time.¹⁶

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as Homo erectus have lived up until very modern times. Homo sapiens neandarthalensis and *Homo sapiens sapiens* (present-day man) co-existed in the same region.¹⁷

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. The late Stephen Jay Gould explained this deadlock of the theory of evolution although he was himself one of the leading advocates of evolution in the twentieth century:

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (A. africanus, the robust australopithecines, and H. habilis), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.¹⁸

Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is

"upheld" with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific foundation.

Lord Solly Zuckerman, one of the most famous and respected scientists in the U.K., who carried out research on this subject for years and studied Australopithecus fossils for 15 years, finally concluded, despite being an evolutionist himself, that there is, in fact, no such family tree branching out from ape-like creatures to man.

Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science" ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific"-that is, depending on concrete data-fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "extra-sensory perception"-concepts such as telepathy and sixth sense-and finally "human evolution." Zuckerman explains his reasoning:

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible - and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.¹⁹

The tale of human evolution boils down to nothing but the prejudiced interpretations of some fossils unearthed by certain people, who blindly adhere to their theory.

Darwinian Formula!

Besides all the technical evidence we have dealt with so far, let us now for once, examine what kind of a superstition the evolutionists have with an example so simple as to be understood even by children:

The theory of evolution asserts that life is formed by chance. According to this irrational claim, lifeless and unconscious atoms came together to form the cell and then they somehow formed other living things, including man. Let us think about that. When we bring together the elements that are the building-blocks of life such as carbon, phosphorus, nitrogen and potassium, only a heap is formed. No matter what treatments it undergoes, this atomic heap cannot form even a single living being. If you like, let us formulate an "experiment" on this subject and let us examine on the behalf of evolutionists what they really claim without pronouncing loudly under the name "Darwinian formula":

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living things such as phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, iron, and magnesium into big barrels. Moreover, let them add in these barrels any material that does not exist under normal conditions, but they think as necessary. Let them add in this mixture as many amino acids and as many proteins-a single one of which has a formation probability of 10-950-as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they like. Let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they like. Let them put the foremost scientists beside these barrels. Let these experts wait in turn beside these barrels for billions, and even trillions of years. Let them be free to use all kinds of conditions they believe to be necessary for a

human's formation. No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a human, say a professor that examines his cell structure under the electron microscope. They cannot produce giraffes, lions, bees, canaries, horses, dolphins, roses, orchids, lilies, carnations, bananas, oranges, apples, dates, tomatoes, melons, watermelons, figs, olives, grapes, peaches, peafowls, pheasants, multicoloured butterflies, or millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they could not obtain even a single cell of any one of them.

Briefly, unconscious atoms cannot form the cell by coming together. They cannot take a new decision and divide this cell into two, then take other decisions and create the professors who first invent the electron microscope and then examine their own cell structure under that microscope. Matter is an unconscious, lifeless heap, and it comes to life with Allah's superior creation.

The theory of evolution, which claims the opposite, is a total fallacy completely contrary to reason. Thinking even a little bit on the claims of evolutionists discloses this reality, just as in the above example.

Technology in the Eye and the Ear

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear.

Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of how we see. Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the eye's retina. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain, the "center of vision." These electric signals are perceived in this center as an image

after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that its inside is completely dark, and that no light reaches the place where it is located. Thus, the "center of vision" is never touched by light and may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the twentieth century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding it, and then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective with depth.

For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV and achieve the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system, but it is not possible to watch it without putting on special 3-D glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality.

Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by chance. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of chance, that all of its atoms just happened to come together and make up this device that produces an image, what would you think? How can atoms do what thousands of people cannot?

If a device producing a more primitive image than the eye could not have been formed by chance, then it is very evident that the eye and the image seen by **the eye could not have been formed by chance.** The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear, the middle ear transmits the sound vibrations by intensifying them, and the inner ear sends these vibrations to the brain by translating them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalizes in the center of hearing in the brain.

The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, the brain is insulated from sound just as it is from light. It does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside, the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In your completely silent brain, you listen to symphonies, and hear all of the noises in a crowded place. However, were the sound level in your brain measured by a precise

device at that moment, complete silence would be found to be prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all of this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavor, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality hi-fi systems produced by the largest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a hi-fi you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the human body's technology are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does a hi-fi; rather, it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no man-made visual or recording apparatus has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear. However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater truth lies beyond all this.

To Whom Does the Consciousness that Sees and Hears within the Brain Belong?

Who watches an alluring world in the brain, listens to symphonies and the twittering of birds, and smells the rose? The stimulations coming from a person's eyes, ears, and nose travel to the brain as electro-chemical nerve impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact: Who perceives these electro-chemical nerve impulses as images, sounds, odors, and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for an eye, an ear, and a nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? Of course it does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer, and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot answer these questions.

For this consciousness is the spirit created by Allah, which needs neither the eye to watch the images nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, it does not need the brain to think.

Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty Allah, and fear and seek refuge in Him, for He squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimeters in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is incompatible with scientific findings. The theory's claim regarding the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the required intermediate forms have never existed. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be

pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas, such as the Earth-centered universe model, have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

However, the theory of evolution is kept on the agenda of science. Some people even try to represent criticisms directed against it as an "attack on science." Why?

The reason is that this theory is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are **blindly devoted** to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward to explain the workings of nature.

Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well-known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine [intervention]...²⁰

These are explicit statements that **Darwinism is a dogma** kept alive just for the sake of adherence to materialism. This dogma maintains that there is no being save matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter brought life into being. It insists that millions of different living species (e.g., birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales, and human beings) originated as a result of

the interactions between matter such as pouring rain, lightning flashes, and so on, out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary both to reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue to ignorantly defend it just so as not to acknowledge, in their own eyes, the evident existence of Allah.

Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice sees this evident truth: All living beings are works of a Creator, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise, and All-Knowing. This Creator is Allah, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, designed it in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

The Theory of Evolution: The Most Potent Spell in the World

Anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his or her reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible.

As explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors and university students; such scientists as Einstein and Galileo; such artists as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti; as well as antelopes, lemon trees, and carnations. Moreover, as the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people, it is quite justifiable to speak of this theory as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to

think intelligently and logically, and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of Prophet Ibrahim (as) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or some among the people of Prophet Musa (as) worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, Allah has pointed to this lack of reason in the Qur'an. In many verses, He reveals that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who do not believe, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Surat al-Baqara, 6-7)

... They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A'raf, 179)

Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say: "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Surat al-Hijr, 14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is

understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, "magic" is the only possible explanation for people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason, and consciousness; a planet named Earth with all of its features so perfectly suited to life; and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, the Qur'an relates the incident of Prophet Musa (as) and Pharaoh to show that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told Prophet Musa (as) to meet with his own magicians. When Musa (as) did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

He said: "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Surat al-A'raf, 116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from Musa (as) and those who believed in him. However, his evidence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as revealed in the verse:

We revealed to Musa: "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Surat al-A'raf, 117-8)

As we can see, when people realized that a spell had

been cast upon them and that what they saw was just an illusion, Pharaoh's magicians lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who, under the influence of a similar spell, believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them, abandon their superstitious beliefs, they also will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, world-renowned British writer and philosopher Malcolm Muggeridge, who was an atheist defending evolution for some 60 years, but who subsequently realized the truth, reveals the position in which the theory of evolution would find itself in the near future in these terms:

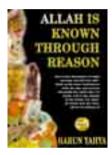
I myself am convinced that **the theory of evolution**, especially the extent to which it's been applied, **will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future.** Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.²¹

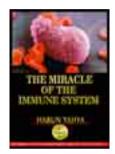
That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a deity, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see its true face are wondering with amazement how they could ever have been taken in by it.



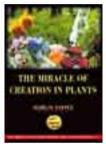


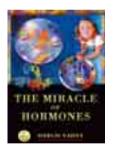
Also by Harun Yahya





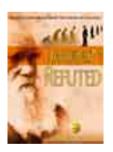




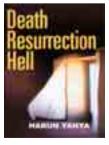


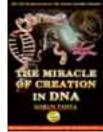








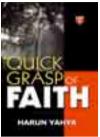


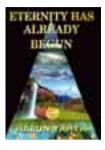


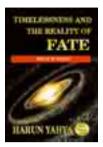


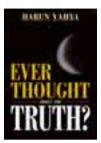


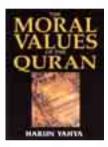


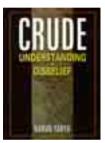


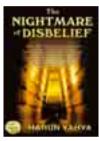












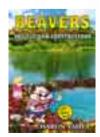


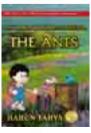






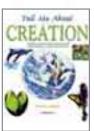
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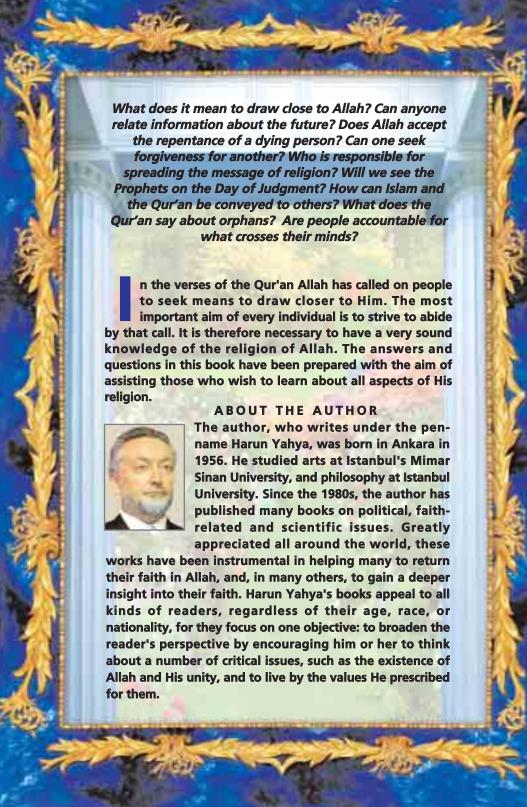
QUICK GRASP OF

PAUUH

-3-

We sent down Clear Signs to you and the example of those who passed away before you and an admonition for the heedful.

(Surat an-Nur, 34)



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم



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QUICK GRASP OF FAITH

-3-

We sent down Clear Signs to you and the example of those who passed away before you and an admonition for the heedful.

(Surat an-Nur, 34)

Goodword

HARUN YAHYA

October, 2003

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Now writing under the pen-name of HARUN YAHYA, he was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, he has published many books on political, scientific, and faith-related issues. Harun Yahya is wellknown as the author of important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, their invalid claims, and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and such bloody ideologies as fascism and communism.

His penname is a composite of the names Harun (Aaron) and Yahya (John), in memory of the two esteemed Prophets who fought against their people's lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on the his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to the their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the final scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of godless ideologies and to have the "last word," so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the final Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of his intention to offer the last word.

All of Harun Yahya's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur' an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as Allah's Existence and Unity and the Hereafter; and to expose godless systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideolo-

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, and Spain to Brazil. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, and Indonesian.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering faith in Allah and gaining deeper insights into their faith. His books' wisdom and sincerity, together with a distinct style that's easy to understand, directly affect anyone who reads them. Those who seriously consider these books, can no longer advocate atheism or any other perverted ideology or materialistic philosophy, since these books are characterized by rapid effectiveness, definite results, and irrefutability. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence, since these books refute such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the books written by Harun Yahya.

This is no doubt a result of the Qur'an's wisdom and lucidity. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for Allah's right path. No material gain is

sought in the publication of these works.

Those who encourage others to read these books, to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of Allah, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological chaos, and that clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the Qur'an's moral values. The success and impact of this service are manifested in the readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and other ordeals endured by the vast majority of people is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This can be ended only with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, leading into a downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, clearly this service must be provided speedily and effectively, or it may be too late.

In this effort, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of Allah, these books will be a means through which people in the twentyfirst century will attain the peace,

justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

The works of the author include *The New Masonic Order, Judaism and Freemasonry,* Global Freemasonry, The Kabbala and Freemasonry, The Knight Templars, Templars and Freemasonry, Israel's Policy of World Domination, Islam Denounces Terrorism, The Black Clan, Terrorism: The Ritual of the Devil, The Disasters Darwinism Brought to Humanity, Communism in Ambush, Fascism: The Bloody Ideology of Darwinism, The 'Secret Hand'in

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The author's childrens books are: Wonders of Allah's Creation, The World of Animals, The Glory in the Heavens, Wonderful Creatures, Let's Learn Our Islam, The World of Our Little Friends: The Ants, Honeybees That Build Perfect Combs, Skillful Dam Constructors: Beavers, Tell Me About Creation, The Miracle in Our Body, A Day in the Life of a Muslim, Children This is for You I-II

The author's other works on Ouranic topics include: The Basic Concepts in the Our'an, The Moral Values of the Qur'an, Quick Grasp of Faith 1-2-3, Ever Thought About the Truth?, Crude Understanding of Disbelief, Devoted to Allah, Abandoning the Society of Ignorance, Paradise: The Believers' Real Home, Learning from the Qur'an, An Index to the Qur'an, Emigrating for the Cause of Allah, The Character of the Hypocrite in the Qur'an, The Secrets of the Hypocrite, Names of Allah, Communicating the Message and Disputing in the Qur'an, Answers from the Qur'an, Death Resurrection Hell, The Struggle of the Messengers, The Avowed Enemy of Man: Satan, The Greatest Slander: Idolatry, The Religion of the Ignorant, The Arrogance of Satan, Prayer in the Qur'an, The Theory of Evolution, The Importance of Conscience in the Qur'an, The Day of Resurrection, Never Forget, Commonly Disregarded Qur'anic Rulings, Human Characters in the Society of Ignorance, The Importance of Patience in the Qur'an, Perfected Faith, Before You Regret, Our Messengers Say, The Mercy of Believers, The Fear of Allah, Jesus Will Return, Beauties for Life in the Qur'an, A Bouquet of the Beauties of Allah 1-2-3-4, The Iniquity Called "Mockery," The Mystery of the Test, Real Wisdom Described in the Qur'an, The Struggle Against the Religion of Irreligion, The School of Yusuf, The Alliance of the Good, Slanders Spread Against Muslims Throughout History, The Importance of Following the Good Word, Why Do You Deceive Yourself?, Islam: The Religion of Ease, Zeal and Enthusiasm Described in the Qur'an, Seeing Good in All, How do the Unwise Interpret the Qur'an?, Some Secrets of the Qur'an, The Courage of Believers, Hopefulness in the Qur'an, Justice and Tolerance in the Qur'an, Basic Tenets of Islam, Those Who do not Heed the Qur'an, Taking the Qur'an as a Guide, A Lurking Threat: Heedlessness, Sincerity Described in the Qur'an, The Happiness of Believers, Those Who Exhaust Their Pleasures During Their Wordly Lives, A Sly Game of Satan, Passivism in Religion, The Religion of Worshipping People, Agonies of a Fake World, How a Muslim Speaks, The Silent Language of Evil, The Ruses of the Liar in the Qur'an, Loyalty in the Qur'an, The Solution to Secret Torments.

TO THE READER

- All the author's books explain faith-related issues in light of Qur'anic verses, and invite readers to learn Allah's words and to live by them. All the subjects concerning Allah's verses are explained so as to leave no doubt or room for questions in the reader's mind. The books' sincere, plain, and fluent style ensure that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand them. Thanks to their effective, lucid narrative, they can be read at a one sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts these books document and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.
- This and all the other books by the author can be read individually, or discussed in a group. Readers eager to profit from the books will find discussion very useful, letting them relate their reflections and experiences to one another.
- In addition, it will be a great service to Islam to contribute to the publication and reading of these books, written solely for the pleasure of Allah. The author's books are all extremely convincing. For this reason, to communicate true religion to others, one of the most effective methods is encouraging them to read these books.
- We hope the reader will look through the reviews of his other books at the back of this book. His rich source material on faith-related issues is very useful, and a pleasure to read.
- In these books, unlike some other books, you will not find the author's personal views, explanations based on dubious sources, styles that are unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, pessimistic arguments that create doubts in the mind and deviations in the heart.

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1. What does it mean to draw close to Allah?

Drawing close to Allah means to enhance one's love, devotion, awe, and faith for Allah. There is no limit to how near one can draw to Allah. In the Hereafter, people will be repaid in proportion to their nearness to Him and, accordingly, will earn eternal life in Paradise. Therefore, every person should strive to make a sincere effort, as Allah proclaims. The Qur'an points out the believers' efforts in the following terms:

And among the desert Arabs there are some who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and regard what they give as something that will bring them nearer to Allah and to the prayers of the Messenger. It does indeed bring them near. Allah will admit them into His mercy. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat at-Tawba, 99)

As a result of such an effort, the love and devotion of people who have drawn closer to Allah become even more intensified. They start to feel a greater contentment in their hearts with our Lord, seek to avoid acting in a way that would not please Allah, and accordingly ward off evil. Their devotion to religion, as well as their eagerness and will to serve religion, grow stronger. The stronger their closeness to Allah, the greater their virtues.

2. What should the believers' target be in terms of getting close to Allah?

In the verse "You who believe! Heed Allah, seek the means of drawing near to Him, and strive in His Way, so that hopefully you will be successful" (Surat al-Ma'ida: 35),

Allah invites people to seek ways to get close to Him. Hence, the believers' most important target is to conform to what Allah invites people to and to strive to be His nearest servant. The believers take the Prophets as their models, for the Prophets' nearness to Allah comes from their sincerity, heedfulness, righteousness, and the strong awe and love that they feel for Him.

In the verse "So We forgave him for that, and he has nearness to Us and a good Homecoming" (Surah Sad, 25), Prophet Dawud's (as) nearness to Allah is given as a model for all believers. Anyone who takes the Prophets' virtuous character and sincerity as their model may hope to attain their closeness to Allah by being in awe of Him as Prophets are, accurately fulfilling the Qur'an's commands, and dedicating their lives to earning His good pleasure. It should also be noted that one can get closer to Allah in only a few seconds by even one sincere intention to do so, for Allah is close to all men and women and answers His servants' calls.

3. How should the believers show their respect for the Prophets?

As the verse "And Isma`il, al-Yasa`a, Yunus, and Lut. All of them We favored over all beings" (Surat al-An`am, 86) states, Prophets are those individuals whom Allah has chosen and favored over all human beings. Allah has granted them a special knowledge direct from Him, supported them with His angels, and promised them Paradise. Throughout the ages, they have been responsible for communicating Allah's religion, and thus have conveyed His revelation to people and invited them to live by the religion

of truth. No matter what difficulties they encountered, they always were resolute and continued their struggle with eagerness and steadfastness. All believers are attached to the Prophets, who are chosen by Allah and who are known for their strong faith and good morals, with true respect and love. The Prophet Muhammad (saas), whose loyalty to Allah is praised in the Qur'an, is said to be "closer to the believers than their own selves." (Surat al-Ahzab, 6)

As a result, all believers have a great respect in their hearts for the Prophets and hold them in high esteem. The Qur'an instructs them to display this respect to His Messenger (saas) as follows:

So that you might all believe in Allah and His Messenger, and honor him and respect him, and glorify Him in the morning and the evening. (Surat al-Fath, 9)

Several verses in the Qur'an tell us how the Prophets should be respected in daily life. Some of them are given here: "not to wait where the Prophet lives while food is being cooked," "not to call out to the Prophet from outside his private quarters," "not to raise one's voice above the Prophet's voice," "not to be as loud when speaking to him as the believers are when speaking to one another," or "not to put oneself forward in front of the Messenger."

Along with those who lived at the time of the Prophet (saas), all believers who lived after him continue to have the same idea of respect in their hearts. As the verse "You have an excellent model in the Messenger of Allah, for all who put their hope in Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah much" (Surat al-Ahzab, 21) reminds them, they try to

express the deep respect they feel for our Prophet (saas) by taking him as their role models in all of their behavior and by honoring and praising him.

For the other Prophets, the Qur'an says:

Say, "We believe in Allah and what has been sent down to us and what was sent down to Ibrahim and Isma`il and Ishaq and Ya`qub and the Tribes, and what Musa and `Isa were given, and what all the Prophets were given by their Lord. We do not differentiate between any of them. We are Muslims submitted to Him." (Surat al-Baqara: 136)

As we understand from the verses, we are expected to show the same respect to all Prophets. In another verse, Allah says:

You have an excellent example in Ibrahim and those with him, when they said to their people "We wash our hands of you and all that you worship apart from Allah, and we reject you. Between us and you there will be enmity and hatred for everunless and until you believe in Allah alone." Except for Ibrahim's words to his father: "I will ask forgiveness for you but I have no power to help you in any way against Allah." Our Lord, we have put our trust in You and have repented to You. You are our final destination. (Surat al-Mumtahana: 4)

4. What does "revelation" mean?

Revelation is Allah's way of inspiring the person's heart with whatever information He wills to provide. Based on the Qur'an's examples, revelation may be given by means of angels, "from behind a veil," or be placed directly in the person's heart by Allah without any intermediaries. Allah explains this matter as follows:

It is not for any human being that Allah should speak to him, except by inspiration or from behind a veil, or He sends a messenger who then reveals, with His permission, whatever He wills. He is indeed Most High, All-Wise. (Surat ash-Shura, 51)

Prophet Musa (as) is given as an example. The Qur'an relates that when he saw a fire, he went to find out more about it:

Then when he reached it, a voice called out: "Musa! I am your Lord. Take off your sandals. You are in the holy valley of Tuwa. I have chosen you, so listen well to what is revealed. I am Allah. There is no god but Me, so worship Me and establish prayer to remember Me." (Surah Ta Ha, 11-14)

Another verse relates that the Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (saas) by means of Jibril:

It is nothing but Revelation revealed, taught to him [the Prophet] by one immensely strong, possessing power and splendor. He [Jibril] stood there stationary—there on the highest horizon. Then he drew near and hung suspended. He was two bow-lengths away or even closer. Then he revealed to Allah's servant what Allah revealed. (Surat an-Najm, 4-10)

Allah's revelation may also come through an invisible voice, as was the case with Prophet Musa (as):

When Musa came to Our appointed time and his Lord

spoke to him, he said: "My Lord, show me Yourself so that I may look at You." He [Allah] said: "You will not see Me, but look at the mountain. If it remains firm in its place, then you will see Me." But when His Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, He crushed it flat and Musa fell unconscious to the ground. When he regained consciousness, he said: "Glory be to You! I repent to You and I am the first of the believers!" (Surat al-A`raf, 143)

Allah revealed the following to Maryam, the mother of Prophet `Isa (as), by means of a voice from under a stream:

A voice called out to her from under her: "Do not grieve. Your Lord has placed a small stream at your feet. Shake the trunk of the palm toward you, and fresh, ripe dates will drop down on you. Eat and drink, and delight your eyes. If you should see anyone at all, just say: "I have made a vow of abstinence to the All-Merciful, and today I will not speak to any human being." (Surah Maryam, 24-26)

On the other hand, Prophet Musa's (as) mother was told something in her heart:

We revealed to Musa's mother: "Suckle him, and then when you fear for him, cast him into the sea. Do not fear or grieve, [for] We will return him to you and make him one of the Messengers." (Surat al-Qasas, 7)

5. Are our prayers for other people of any use?

In the verse "Your Lord says: 'Call on Me and I will answer you. Those who are too proud to worship Me will

enter Hell abject" (Surah Ghafir, 60), Allah invites all people to pray and says that He will answer their calls. Therefore, if someone prays for someone else, it will benefit them, if Allah wills. In another verse, Allah tells the Prophet (saas) to pray for other believers, as follows:

... Pray for them. Your prayers bring relief to them. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Surat at-Tawba, 103)

Each believer desires that all other believers earn Allah's good pleasure and Paradise, and has the same hope for himself or herself. Hence, they pray for their fellow believers at least as much as they do for themselves. Yet whether the prayer is accepted or not, and how it is answered, is completely in Allah's hands. If He wills, He answers that prayer in a different way for a certain purpose and a better cause.

Prophet Muhammad (saas) says in one hadith: "A prayer by a Muslim for his brother (or sister) in his absence is always answered. An angel stands close to him who is assigned a special task. Every time he (she) says a good prayer for his brother (or sister), the angel says: 'Amen, and may Allah grant you the same.'" (Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud)

6. What does "praying with hope and fear" mean?

Allah commands people to obey Him, to exhibit good behavior, to race each other to do good, and to perform good deeds in order to earn His good pleasure throughout their lives. However, no one is sure of entering Paradise due to their actions. Thus, no matter how strong their faith and devotion to Allah, they live every instant of their lives in hope and fear. Fearing the punishment of Hell, they ask for forgiveness for their mistakes. On the other hand, since they sin-

cerely believe in Allah, they seek His forgiveness. They always have both the fear of entering Hell and the hope of entering Paradise, until the Day of Judgment, when they will be called to account.

The Qur'an relates that the Prophets prayed to Allah in hope and fear:

We responded to him and gave him Yahya, restoring for him his wife's fertility. They outdid one another in good actions, calling out to Us in hope and fear, and humbling themselves to Us. (Surat al-Anbiya', 90)

7. For what did the Prophets and believers pray?

Allah sets no limits on prayer, invites believers to take refuge in Him, and tells them to ask for help in anything: "Call on Me and I will answer you" (Surah Ghafir, 60). The Qur'an gives some examples of these prayers, as follows:

- To guide them on the Straight Path, the Path of those whom Allah has blessed, and to separate them from the path of those with anger on them, and of the misguided. (Surat al-Fatiha, 5-7)
- To make the place they live a place of safety and to provide the inhabitants of their city, who have faith in Allah and the Last Day, with crops. (Surat al-Baqara, 126)
- To make them Muslims submitted to Allah, and their descendants a Muslim community submitted to Allah. (Surat al-Baqara, 128)
- To show them their rituals of worship. (Surat al-Baqara, 128)

- To turn toward them. (Surat al-Baqara, 128)
- To raise up among them a Messenger to recite His Signs to them, teach them the Book and Wisdom, and purify them. (Surat al-Baqara, 129)
- To give them good both in the world and in the Hereafter. (Surat al-Baqara, 201)
- To safeguard them from the punishment of the Fire. (Surat al-Baqara, 201)
- To pour down steadfastness upon them, make their feet firm, and help them against the unbelievers. (Surat al-Baqara, 250)
- Not to take them to task if they forget or make a mistake. (Surat al-Baqara, 286)
- Not to place on them a load like the one He placed on those before them, and not to place on them a load they do not have the strength to bear. (Surat al-Baqara, 286)
- To pardon them, to forgive them, and to have mercy on them. (Surat al-Baqara, 286)
- Not to make their hearts swerve after He has guided them, and to give them mercy. (Surah Al`Imran, 8)
- To forgive their wrong actions, to erase their bad actions. (Surah Al`Imran, 193)
- To give them what He promised them through His Messengers. (Surah Al`Imran, 194)
- Not to disgrace them on the Day of Resurrection. (Surat Al `Imran, 194)
- To judge between them and their people with truth. (Surat al-A`raf, 89)
- To take them back to Him as Muslims. (Surat al-A`raf, 126)

- To rescue them, by His mercy, from the unbelievers. (Surah Yunus, 86)
- To grant them supporting authority direct from His presence. (Surat al-Isra', 80)
- To make them people who keep up prayer and to accept their prayers. (Surah Ibrahim, 40)
- To forgive them and their parents on the Day of Judgment. (Surah Ibrahim, 41)
- To expand their breasts and to make their task easy for them. (Surat Ta Ha, 25-26)
- To safeguard them from the goadings of the devils. (Surat al-Mu'minun, 97-98)
- To make them a good example for those who do their duty. (Surat al-Furqan, 74)
 - To give them right judgment. (Surat ash-Shu`ara', 83)
- To make them among the inheritors of the garden of delight, and not to disgrace them on the Day of Resurrection. (Surat ash-Shu`ara', 85, 87)
- To keep them thankful for the blessing He has bestowed on them and on their parents, and to keep them acting rightly and to admit them, by His mercy, among His righteous servants. (Surat an-Naml, 19)
 - To bestow good on them. (Surat al-Qasas, 24)
- To forgive them and their brothers (and sisters) who preceded them in faith and not to put any rancor in their hearts toward believers. (Surat al-Hashr, 10)
- To give them a kingdom from His presence. (Surah Sad, 35)
 - To give them decisive speech. (Surah Ta Ha, 27-28)

8. Is it proper to refer to people as "the people of Paradise" or "the people of Hell" while still in this world?

Making such comments is improper, for only Allah knows who will enter Paradise and Hell. People will have such knowledge, if Allah wills, only in the Hereafter. The believers hope for Paradise, but they can never be sure whether they will enter it. Prophet Yusuf's (as) prayer that he be allowed to die as a Muslim is a good example of this:

... Originator of the heavens and Earth, You are my Friend in this world and the Next. So take me as a Muslim at my death and join me to the righteous. (Surah Yusuf, 101)

9. What does the phrase "leaders who summon to the Fire" mean?

Both the believers and the unbelievers have leaders. The believers' leaders invite them to live by the religion, perform good deeds, and exhibit good behavior. They inform them of Allah's existence and the good morals that they should have, describe how the religion's commands should be fulfilled, and enable them to improve themselves by showing them what they are doing wrong.

In the case of the unbelievers, we should not understand their "leaders" to be the community's leading people. People who do not believe in Allah, and reflect their unbelief in their way of thinking, behaving, and living, call others to the Fire, and so become leaders of unbelief. They do not direct people to believe in Allah; rather, they lead them away from belief in Him. They incite the people to follow Satan and their desires, instead of the Qur'an and their consciences. As a result, these leaders of unbelief draw their followers into the Fire and Allah's punishment:

... See the final fate of the wrongdoers! We made them leaders, summoning to the Fire, and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be helped. (Surat al-Qasas, 40-41)

10. What does the Qur'an mean when it says that people's skin, ears, and eyes will bear witness against them on the Day of Judgment?

This statement means that all of the unbelievers' actions, even the ones that they thought no one knew about, will be revealed when their ears, eyes, and skins start to talk. Allah sees everything, whether hidden or open, but on that day He will make these people bear witness to their own crimes through a personal confession. This is a very easy matter for Him, for since He gave each person's tongue the gift of speech, He can surely bestow it upon each person's skin, eyes, and ears.

This fact is related in the Qur'an, as follows:

On the Day We crowd the enemies of Allah into the Fire and they are driven in close-packed ranks, when they reach it, their hearing, sight, and skin will testify against them concerning what they did. They will ask their skins: "Why did you testify against us?" and they will reply: "Allah gave us speech, as He has given speech to everything. He created you in the first place, and you will be returned to Him. You did not think to shield yourselves from your hearing, sight, and skin testifying against you, and you thought that Allah would never know much of what you did." (Surah Fussilat, 19-22)

11. What does the "Unseen" mean?

The "Unseen" is that of which we can have no knowledge, sight, or hearing unless Allah reveals part of this knowledge to us, for only He knows the Unseen. Only Allah is Transcendent, free from the limitations of time and space, and so only He has full knowledge of the past, the present, and the future. As the verse "Though you speak out loud, He knows your secrets and what is even more concealed" (Surah Ta Ha, 7) informs us, He is the One Who possesses the knowledge of the most concealed things, which we can never know. He knows what our hearts contain, what people conceal in their subconscious, and their most secret thoughts, which they do not share with anyone. The Qur'an relates that only Allah knows the Unseen:

The keys of the Unseen are in His possession. No one knows them but Him. He knows everything in the land and sea. No leaf falls without His knowing it. There is no seed in the darkness of the earth, and nothing moist or dry, which is not in a Clear Book. (Surat al-An`am, 59)

12. Can anyone relate information about the future?

Knowledge of the future, whether close or remote, belongs only to Allah, the sole possessor of the knowledge of the Unseen. Thus, people cannot relate any information about the future. Allah, however, says in the Qur'an that He may provide some information about the future to His Messengers:

He is the Knower of the Unseen, and does not divulge His secrets to anyone—except a Messenger with whom He is well pleased, and then He posts sentinels before him and behind him. (Surat al-Jinn, 26-27)

13. Is it proper to talk about the future in a definite manner?

No, for only Allah knows what will happen. Whatever one encounters in a week, a minute, or a second later occurs completely by His will. Thus, people cannot possibly make a definite plan even for the following day. Allah may redirect or even end the course of a person's life, send a serious accident or a fatal illness, destroy his or her city by means of an earthquake, or send some other unexpected events. As people cannot know their destiny, which Allah has predetermined, they have no guarantee that they will even be able to execute a given plan in the next second.

Given that all events occur according to Allah's decree, the Qur'an advises people not to talk about anything so definitely, but rather to say: "If Allah wills," as follows: Never say about anything: "I am doing that tomorrow," without adding: "If Allah wills." Remember your Lord when you forget, and say: "Hopefully my Lord will guide me to something closer to right guidance than this." (Surat al-Kahf, 23-24)

14. How should compliments and praises be proclaimed?

People are praised for their physical beauty or good morals, although the unique and real possessor of all of these admirable features is Allah. Hence, we present all of our compliments to Him, the only One Who creates and shapes everything in its perfect form. For example, if one's physical beauty is praised, we have to remember that Allah has given that beauty as a blessing. Wisdom, intelligence, and all other features are the blessings of Allah on that person. Therefore, all praises find their proper place only when they are made with the intention to praise Allah. The Qur'an proclaims that Allah is the true owner of everything that can be admired, as follows:

And say: "Praise be to Allah, Who has had no son and no partner in His Kingdom, and Who needs no one to protect Him out of weakness." Proclaim His Greatness repeatedly! (Surat al-Isra', 111)

For that reason, when praising a thing's or a person's beauty, we have to realize that Allah created it, that it belongs to Him, and that He may take that blessing back, if He wills to do so.

15. Does Allah accept the repentance of a dying person?

Allah reveals that He will accept repentance, but not at the time of death. Even so, every person has the chance to repent while still alive, for Allah sets no limits on what may be forgiven. Even the worst crimes or the most irreligious acts can be forgiven if the person's repentance is sincere, if he or she proves this sincerity by abandoning such activities and becoming a devoted servant of Allah, and if Allah wills to accept it. However, Allah says the following about those people who do not find it necessary to repent of a long life of unbelief and turn to Him until they find themselves on the point of death and the fear of death overtakes them:

There is no repentance for people who persist in doing evil until death comes to them and who then say: "Now I repent," nor for people who die as unbelievers. We have prepared for them a painful punishment. (Surat an-Nisa', 18)

16. Can one seek forgiveness for another?

It is always possible for a person to ask that other believers be forgiven, regardless of what they have done. The Qur'an mentions that the believers pray to Allah for all believers to be forgiven and for mercy. Since they know that only those with whom Allah is well pleased will be safeguarded from Hell's punishment and will earn Paradise, they desire the wrongdoings of other believers, as well as their own, to be forgiven. Allah's command in this matter is expressed as follows:

Know then that there is no god except Allah, and ask forgiveness for your wrongdoing and for the men and women who believe. Allah knows both your activity and your repose. (Surah Muhammad, 19)

Until the end of their lives, the believers seek forgiveness for other believers. However, whether their prayers are accepted or not is completely within the authority of Allah. The Qur'an gives the following example of such a prayer:

Those who have come after them say: "Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not put any rancor in our hearts toward those who believe. Our Lord, You are All-Gentle, Most Merciful." (Surat al-Hashr, 10)

17. Can anyone know when the Last Hour will come?

No, for such knowledge is unique to Allah. No person, unless Allah wills, can know when it will take place. All we know is that it is coming, for the Qur'an states:

People will ask you about the Last Hour. Say: "Only Allah has knowledge of it. What will make you understand? It may be that the Last Hour is very near." (Surat al-Ahzab, 63)

18. Who are the people "with sickness in their hearts"?

This phrase is used in the Qur'an to designate those people whose faith is weak and who lack sincerity toward Allah, religion, and the believers. Their sickness is not physical; rather, it is spiritual. In other words, it indicates a problem with their degree of faith.

People who have a sickness in their hearts generally reveal their true nature through some behavioral deviations, some of which the Qur'an reveals: not remembering Allah, not living by the Qur'an's moral codes, not striving to serve religion, being unwilling and slow to perform prayers, being uncaring and cold toward the believers, being cowardly, and not paying meticulous attention to the limits set by Allah when they encounter a difficulty. Allah says that these signs can be perceived by those of His servants whom He wills to perceive such things:

Or did those with a sickness in their hearts imagine that Allah would not expose their malevolence? If We willed, We would show them to you and you would know them by their mark and their ambivalent speech. Allah knows your actions. (Surah Muhammad, 29-30)

19. What about being persistent in Allah's worship?

In the verse "He is Lord of the heavens and Earth and everything in between them, so worship Him and persevere in His worship. Do you know of any other with His Name?" (Surah Maryam, 65), Allah commands people to be persistent in their worship of Allah. All good deeds that are performed to earn His good pleasure will be paid in full in His sight. Nonetheless, Allah tells people to be resolute in this matter to point out that perseverance in worship is the real satisfactory objective:

Wealth and sons are the embellishments of the life of

this world. But, in your Lord's sight, right actions that are lasting bring a better reward and are a better basis for hope. (Surat al-Kahf, 46)

20. How should one behave toward one's parents?

Allah commands people to show kindness to their parents. Speaking kind words, showing affection and respect, and being compassionate to one's parents is a requirement of the Qur'an's morals. Allah reminds people not to say even "Ugh" to their parents. Even if their parents do not share their children's belief and do not believe in Allah, the believers still maintain their compassionate and respectful manner toward them. The fact that they do not follow their parents' advice when it conflicts with religion does not affect their idea of respect negatively in the least:

We have instructed man to honor his parents. But if they endeavor to make you associate with Me something about which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. It is to Me that you will return, and I will inform you about the things that you did. (Surat al-`Ankabut, 8)

21. Who is responsible for spreading the message of religion?

Enjoining right and forbidding wrong is everyone's responsibility, anybody who knows the truth is obliged to convey it to others. For that reason, conveying the message of religion and inviting people to believe in Allah is not re-

stricted to Allah's Messengers; every person who believes in Allah must be engaged in this undertaking. Allah informs the believers that calling people to religion and showing them the right path is the way to endless salvation in the Hereafter:

Let there be a community among you who calls to the good, enjoins the right, and forbids the wrong. They are the ones who have success. (Surah Al`Imran, 104)

22. How does the Qur'an define wrongdoing?

The Qur'an classifies those people who refuse to worship Allah, despite being reminded by His signs, as "those who do wrong," as follows:

Who could do greater wrong than those who lie about Allah and deny the truth when it comes to them? Do the unbelievers not have a dwelling place in Hell? (Surat az-Zumar, 32)

Among the most significant signs of the erroneous path taken by these people is their inability to be grateful to Allah for His innumerable gifts and favors, as well as their lack of reflection on their weakness before His greatness. Besides drawing themselves to Hell by means of their erroneous character, they also call other people to the same evil conduct. Preventing others from living by the religion, they lead them to a great punishment both in this world and in the Hereafter. This is why Allah warns against following such people: "Do not rely on those who do wrong, thus causing the Fire to afflict you, for you have no protector besides Allah. Then you will not be helped." (Surah Hud, 113)

23. Is saying "I am a Muslim" sufficient to be considered one of the faithful?

No, because people are considered believers only if they verbally affirm their belief and then live according to it and call others to follow Allah's commands. According to the Qur'an, the believers have the following attributes:

They pay constant attention to living by the values of religion, sacrifice their personal benefits for the common benefits of religion, overcome the selfish passions of their own souls, pardon others, control their rage and are moderate in their behavior, sacrifice for others even when they are in need, spend their wealth in the way of Allah, are steadfast, convey the message of Islam to spread the religion, remember Allah constantly, perform the prayers meticulously, control their temper even when faced with injustice, are just, and who make sincere efforts in many other such matters.

None of these actions can be fulfilled only by speaking. In other words, it makes no sense to say: "I am doing my best" when no actual effort is being made, or to say: "I will spend my wealth when necessary" and then not doing so. Accordingly, even though saying "I am a Muslim" may be the first step in becoming one of the faithful, it will become true faith only when the person sincerely adheres to Allah's commands to the best of his or her ability. This is explained in the Our'an, as follows:

Who could say anything better than someone who summons to Allah and acts rightly and says: "I am one of the Muslims"? (Surah Fussilat, 33)

24. How does the Qur'an explain that unbelievers are also under Allah's control?

All beings in the universe, whether living or nonliving, are under Allah's absolute control. Whether they are aware of it or not, the unbelievers are under His control at every instant of their lives, for as "all things We created with predestination" (Surat al-Qamar, 49) reveals, only Allah has the power to determine the destiny of all beings. As He has predetermined their destinies, they live throughout their lives completely dependent on this destiny. Allah relates this fact in the following verse:

Is it other than the religion of Allah that you desire, when everything in the heavens and Earth, willingly or unwillingly, submits to Him, and to Him you will be returned? (Surah Al`Imran, 83)

Given that Allah's existence surrounds the entire universe, He sees and hears the voice of every living being. Everything, from the unbelievers' subconscious to a thought that crosses their mind, from a single spoken word to any act, is known to Allah at every instant. Therefore all people without exception live, always and everywhere, under His control and oversight. As the Qur'an states:

You do not engage in any matter, recite any part of the Qur'an, or do any action without Our witnessing you while you are occupied with it. Not even the smallest speck eludes your Lord, either on Earth or in Heaven. Nor is there anything smaller than that, or larger, which is not in a Clear Book. (Surah Yunus, 61)

25. How should we love Allah?

Love for Allah, a very deep-rooted affection, is a combination of various emotions. This love contains a feeling of submission to our Creator, Who is the Lord of infinite might, a strong trust in His infinite mercy, a respect for His infinite wisdom, and a great admiration for the infinite beauty He creates. Knowing that Allah is the Lord of all adds loyalty and devotion to this love. Those who are aware of all of these things become devoted to our Lord with a very intense love, which is utterly real and pure. The love that the believers feel for our Lord is expressed in the Qur'an, as follows:

Some people set up equals to Allah, loving them as they should love Allah. But those who believe have a greater love for Allah. If only you could see those who do wrong at the time when they see the punishment, and that truly all strength belongs to Allah, and that Allah is severe in punishment. (Surat al-Baqara, 165)

26. What does "being mighty against the unbelievers" mean?

O You who believe. If any of you renounce your religion, Allah will bring forward a people whom He loves and who love Him, humble to the believers and powerful against the unbelievers, who strive in the Way of Allah and do not fear the blame of any censurer... (Surat al-Ma'ida, 54)

Allah commands the believers to conduct themselves according to the Qur'an's morals and, no matter what happens or how they are treated, always to be resolute in this respect.

On the other hand, unbelievers exhibit some behaviors that are completely opposed to the believers' good morals. Upon encountering such behavior, the believers do not respond in the same way, but rather respond in a mighty and dignified manner and, by displaying their strong decisiveness, never neglect the Qur'an's morals. They respond to corrupt words with good words, arrogance with humility, injustice with justice, and mercilessness with mercy. They never consider it necessary to adopt attitudes resembling the attitudes of those who reject belief.

The Qur'an gives several examples of believers' maintaining their dignity toward the unbelievers, as follows:

Those who do not bear false witness and who, when they pass by worthless talk, pass by with dignity. (Surat al-Furqan, 72)

The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk lightly on the land and who, when the ignorant speak to them, say: "Peace." (Surat al-Furqan, 63)

27. Is the person who communicates the religion responsible for someone's decision to believe or not to believe?

No, because each person is responsible only for himself or herself. The believers are responsible only for conveying the message to others in the best way and to call them to believe in Allah.

Nevertheless, the heart of the person to whom the religion is communicated is completely in Allah's hand. If it is that person's destiny to believe, Allah will give him or her the love of Islam and will settle faith in his or her heart. Accordingly, Allah states in the Qur'an that Muslims communicate the religion, but only He guides the person:

You cannot guide those you would like to, but Allah guides those whom He wills. He has best knowledge of the guided. (Surat al-Qasas, 56)

28. Can a Muslim live in isolation from other Muslims?

As long as they do not have sound reasons for being alone, Muslims should live with other Muslims in order to exhibit good morals, generosity, submissiveness to advice, humbleness, love, and loyalty. The believers should be together, because they cannot be loyal to those who are irreligious, yield to the unbelievers' conduct, be submissive to unbelievers or remember Allah with unbelievers. Therefore, the believers must be with other believers in order to live the Qur'anic lifestyle.

Besides this, the believers have to spread the morals of Islam among people so that everyone can live by them, since this is one of the responsibilities that Allah has given to the believers. Such a responsibility requires that the believers support each other as much as possible, for Allah commands them to act "in ranks like well-built walls." (Surat as-Saff, 4)

In addition, the believers can be at ease only when they are with other believers who live by the Qur'an's morals. They find pleasure only in the friendship of people who have taken Allah as their Friend. They would like to see people with good morals, who are deeply devoted to Allah, and would

wish to live in the world with people whom they desire to be with eternally in the Hereafter.

Allah has related this command in the Qur'an, as follows:

Restrain yourself patiently with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, desiring His face. Do not turn your eyes from them, desiring the attractions of this world. And do not obey someone whose heart We have made neglectful of Our remembrance, who follows his own whims and desires, and whose life has transgressed all bounds. (Surat al-Kahf, 28)

29. Can one be happy without religion?

People who do not live by the religion cannot be happy, in the true sense of the word, for in order to be happy, first of all one's conscience needs to be at ease. In other words, nothing should cause them distress or confusion, or make them feel remorse. Ease of conscience can be attained only by living by the religion. One's conscience, which is under Allah's control, always commands a person to believe in Allah, to fulfill the religion's requirements, and to adhere to the Qur'an's values. For that reason, irreligious person, one who has struggled against this command of his or her conscience throughout his or her life, cannot be truly happy. Allah reveals that people can attain ease of heart and true peace only by having faith in Him:

Those who believe and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah. Only in the remembrance of Allah can the heart find peace. (Surat ar-Ra`d, 28)

30. Is everybody responsible for living by the religion?

Everybody, from the moment one gains consciousness to comprehend Allah's existence, is responsible for fulfilling His commands. Being sick or poor, very rich or very famous, or having a high rank does not hinder a person from living by the religion.

No one can change the fact that people are created to serve Allah. The Qur'an informs us that only physically disabled people will not be held accountable for some of the religion's commands. Apart from this, every person is to worship Allah and fulfill His religion's commands. Allah states that the Qur'an is a binding duty upon humanity:

It [the Qur'an] is certainly a reminder to you and to your people, and you will be questioned. (Surat az-Zukhruf, 44)

31. Can Isa' (as), Musa (as), and other Prophets be referred to as "Muslims"?

All Prophets, including `Isa (as), Musa (as), Sulayman (as), Ibrahim (as), Nuh (as), and Yusuf (as), are referred to in the Qur'an as "Muslims," because Allah's religion is one: Islam. The religion that has been taught since Prophet Adam (as) has always been the same. The essence of the Gospel of Prophet 'Isa (as), the Torah of Prophet Musa (as), and the Psalms of Prophet Dawud (as), before they were distorted, conveyed the message of this religion. For that reason, all of Allah's Prophets communicated and belonged to the religion of Allah—Islam—the religion of truth. This point is ex-

plained in the Qur'an, as follows:

Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a man of pure natural belief—a Muslim. He was not one of the associaters. (Surah Al `Imran, 67)

In another verse, Prophet Musa (as) referred to his followers as "Muslims":

Musa said: "My people. If you believe in Allah, then put your trust in Him if you are Muslims." (Surah Yunus, 84)

Another verse informs us that the disciples of Prophet 'Isa (as) also referred to themselves as Muslims:

And when I inspired the Disciples to believe in Me and in My Messenger, they said: "We believe. Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Surat al-Ma'ida, 111)

32. What does "being pleased with Allah" mean?

This phrase means that people should be content with the destiny that Allah has predetermined for them and with what He gives them, both unconditionally and without any internal resistance. People may not realize the goodness in a given event at that very moment. But whether they realize it or not, they know that Allah wills goodness in a given event at that very moment and in every event. In fact, believers always have infinite trust in Allah in everything that befalls them. They never wonder whether that event will bring them good or bad; rather, they trust in Allah unceasingly and know that they will always find good.

One may become fatally sick, have a serious accident

and become physically disabled, lose all of his or her wealth, be wronged by others, or encounter an utterly unexpected event. No matter what happens, one should know that all of these things take place under Allah's complete control, and therefore feel at peace. That person submits completely to Allah's wisdom and mercy and thanks Him, regardless of the circumstances in which they find themselves. This is the behavior exhibited by those who are pleased with Allah, about whom Allah states the following:

Allah will say: "This is the Day when the sincerity of the sincere will benefit them. They will have Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, forever and ever. Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. That is the Great Victory." (Surat al-Ma'ida, 119)

... Allah has inscribed faith upon such people's hearts, and will reinforce them with a Spirit from Him and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, forever. Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. Such people are the party of Allah. Truly it is the party of Allah who are successful. (Surat al-Mujadala, 22)

33. Is it appropriate to believe in superstitions?

Superstitions are irrational and mistaken beliefs that spread among the people. Some people may become nervous due to their unfounded beliefs, such as believing that some beings bring bad luck. However, no one or thing can bring good or bad luck, for nothing in the universe comes into being by mere chance. Every person, plant, animal, or object has its own destiny. How long they will live, how their life will be, what they will look like, and everything else is already known in Allah's sight, for not a leaf falls without Him knowing it.

Every event that has taken place since the creation of the universe, and that will take place in the future, occurs according to Allah's will. No person, animal, or object has the strength to change this destiny. If a person meets with an unexpected accident, this is due to his or her destiny, which was predetermined even before he or she was created. Achieving success, regaining one's health, or coming across something good is not due to good luck, but to Allah's favor:

The keys of the Unseen are in His possession. No one knows them but Him. He knows everything in the land and sea. No leaf falls without His knowing it. There is no seed in the darkness of the earth, and nothing moist or dry, which is not in a Clear Book. (Surat al-An`am, 59)

34. Has the Qur'an been sent to all nations, regardless of time or location?

Yes, for the Qur'an's commands are for every person who lives until the Day of Resurrection. Those who lived 1,000 years ago and those who will live from now on will all be judged by the same book and the same commands. Entering a new century or changing technology or cities do not change humanity's responsibilities to Allah. Whether a

person lives in the midst of a great desert or in an apartment in a skyscraper, he or she must pray and adhere to the Qur'an's values. Allah reveals that the Qur'an is sent to all beings and that all people will be judged from this book:

It [the Qur'an] is certainly a reminder to you and to your people, and you will be questioned. (Surat az-Zukhruf, 44)

Blessed be He Who has sent down the Criterion (Furqan) to His servant, so that he can be a warner to all beings. (Surat al-Furqan, 1)

35. Is it proper to complain about a disease, a disability, a physical defect, or poverty?

Such imperfections are specially created by Allah in order to make people grasp the temporary nature of this world's life and yearn for Paradise, so that they will strive to attain it. Hence, and in fact, these imperfections are blessings that Allah grants to His servants. For those who know how to take heed, situations that seem to be difficulties in the world turn out to be great blessings in respect to the eternal life. Allah promises Paradise to His servants who, when faced with the deficiencies and difficulties of this world's life, trust Allah and are steadfast in order to earn His good pleasure. Furthermore, Allah will remove all imperfections, both spiritual and physical, of those who attain Paradise and will create them in the most beautiful and eternal form.

That is why, when faced with any imperfection, one should remember this fact and utterly yield to Allah, the Lord of infinite wisdom. There is absolute goodness and great wisdom, unknown to any person, in the destiny that Allah has determined for them. It is incompatible with the Qur'an's morals to be displeased with and to complain of situations that people do not like, such as poverty, unattractiveness, or sickness. All men and women should be content with their destiny, for those who complain and are unhappy with a situation are, in fact, displeased with a good thing that Allah has willed for them. Such an attitude displays their ingratitude toward Allah, because He creates every incident in order to test people, and makes it a means for their eternal salvation. The ideal behavior that believers should exhibit is described in the Qur'an, as follows:

Say: "Nothing can happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is Our Master. It is in Allah that the believers should put their trust." (Surat at-Tawba, 51)

36. Will we see the Prophets on the Day of Judgment?

All people who have ever lived, including the Prophets, will be gathered on the Day of Judgment. Each Prophet will return to Allah to bear witness to his people. People will be judged in His presence for all of their actions in the world. Hence, it will be possible, by His will, to see Prophets Muhammad (saas), 'Isa (as), Adam (as), Yusuf (as), and all of the other Prophets on that day. Allah relates this in the Qur'an, as follows:

And Earth will shine with the Pure Light of its Lord, the Book will be put in place, and the Prophets and witnesses will be brought. It will be decided between them with the truth, and they will not be wronged. (Surat az-Zumar, 69)

37. Who will accompany the believers in Paradise?

In Paradise, all of the believers who have lived since the time of Prophet Adam (as) will be together. Among these people will be the Prophets, martyrs, and sincere believers who affirmed the Messengers and followed the path they showed. The glad tidings are given to the believers in the Qur'an, as follows:

Whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger will be with those whom Allah has blessed: the Prophets and the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. What excellent company such people are! (Surat an-Nisa', 69)

38. What is the place of "boasting of things that one has not done" in the Qur'an?

In the Qur'an, Allah advises humanity to be sincere in every deed and to seek only His good pleasure. On the other hand, any expectation of praise results from seeking the appreciation of other people and trying to please them. Those who have such a point of view attempt to boast about what they have and have not done. However, taking credit for what one has not done and using it to gain other people's esteem is simply lying to Allah, for He knows what each person has and has not done. The Qur'an condemns trying to profit from knowledge unknown to people, whereas Allah

knows it, and boasting. Even though such people may seem to be gaining some benefit at that very moment, they are, in fact, losers, for Allah will hold them responsible for every word they utter and will certainly pay them their due in the Hereafter. Their situation is explained in the Qur'an, as follows:

Those who exult in what they have done and love to be praised for what they have not done should not suppose that they have escaped the punishment. They will have a painful punishment. (Surah Al `Imran, 188)

39. How should Muslims understand art?

Allah has created many beautiful things; art is the product of people's activities, those who take beauty as a model and imitate it. Given that art is a favor that Allah grants to humanity, it is part of human nature to appreciate aesthetics and beauty. The believers, especially, are people who can appreciate Allah's blessings, perceive the subtleties in them, and are broad-minded in terms of aesthetics. As a result, the pleasure they find in art multiplies.

The believers consider art as a gift of Paradise. The Qur'an relates that Paradise is furnished with unparalleled elegant art, which deeply impresses the soul. In addition, it relates that Paradise contains gold-embroidered cushions, garments made of rich brocade, jewels, lofty chambers, green garments made of the finest silk, and thrones encrusted with gold and precious stones. All of this beauty, which Allah commends, are blessings for the believers in this world, too.

Besides these, the exquisiteness of Prophet Sulayman's

(as) palace, as mentioned in the Qur'an, is noteworthy in terms of revealing the believers' understanding of art and aesthetics. Prophet Sulayman (as) decorated his palace with pools, large basins, and statues, and produced such excellent work of art that everyone was struck with admiration.

Our Prophet (saas) also states that Allah loves beauty in the following hadith: "Allah is beautiful and loves beauty" (Muslim).

40. What does "wisdom" mean?

Wisdom is the ability to determine what is right and most appropriate. All speech, decisions, and behavior of people of wisdom are wise and proper. They can explain a subject in the most correct, most concise, and wisest manner; can make the right diagnosis of an event, a person, or a behavior; react to events wisely; and can exhibit the finest behavior. Therefore, people of wisdom are also people of high intelligence.

One can have wisdom only through belief in Allah and following the Qur'an, for the Qur'an is the only source that teaches humanity the truth of events, good and wise behavior, thought, and speech.

Allah gives wisdom as a blessing to His sincere servants who turn to Him. The Qur'an points out that Allah grants this gift to whom He wills:

He gives wisdom to whoever He wills, and he who has been given wisdom has been given great good. But no one pays heed but people of intelligence. (Surat al-Baqara, 269)

41. What is the "decisive speech" that Allah gave to Prophet Dawud (as)?

We made his kingdom strong and gave him wisdom and decisive speech. (Surah Sad, 20)

Decisive speech is the ability to explain the truth in the most concise, most articulate, and most influential way. In other words, it is the ability to talk wisely. The most significant characteristic of such speech is that its very sincerity and fluency moves the conscience of others. Those who have decisive speech deeply influence other people by causing them to alter their thoughts, ideologies, and ways of living, and to adopt the right path.

Remember that decisive speech is not the result of being well-cultured, having read many books, being experienced, knowing the rules of grammar, or making perfect sentences. Rather, it is a gift of Allah to His firmly believing, sincere, and true servants.

42. Does Allah reward the believers in this world for their faith?

Allah provides great rewards to His sincere servants during their lives in this world. He guides them to the right path, provides them with ease in their affairs, sends down serenity and peace upon their hearts, multiplies His blessings to them many times over, and helps them in return for their services in His way. He may also send them some difficulties to test their faith. However, in addition to all of these, He provides them with a good life. Allah states that He will reward the believers' good deeds:

Anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a believer, We will give them a good life and will recompense them according to the best of what they did. (Surat an-Nahl, 97)

Say: "O My servants who believe. Be in awe of your Lord. For those who do good in this world there is good, and Allah's Earth is spacious. The steadfast will be paid their wages in full, without any reckoning." (Surat az-Zumar, 10)

So Allah gave them the reward of this world and the best reward of the Hereafter. Allah loves good-doers. (Surah Al`Imran, 148)

43. Does Allah punish the unbelievers in this world?

Allah states: "As for those who do not believe, I will punish them with a harsh punishment in this world and the Hereafter. They will have no helpers." (Surah Al`Imran, 56) In this verse, Allah informs us that He will recompense the unbelievers in this world too. The Qur'an points out that these people may experience both a physical and a spiritual punishment. As outlined in the verse "Do they not see that they are tried once or twice in every year? But still they do not repent. They do not pay heed," (Surat at-Tawba, 126) Allah mentions that He sometimes strikes the unbelievers with various afflictions in this world. In addition, the Qur'an contains accounts of past nations that suffered such punishments as earthquakes, drought, scarce crops, flood, lightning, or perishing all together at the same time.

On the other hand, their spiritual punishment continues as long as they are alive. These people, who do not follow the right path to which their consciences guide them, can never escape their remorse. Likewise, since they do not live by the Qur'an's morals, they can never experience true happiness, friendship, love, and loyalty. The people around them also do not adhere to the Qur'an's morals, and so live in a world of disorder, chaos, and anxiety. Although Allah gives them many blessings in this world, the Qur'an points out that they are created only to try them:

Do not let their wealth and their children impress you. Allah merely wants to punish them by them in this world, and for them to die while they do not believe. (Surat at-Tawba, 85)

44. Is it possible to distinguish those people who are more pious? How is piety (taqwa) displayed?

It is impossible to determine who has the most piety in Allah's sight. A person's true piety, sincerity, and faith are hidden in his or her heart, and only Allah knows them, whereas people may only form a strong opinion about somebody's piety.

People form their opinions about others based upon their conduct. For example, a person's sincerity toward Allah, loyalty to the religion, sincere effort to earn Allah's good pleasure, eagerness and resoluteness to serve religion, love for the believers and loyalty allow others to form an opinion about that person's piety. Even so, the final judgment belongs to Allah alone.

People become pious by avoiding sins, forbidden acts, or behavior that does not comply with the Qur'an's morals. Whoever is firmer in living according to good morals, makes more effort to help religion, and is more devoted to adhering to the religion's commands increases his or her piety.

Pious believers also can be identified by their wisdom. Their decisions are right, they find much easier and quicker solutions to problems, and their speech is much wiser and more impressive. They can perceive aspects of events that remain unnoticed by others, and have a much keener awareness. They do not do things to put themselves forward, but display a sincere manner. They do not seek the adulation and praise of other people, but only Allah's good pleasure. Regardless of the situation, they always observe the limits set by Allah. People who possess all of these features may be expected to have a high degree of righteousness. However, one still cannot form a definite opinion concerning another's degree of piety or level of faith in relationship to other people, for all such evaluations are only superficial, being based upon what is seen from the outside. Peoples' true faith, devotion, sincerity, and nearness to Allah is known only by Allah.

45. Can one person bear another's burden and be punished for him or her in the Hereafter?

The Qur'an states that such a situation is not possible, for every person is responsible for his or her actions and will be judged in Allah's presence. This is so because Allah has given each person a conscience that distinguishes between right and wrong and always calls him or her to seek Allah's good pleasure. Furthermore, by sending a book to teach them what is right and wrong, and communicating His religion through His Messengers, He has warned all people against the punishment of Hell. Those who turn away from the truth after all of these warnings make their individual choices by their free will, reasoning, and desires. Each one of them will be held accountable for their ultimate decision. The Qur'an proclaims this, as follows:

No one can bear another's burden. If someone weighed down calls for help to bear his load, nothing of it will be carried, even if he should be his close relative. You can only warn those who fear their Lord in the Unseen and establish prayer. Whoever is purified, is purified for himself alone. Allah is your final destination. (Surah Fatir, 18)

In another verse, Allah informs humanity that those who drive people to wrongdoing by promising what they cannot deliver are liars, and warns humanity about them, as follows:

Those who do not believe say to those who believe: "Follow our way, and we will bear the weight of your mistakes." They will not bear the weight of a single one of their mistakes. Truly they are liars. (Surat al-`Ankabut, 12)

46. How can Islam and the Qur'an be conveyed to others?

Religion is best conveyed to a person by communicating it both verbally and physically. By explaining the religion's

commands and the Qur'an's morals, and then living according to them, those who are not yet believers can grasp the truth's meaning far more accurately. Since sincerity is measured by the consistency of a person's words with his or her actual actions, the sincerity of the conveyor significantly helps the person to perceive the beauty of religion.

For example, if the person explains why self-sacrifice is a virtuous action and, on the other hand, exhibits selfishness, this will diminish the effect of his or her words and raise serious doubts about that person's sincerity. However, if a person displays good morals and invites other people to do the same, they will form a strong opinion about that person's sincerity and observe how the good morals that he or she mentions can be practiced in daily life. Likewise, if the person explaining modesty displays it in his or her actions, it becomes the best way to spread the religion. Allah reminds believers to do what they tell other people to do:

O You who believe. Why do you say what you do not do? It is deeply abhorrent to Allah that you should say what you do not do. (Surat as-Saff, 2-3)

47. Is there any limit to good morals? Can one say "that's enough" after attaining a certain level of good morals?

There are no limits to good morals. For every action and word, there is certainly a better one. One can never say "this is enough" or "this is the best." Furthermore, whenever people deem themselves to have reached a satisfactory level, moral and behavioral corruption sets in. Since they believe

that they have no further need to renew themselves, they cannot benefit from any beauty or show any improvement in their characters. Allah points out that those who see themselves as sufficient are arrogant:

No indeed! Truly man is unbridled, seeing himself as self-sufficient. (Surat al-`Alaq, 6-7)

Thus people should always seek to improve themselves, because nobody can be sure of earning Paradise and Allah's good pleasure before Allah's decision about him or her is known.

48. How should Muslims spend their time?

In the Qur'an, the concept of "spare time" does not apply to the believers, for every instant of their lives is occupied. Those who are in awe of Allah and scrupulously abide by His commands strive to perform good deeds continuously in order to be among those closest to Allah. They spend their time worshipping Him according to the guidelines that He has laid out in the Qur'an. Finishing one thing, they embark upon another one in their eternal quest for goodness and beauty. There are no interruptions, pauses, or limits during these efforts, because the believers understand that they should spend every moment working to earn Allah's good pleasure and that they will have to account for every instant of their lives.

The Qur'an refers to these efforts, as follows:

So when you have finished, work on, and make your Lord your goal! (Surat al-Inshirah, 7-8)

49. Can any reward be expected from people in return for conveying the religion's message?

The believers convey this message in order to earn Allah's good pleasure and to fulfill the related Qur'anic command. In return, they expect no worldly wage, but only Allah's good pleasure and Paradise. All Prophets strove with this purpose in mind until the end of their lives; however, they never asked for any worldly recompense from the people and made it clear that they expected none. This greatness of spirit is exemplified in the Qur'an, as follows:

So heed Allah and obey me. I do not ask you for any wage for it. My wage is the responsibility of no one but the Lord of all the worlds. (Surat ash-Shu`ara', 179-180)

50. What does the Qur'an say about orphans?

It is commanded in the Qur'an to be good and compassionate towards orphans, for they have no parents to look after them or to ensure their education:

So as for orphans, do not oppress them. (Surat ad-Duha: 9)

In other verses, Allah commands people to respect their rights, set aside part of their goods and income for them, and to treat them well. Furthermore, He recommends that an orphan's assets be used justly, and that these should be returned when he or she reaches mental maturity.

Allah advises people to be careful and meticulous about an orphan's education so that he or she can be brought up as a good person and have the good morals of the Qur'an. He encourages the believers to provide orphans with protection and

material assurance:

... They will ask you about the orphans. Say: "Improvement for them is best." If you mix your affairs with theirs, they are your brothers... (Surat al-Baqara, 220)

The believers always avoid being unjust with an orphan's property, because Allah defines the pitiless behavior of those who covet such property and benefit from it as a serious crime:

Give the orphans their property, and do not substitute bad things for good. Do not assimilate their property into your own, [for] doing that is a serious crime. (Surat an-Nisa', 2)

As a result of these verses, the believers protect the orphans' property carefully until they grow up and can take care of themselves, and then hand over all of their rights to them.

51. Is it proper to argue when one's knowledge of an issue is incomplete?

Allah advises people not to argue about issues of which they have no knowledge, because over everyone with knowledge is someone who knows better. People do not derive any benefit from arguing over things about which they are not knowledgeable. The best behavior in such a case is to consult those who are more knowledgeable in order to learn the correct information. The Qur'an reminds people not to pursue things of which they have no knowledge, as follows:

Do not pursue what you have no knowledge of.

Hearing, sight and hearts will all be questioned. (Surat al-Isra': 36)

52. What about people who warn others, yet do not personally practice what they recommend?

The Qur'an advises the believers to enjoin one another to do right and to forbid wrong. This surely pleases Allah. However, the really important thing is to do what they ask others to do, thereby setting an example in their own behavior and good morals. If somebody knows that a particular action is wrong and is disturbed to see someone else doing it, then he or she is equally responsible for abandoning this act and performing the right action. Allah reminds the believers of this, as follows:

Do you order people to devoutness and forget yourselves, when you recite the Book? Will you not use your intellect? (Surat al-Bagara, 44)

53. People, in general, pray only during times of hardship. What does the Qur'an say about this?

People who are far from the Qur'an's morals pray to Allah only when they become sick, or face hardship or some other "disaster." At these times, they understand how helpless they are. However, those who seek refuge in Allah at such times and pray to Him continuously to free them from their troubles and grant them blessings change the minute the situation is resolved.

They forget to pray to Allah and thank Him for His bless-

ings. As soon as they are freed from their difficulties, they immediately reveal their insincerity toward Allah.

Their hypocritical and insincere manner is described in the following terms:

When the waves hang over them like canopies, they call upon Allah, making their religion sincerely His. But then when He delivers them safely to the land, some of them are ambivalent. None but a treacherous, thankless man denies Our Signs. (Surah Luqman, 32)

54. Has Allah sent a warner / Messenger to all nations?

The verse "There is no community to which a warner has not come" (Surah Fatir, 24), clearly states that Allah has done so. These Messengers explained Allah's religion to their people, as well as the rituals of worship that they should perform, gave them the glad tidings of Paradise, and warned them about the punishment of Hell. In addition, the Messengers have always been role models for their people, due to their meticulous fulfillment of Allah's religion, their good morals, and the intense awe of Allah that they feel. Another reason why Allah warns humanity through His Messengers is as follows:

Messengers bringing good news and giving warning, so that people will have no argument against Allah after the coming of the Messengers. Allah is Almighty, All-Wise. (Surat an-Nisa', 165)

This is a manifestation of Allah's superior justice. On the Day of Judgment, no one will be able to say that he or she

was not warned of Allah's punishment or had not been told of his or her responsibilities to Allah. In other words, everybody will be justly paid in full.

55. How does the Qur'an define "suspicion"?

Allah does not approve of people acting on suspicion and conjecture. In fact, He indicates in many verses that this is a characteristic of the societies of ignorance and that it benefits no one. Following His command to avoid suspicion, the believers do not base any of their ideas on unfounded information. All of their words and ideas always comply with the Qur'an's morals, are based on absolute evidence, and are just. They do not arrive at suspicion-based decisions about a person; rather, they ask his or her opinion or gather valid evidence.

The believers' awe of Allah causes them to pay serious attention to this issue. Knowing that they will be judged for each action in the Hereafter and doing their best to earn His Paradise, they are very careful and just in this respect. Allah defines suspicion in these words:

O You who believe. Avoid most suspicion. Indeed, some suspicion is a crime... (Surat al-Hujurat, 12)

56. Is it acceptable to defer one's acts of worship until old age?

Allah holds everybody who has a sound mind and consciousness responsible for living by the Qur'an's morals and for fulfilling the religion's commands. Those who perform acts of worship live a good life in this world and earn eternal

life in Paradise. Intentionally deferring these prayers with such thoughts as "I'd better enjoy my youthful years, I can worship when I get older and thus earn the life in the Hereafter" may cause people to lose their lives in the Hereafter, for "There is no repentance for people who persist in doing evil until death comes to them and who then say: "Now I repent," nor for people who die as unbelievers. We have prepared for them a painful punishment." (Surat an-Nisa', 18) Also remember that no one knows when he or she will die. Thus, it is a great mistake to defer one's worship, for after death there are no more chances, regardless of the level of regret or of the desire to be sent back.

57. Is it acceptable to defer acts of worship, saying: "I have a pure heart"?

The world is a place of testing for everyone. Allah informs humanity of this fact in "He Who created death and life to test which of you is best in action..." (Surat al-Mulk, 2). As a requirement of this test, people are accountable for every action and every act of worship that they actually perform or defer. In such a case, the chastity of one's heart alone cannot be a measure. No doubt this chastity, goodwill, and honest personality are valuable in Allah's sight, but the most significant sign of chastity and sincerity is the meticulous fulfillment of His commands. Therefore, no matter how benevolent they claim to be, people who do not perform the prescribed acts of worship, stand in awe of Allah, and do not take the Qur'an and His good pleasure as their measure will not meet with what they expect in the Hereafter.

Besides these, only the Qur'an can measure the "chastity of heart." In other words, people can say that they are chaste only if they are sincere according to the Qur'anic meaning of the term. Thus, it is senseless for them to claim to have a chaste heart based upon their own code of values or that of the societies of ignorance.

58. How does the Qur'an view the holy books that were revealed before it?

Allah revealed the Torah to Prophet Musa (as), the Psalms to Prophet Dawud (as), and the Gospel to Prophet `Isa (as) before He sent down the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad (saas). Each of these books were books of truth that conveyed the message of Allah's religion at a particular point in time. However, over time they were distorted by people who held mistaken and false beliefs and became mixed up with false information. Due to this development, humanity had no book of truth that conveyed the true religion, and so Allah sent the Qur'an to inform humanity of His religion once again. The Qur'an is protected until the Day of Resurrection by Allah, for "It is We Who have sent down the Reminder and We Who will preserve it." (Surat al-Hijr, 9)

59. Who are the "People of the Book"?

They are the Jews and the Christians, to whom the Torah and the Gospel were sent. But since these books have been distorted over time, Allah sent Prophet Muhammad (saas) to warn them, and the Qur'an as their holy book. Some of the verses related to them are as follows:

They are not all the same. There is a community among the People of the Book who are upright. They recite Allah's Signs throughout the night, and they prostrate. They believe in Allah and the Last Day, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and compete in doing good. They are among the righteous. (Surah Al`Imran, 113-114)

Among the People of the Book are some who believe in Allah, in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down to them, and who are humble before Allah. They do not sell Allah's Signs for a paltry price. Such people will have their reward with their Lord. Allah is swift at reckoning. (Surah Al`Imran, 199)

60. What is the point of not being punished immediately for one's mistakes?

The fact that their punishment is not immediate should not encourage people to be slack, for Allah gives people a specified time and thus tests them. He promises the life of Paradise to those who do good, and the life of Hell to those who do evil. This being the case, those who are not punished immediately should realize that Allah, out of His love and compassion, has given them time to repent. The Qur'an states:

If Allah were to take mankind to task for what they have earned, He would not leave a single creature crawling on it, but He is deferring them until a specified time. Then, when their time comes, Allah sees His servants! (Surah Fatir, 45)

61. Are people accountable for what crosses their minds?

Satan may fill people with all sorts of false hopes, whisper to them, or sow suspicious thoughts in their minds. If they are deluded by these whispers, believe in Satan, and comply with his whisperings, they may be responsible for their thoughts.

But if they realize that these whispers come from Satan and so seek refuge with Allah and exhibit good behavior, they immediately abandon such evil thoughts and replace them with good thoughts. As a result, the evil thoughts vanish. How the believers behave when Satan whispers to them is related in the Qur'an, as follows:

As for those who guard against evil, when they are bothered by visitors from Satan, they remember and immediately see clearly. (Surat al-A`raf, 201)

But it should also be noted that if people, despite being aware of the above, allow provoking whispers, doubts, and negative thoughts to cross their minds, they may be held responsible for these. Those who always think evil against the believers and seek to cause dissention among them also may be held responsible for their intentions, for "Say: 'Whether you conceal what is in your breasts or make it known, Allah knows it. He knows what is in the heavens and what is on Earth. Allah has power over all things.' " (Surah Al `Imran, 29)

62. Is it acceptable to grieve when someone dies?

Allah has predetermined a certain lifetime for each person, and nobody can alter it. Thus, the believers should be pleased with the destiny that Allah has created, submit to this event, and trust Allah. Not doing so implies rebelling against the destiny that Allah has created, something that sincere believers would never do. Furthermore, deceased believers will meet with Allah's good pleasure and Paradise, and so will live a good life in great blessings that cannot possibly be compared with their lives in this world. Thus, there is no need to be sorry for the deceased believers; rather, we should be happy that they met such an honorable outcome. If the deceased did not use their lives to seek Allah's good pleasure, they will meet Hell in the Hereafter. Yet since this is also due to His will and justice, there is again nothing to be sorry about, for the deceased had knowingly chosen the path of unbelief despite being warned of the consequences of doing so.

In addition, it makes no sense to feel sorrow at one's separation from a loved one, for those who are still alive can strive sincerely for Allah's good pleasure and, as a result, can attain the eternal companionship of their loved ones in the eternal life of Paradise.

Therefore, since the believers hope that their deceased fellow believers will enter Paradise, they are not sorry when their companions die. In fact, the Qur'an advises the believers to be happy and to give one another the glad tidings of entering Paradise after death:

Allah has bought from the believers their selves and their wealth in return for the Garden. They fight in the Way of Allah, and they kill and are killed. It is a promise binding on Him in the Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his contract than Allah? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the great victory. (Surat at-Tawba, 111)

63. Is it proper to feel sorry for those who do not believe in Allah?

Those who are sure of Allah's existence and the Hereafter desire that other people grasp the truth and live by the Qur'an's morals, which is the most suitable way of living for human beings. Knowing that each unbeliever will meet with Hell's infinite punishment, the believers put forth their best efforts to lead the unbelievers to belief. But while each believer is responsible for conveying the message and for calling people to the truth, only Allah can guide people to the truth. Even if the believers convey the message all day and night, express themselves in the most impressive ways and give the most convincing examples, all of these efforts will come to naught if Allah does not guide the people being addressed. If Allah wills, He guides anyone He selects at any time. This is only by His will, and Allah is the best of judges because whatever He determines and decides is the best for humanity. For that reason, those people who refuse to believe despite the best efforts of the believers should not be a cause of sorrow. Knowing that submitting to His will is the right conduct, believers place their trust in Allah.

64. Who will bear witness to humanity in the Hereafter?

On the Day of Judgment, each person will meet every action that they performed and every thought that crossed their minds when they were in the world. As "... Allah is witness of all things" (Surat al-Hajj, 17) informs us, Allah witnesses everything that each person does in the world. The Qur'an mentions those who will serve as witnesses on that Day and provides some details about them, as follows:

When they reach it, their hearing, sight, and skin will testify against them concerning what they did. (Surat Fussilat, 20)

When all the Messengers are called together at a time appointed [to bear witness for or against those to whom they conveyed Allah's message.] (Surat al-Mursalat, 11)

How will it be when We bring a witness from every nation and bring you as a witness against them? (Surat an-Nisa', 41)

Today We seal up their mouths and their hands speak to us, and their feet bear witness to what they have earned. (Surah Ya Sin, 65)

Earth will shine with the Pure Light of its Lord, the Book will be put in place, and the Prophets and witnesses will be brought. It will be decided between them with the truth, and they will not be wronged. (Surat az-Zumar, 69)

On the Day We raise up a witness from every nation, those who did not believe will not be excused, nor will they be able to appease Allah. (Surat an-Nahl, 84)

On that Day We will raise up among every community a witness against them from among themselves, and bring you as a witness against them... (Surat an-Nahl, 89)

We will certainly help Our Messengers and those who believe both in the life of this world and on the Day the witnesses appear. (Surah Ghafir, 51)

Every self will come together with a driver and a witness. (Surah Qaf, 21)

65. How should one behave toward arrogant people?

One of the believers' most important characteristics is their resolute compliance with good morals and their beliefs, regardless of conditions, people, or environment. For that reason, when they encounter any arrogance in people, they do not fall into the same error as the person committing it; rather, they behave modestly and humbly and try to set an example for that person. Allah states that such behavior pleases Him, and that responding to bad behavior with good will influence that person:

A good action and a bad action are not the same. Repel the bad with something better and, if there is enmity between you and someone else, he will be like a bosom friend. (Surah Fussilat, 34)

66. Do such concepts as impatience and despair have a place in a believer's life?

Allah advises the faithful to be patient in times of difficulty, as follows:

O You who believe. Be steadfast, be supreme in steadfastness, be firm on the battlefield, and heed Allah so that hopefully you will be successful. (Surah Al `Imran, 200)

Allah advises believers to be steadfast when they face hardship. The believers use their intellect, as well as all material and spiritual means, and do their utmost to overcome difficulties. In addition, knowing that hardships are special conditions that Allah creates to test them and that there is an absolute good hidden behind these events, they trust Allah, for this is essential to their continued steadfastness. The believers' explicit trust that Allah creates every event with absolute wisdom, and that He will remove these difficulties by answering their prayers, prevents them from experiencing despair, hopelessness, and similar negative feelings.

In "Say: 'My servants, you who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Truly Allah forgives all wrong actions. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful,'" (Surat az-Zumar, 53) Allah commands the believers not to despair of His mercy, no matter what happens.

67. What does "being pleased and satisfied with the life of the world" mean?

This phrase means making plans and living only for this world, thereby neglecting the life of the Hereafter. Such people prefer the life of this world, which lasts only some 60 or 70 years on average, compared to the infinite life of the Hereafter. They forget that life in Paradise is perfect and endless, whereas this world is full of imperfection. Seeing the life of this world as near and that of the Hereafter as distant, they desire to enjoy this world and so make their biggest mistake: failing to prepare for the Hereafter. However, those who aim at the Hereafter will enjoy both the gifts of the life of this world and the beauties of Paradise.

On the other hand, those who are satisfied with the life of this world will benefit only from this world, and will receive their punishment in the Hereafter. The Qur'an relates the reward of such people:

As for those who do not expect to meet Us and are content with the life of this world and at rest in it, and those who are heedless of Our Signs, their shelter will be the Fire because of what they earned. (Surah Yunus, 7-8)

68. If a person's close relative or family member performs the prescribed acts of worship,

will he or she benefit from such a connection?

In the verse "Neither your blood relations nor your children will be of any use to you. On the Day of Resurrection He will differentiate between you. Allah sees what you do," (Surat al-Mumtahana, 3) Allah informs people that their close relatives will be of no help on that Day. Another verse as "... he will come to Us all alone" (Surah Maryam, 80) reminds each person that he or she will be called to account by himself or herself. Given such statements, no one will benefit from the worship of another on the Day of Judgment. Allah gives every person an individual understanding and an individual conscience, and warns each of them in various ways. For that reason, the worship of one's closest relatives or family members will benefit only the person who performs them. If people do not fulfill their religious responsibilities, despite seeing their closest relatives and family members doing so, and thus knowing that these pious ones are on the right path, they will be held responsible by Allah in the Hereafter.

69. Should those who know the religion inform others, or can they keep it to themselves?

Everyone who learns about the religion is responsible to convey its message to others. In the verse "Let there be a community among you who calls to the good, enjoins the right, and forbids the wrong. They are the ones who have success" (Surah Al `Imran, 104) Allah informs the believers of this duty. Therefore, they must strive to persuade others to live by the religion, as well as live in compliance with the Qur'an's morals and perform acts of worship throughout their lives.

The Qur'an points out performing this task is an important attribute of believers, as follows:

The male and female believers are friends of one another. They command what is right and forbid what is wrong, establish prayer and give alms, and obey Allah and His Messenger. They are the people on whom Allah will have mercy. Allah is Almighty, All-Wise. (Surat at-Tawba, 71)

70. Can one refrain from enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong because of one's environment or the people one knows?

Allah commands people to call one another to good and to forbid wrong. When the believers notice a person exhibiting a behavior that Allah does not like, they should obey His command by calling that person to what is right. They should never hesitate to remind people of what Allah says and to invite them to righteousness, because Allah has told the believers to continue to remind people about His commands:

It is a Book sent down to you—so let there be no constriction in your breast because of it—so that you can give warning by it and as a reminder to the believers. (Surat al-A`raf, 2)

71. How are Allah's attributes of Al-Afuw and Al-Ghaffar manifested?

Al-Afuw means "the One Who is all-pardoning"; al-Ghaffar means "the One Who has plenty of mercy and forgiveness." People are prone to error and forgetfulness, and so make countless mistakes and so feel regret countless

times while in this world. Yet each time they sincerely repent, they find Allah most merciful and all-forgiving, because He is the most merciful to His servants, and protects and forgives them. Allah informs people of this truth:

Anyone who does evil, or wrongs himself and then asks Allah's forgiveness, will find Allah Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat an-Nisa', 110)

Another verse relates that Allah may forgive all wrongdoing except associating other deities with Him:

Allah does not forgive anything being associated with Him, but He forgives whomever He wills for anything other than that. Anyone who associates something with Allah has committed a terrible crime. (Surat an-Nisa', 48)

72. How is Allah's attribute of Al-Ghani manifested?

O mankind. You are the poor [and thus] in need of Allah, whereas Allah is the Rich Beyond Need, the Praiseworthy. (Surah Fatir, 15)

As indicated by His attribute of "al-Ghani," Allah is rich and free of all wants and needs. All beings, including human beings, are in need of Allah's existence, blessings, mercy, and forgiveness at every instant. They live only by His will and with His blessings. However, Allah is free of all imperfections and is the only owner of everything. This attribute is described in many verses, some are as follows:

- Allah "cannot be withstood in any way, either in the heavens or on Earth." (Surah Fatir, 44)

- He is the One "Who has no partner in His Kingdom and Who needs no one to protect Him out of weakness." (Surat al-Isra', 111)
- He is the One **"Who created the heavens and Earth and was not wearied by creating them."** (Surat al-Ahqaf, 33)
- "**He has not given birth and was not born."** (Surat al-Ikhlas, 3)
- "Everything in the heavens and on Earth, and everything in between them and under the ground, belongs to Him." (Surah Ta Ha, 6)
- "It is We Who give life and cause to die, and We are the Inheritor." (Surat al-Hijr, 23)

73. How is Allah's attribute of Al-Fattah manifested?

Allah manifests this attribute by being "the One Who resolves difficulties." The verse "... Allah desires ease for you; He does not desire difficulty for you..." (Surat al-Baqara, 185) points out this attribute by stating that He will make things easy for His servants who seek refuge with Him, will help and support them by sending His serenity and peace down upon them, and will increase their resolution so that their stance will remain firm. He informs people that He will not impose upon them any more than they can stand, and promises to support them with His help if they show steadfastness for Him despite the difficulties that they face. In addition, He states that "For truly with hardship comes ease" (Surat al-Inshirah, 5) to let people know that He will deliver ease after difficulties.

74. How is Allah's attribute of ash-Shafi`i manifested?

Ash-Shafi`i means "the One Who heals." Just as Allah creates the illness, only He can remove it and heal the person. Allah has created many medical treatments and medicines; however, these are effective only if Allah wills them to be effective. No doctor or treatment can heal a person on its own. Prophet Ibrahim's (as) words, as narrated in the Qur'an, express this fact: "and when I am ill, He heals me." (Surat ash-Shu`ara', 80)

75. How is Allah's attribute of al-Mundhir manifested?

Al-Mundhir means "the One Who warns." Allah informs humanity of what is right and wrong through the books of truth that He sends down, and warns of the punishment of Hell in the Hereafter. The Qur'an was revealed for the following reason: "This is a communication to be transmitted to mankind so that they may be warned by it, so that they will know that He is One God, and so that people of intelligence will pay heed." (Surah Ibrahim, 52) Allah sent a Messenger to every nation throughout history for the same reason.

The Qur'an relates that the Prophets show people the right path, warn them against Allah's punishment, and give them the glad tidings of Paradise:

Messengers bringing good news and giving warning, so that people will have no argument against Allah after the coming of the Messengers. Allah is Almighty, All-Wise. (Surat an-Nisa', 165)

76. What are the characteristics that earn Allah's good pleasure?

Prophet Shu`ayb's (as) words, "Ask your Lord for forgiveness and then repent to Him. My Lord is Most Merciful, Most Loving," (Surah Hud, 90) informs us that he reminds his people of Allah's love. Anyone who believes in Allah, stands in awe of Him, meticulously fulfills the Qur'an's commands, and strives for the Hereafter with all due respect may expect to earn His love and good pleasure. Some of the verses that inform us of whom Allah loves are as follows:

- "... And do good: *Allah loves good-doers*." (Surat al-Baqara, 195)
- "... And be even-handed. *Allah loves those who are even-handed*." (Surat al-Hujurat, 9)
- "No, the truth is if people honor their contracts and are in awe of Him, *Allah loves those who guard against evil.*" (Surah Al`Imran, 76)
- "... Allah loves the steadfast." (Surah Al `Imran, 146)
- "... Allah loves those who put their trust in Him." (Surah Al`Imran, 159)
- "... Allah loves those who purify themselves." (Surat at-Tawba, 108)
- "... Allah loves the righteous." (Surat at-Tawba, 7)
- "Allah loves those who fight in His Way in ranks like well-built walls." (Surat as-Saff, 4)

77. What characteristics displease Allah?

Some of the verses related to this subject are as follows:

"Allah obliterates usury (*riba*) but makes alms grow in value! *Allah does not love any persistently ungrateful wrongdoer*." (Surat al-Baqara, 276)

"As for those who believe and do right actions, We will pay them their wages in full. *Allah does not love wrongdoers.*" (Surah Al`Imran, 57)

"The repayment of a bad action is one equivalent to it. But if someone pardons and puts things right, his reward is with Allah. *Certainly He does not love wrong-doers.*" (Surat ash-Shura, 40)

"Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him. Be good to your parents and relatives, to orphans and the very poor, to neighbors who are related to you and neighbors who are not related to you, to companions and travellers, and to your slaves. *Allah does not love anyone vain or boastful.*" (Surat an-Nisa', 36)

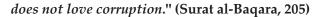
"Do not avert your face from people out of haughtiness, and do not strut about arrogantly on the land. Allah does not love anyone who is vain or boastful." (Surah Luqman, 18)

"Do not argue on behalf of those who betray themselves. *Allah does not love any evildoing traitors.*" (Surat an-Nisa', 107)

"... Allah does not love those who go beyond the limits." (Surat al-Baqara, 190)

"... They rush about the land, corrupting it. *Allah does not love corrupters*." (Surat al-Ma'ida, 64)

"Whenever he holds the upperhand, he goes about the land corrupting it, destroying crops and animals. *Allah*



"... Eat of their fruits when they bear fruit, pay their due on the day of their harvest, and do not be profligate. *He does not love the profligate*." (Surat al-An`am, 141)

"O Children of Adam. Wear fine clothing in every mosque and eat and drink, but do not be profligate. *He does not love the profligate.*" (Surat al-A`raf, 31)

"Call on your Lord humbly and secretly. *He does not love those who overstep the limits.*" (Surat al-A`raf, 55)

"... Allah does not love treacherous people." (Surat al-Anfal, 58)

"There is no doubt that Allah knows what they keep secret and what they make public. *He does not love people puffed up with pride.*" (Surat an-Nahl, 23)

"Allah will defend those who have faith. Allah does not love any thankless traitor." (Surat al-Hajj, 38)

"... When his people said to him: 'Do not gloat. *Allah does not love people who gloat.*" (Surat al-Qasas, 76)

78. What is the evolutionist answer to the questions of how a creature innately possesses the characteristics of its own species and how its conscious, planned, and intelligent behaviors emerged?

The evolutionists have no clear or absolute answer to such questions. However, they argue that animals exhibit these behaviors instinctively. Evolutionary scientists use "instinct" to define some innate behaviors of animals. Questions as to how this instinct is gained, how it emerged, and how it is inherited from one generation to another, however, remain unanswered. The evolutionary geneticist Gordon R. Taylor, explains this dilemma in his book, *The Great Evolution Mystery*, as follows:

If in fact behaviour is heritable, what are the units of behaviour which are passed on—for presumably there *are* units? No one has suggested an answer. (London: Sphere Books, 1984, p. 222)

79. How do the evolutionists define "instinct"?

The evolutionists define instinct as any behavior encoded in a living being's genes. For example, migratory animals find the direction for their journey, even if it is the first time that they have undertaken it, by using their instinct. This same instinct enables birds, freshwater eels, or turtles to complete their journey of thousands of kilometers. In other words, all of the necessary information is encoded in their genes.

However, who is responsible for this encoding? Given that every encoding has an encoder, who is the encoder of the instincts of living beings?

The evolutionists' answer to such questions is nothing more than a mere delusion. They claim that all living organisms on Earth gained their existing features because of "Mother Nature." But of what is "Mother Nature" composed: stones, soil, grass, trees, flowers, and so on. Can a tree teach

a bee how to build a honeycomb, what angle to make the hive's hexagons, or teach a bird to build a nest? Nothing in nature can make another living thing perform any act that requires intelligence and consciousness. Such a claim is entirely irrational and nonscientific. The existence of a Possessor of Intelligence, One Who makes all beings perform their acts and gives them their features, is a crystal-clear fact. The possessor of this infinite intelligence is Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. All behaviors that the evolutionists define as "instinct" or characterize as "encoding" occur only by Allah's inspiration.

80. How do the evolutionists explain altruism, cooperation, and affection between living things, for we see many examples of such behavior in nature?

They do not provide any consistent explanations to such questions. Let's go into more detail with some examples: A male horned screamer builds an incredibly well-sheltered nest and then places the female in it, carries food to her, and looks after both the female and the eggs until the young hatch and mature. He never neglects to take care of them. A penguin does not leave her egg during the freezing polar winter; rather, she incubates it during all this time without eating anything. Many fish species painstakingly build nests for eggs and larvae. For example, male sticklebacks gather bits of vegetation, spout a sticky liquid that is secreted by glands near their kidneys, and use it to glue these plant pieces together to build a nest. Then swimming around it,

they shape the nest. They ensure that the females lay their eggs in the tunnel that they construct in the nest, and undertake the total care of the eggs. The male's duties include repairing the nest, waving the water in order to provide the eggs with oxygen, keeping watch, and protecting the eggs.

Many similar examples are observed in nature. Explaining the emergence of these behaviors in terms of evolutionary mechanisms is impossible. Therefore, evolutionists cannot answer the question of how such features emerged. Dr. Cemal Yildirim, an evolutionist professor, acknowledges that such behaviors as a mother's love for her offspring cannot be explained by evolutionary mechanisms. He states:

How could the love of the mother to her young be explained by a "blind" mechanism (that is natural selection) which does not include any psychological element? One can hardly say that biologists (and Darwinists) provide satisfactory answers to such questions. (Cemal Yildirim, *Evrim Kurami ve Bagnazlik* (The Evolution Theory and Bigotry), Istanbul: Bilgi Publications, 1989, p. 185)

81. Why are such behaviors as altruism among living things a significant, unsolved problem to the theory of evolution?

Altruism and other cooperative behaviors of living beings clearly reveal that the theory of evolution is invalid. The actual reason for this is natural selection, the mechanism upon which Darwin based this theory. According to

this mechanism, those living things that are better adapted to their habitat will survive, whereas those that are unfit and weak will be eliminated. Thus there is no room for cooperation, only competition between organisms. However, we see that nature is not an environment in which only the strong survives and where a merciless struggle for existence continues.

All living beings hunt in order to survive, and fight to protect themselves. Apart from this, however, many organisms also practice unselfish concern to protect their offspring or risk their own lives for the safety of the larger population. Nature provides us with many examples of different species defending the interests of each other.

Since the theory of evolution argues that nature is merely a battleground, it cannot explain such altruistic behaviors. For example, the evolutionists cannot explain why the watcher bird in a flock, who cries out when a predator approaches, risks its own life, or why another bird species attracts the enemy toward itself by faking an injury in order to divert it from its own offspring. Such behavior invalidates the theory of evolution and provides evidence for Allah's creation of living things.

82. Why is natural selection invalid?

Natural selection is a process resulting in the selection of an advantageous change (either structural or behavioral) from others and being permanent in this being and thus being transferred to subsequent generations. This claim makes several very important points that need to be analyzed further. First of all, this thesis attempts to present nature as a power that is conscious, able to distinguish advantageous and disadvantageous behaviors, and make decisions.

However, neither nature nor any being in nature have the power to make such a decision, for such a selection can be made only by the intelligence who designed all of those beings and, as we have shown earlier, all beings are under Allah's control.

According to the natural selection mechanism, the acquired traits need to be inherited by subsequent generations. There is one point, however, that should not be overlooked: Even if living beings learn something by experience, they cannot pass it on to subsequent generations. For example, consider the case of worker ants, who are responsible for carrying out all tasks in the colony. One of their characteristics is that they are sterile. In other words, they cannot possibly pass their qualities on to subsequent generations. Briefly, it is simply impossible for organisms to acquire increasingly advanced traits and to pass them on to subsequent generations.

83. Every living thing innately exhibits species-specific behaviors. Can these be explained by chance?

No, and just one example is enough to disprove this assertion. Consider a newborn silkworm, a member of the species that can lay the most eggs at one time. Silkworms, which can lay about 450-500 eggs at one time, bind their eggs together with a special thread, which they secrete, in order to protect their eggs and to prevent them from scatter-

ing. Caterpillars hatched from eggs initially attach themselves to a twig using the same thread.

Soon after, they begin to spin their cocoons from another silky fiber exuded from their body. A single caterpillar secretes a silk thread that is, on average, about 900 to 1,500 meters long. Innumerable caterpillars are born every day and act in the same way. It is extremely irrational to claim that each caterpillar learned such difficult and complex procedures by chance and taught these to subsequent generations. Allah gives different characteristics to every creature, and these are identical in every new generation and do not change or advance. A caterpillar is always a caterpillar, and always spins the identical cocoon. This is the art of Allah, Who has power over all things.

84. Living things are not altruistic only toward their own offspring. In fact, they care for and look after the offspring of other members of the same species just as they do for their own offspring. How do the evolutionists explain this fact?

This fact completely invalidates the "struggle in nature" claims of the evolutionists, who assert that living things care only for their own offspring in order to transfer their genes to the subsequent generation. This is why the theory of evolution cannot explain why living things help other members of the same species as well as their own offspring. We see many examples of this in nature. Musk oxen herds protect their young members from predators. When in danger, a

herd closes ranks and the musk oxen guard the perimeter of the group, facing outward, and move the young to the center. Likewise, dolphins travel in schools and protect one another from danger. When a dolphin gives birth, other dolphins accompany the mother dolphin to help her. African wild dogs live in packs. Both males and females take care of the young. After killing the prey, adults form a circle around the young and let them feed first. Similar "unselfish" behaviors of other animals, such as bees and ants in colonies, invalidate Darwin's thesis that the strong survive, whereas the weak will disappear.

85. Many living things in nature successfully perform quite complex tasks, which no one would ever expect from them. How do the evolutionists explain this evidence of special design?

They remain silent in the face of such sophisticated mechanisms. One evident sign of a special design that invalidates their theory is the so-called bombardier beetle, which defends itself by squirting a special boiling chemical substance through a hole in its hind section toward its enemy. But how does this chemical weapon work?

The findings of scientists studying this animal are exceptionally amazing. The bombardier beetle prepares a concentrated mixture of two chemical substances (hydrogen peroxide and hydroquinone) in its secretory lobes. The mixture combines in the storage chamber, which is connected to a second chamber: the explosion chamber. These two chambers

are separated from one another in a system similar to the valvular muscular system of human heart. When the beetle senses danger, it contracts the muscles in the storage chamber and simultaneously relaxes the connection muscles separating this chamber from the explosion chamber. This causes the valve in between to open, which allows the secreted chemical mixture to enter the explosion chamber and mix with the catalyst enzymes that will trigger the explosion. At that very moment, the valve of the explosion chamber shuts off. Hydrogen peroxide decomposes into water and oxygen and, interacting with hydroquinone, the oxygen produces more water and quinone, an irritating chemical. This interaction engenders a blistering heat and, when the chemical substance reaches the boiling point, the mixture is squirted with pressure through a special channel in the beetle's hind section. Thus the beetle scalds its enemy with quinone, a poisonous chemical substance.

This chain reaction, which takes place within the beetle's body, occurs in the blink of an eye. It has to operate perfectly, for any fault in the system would cause the beetle to die, either by its enemy or by exploding. Briefly, in order for this defense system to operate, all parts of the system must exist simultaneously and be complete. To put it in another way, it must have been created.

86. Is a living thing's ability to treat its own diseases, as the evolutionists argue, a trait developed by chance?

Let's consider the following example. When a bezoar goat is bitten by a snake, it eats a plant of the genus euphor-

bia, such as spurge, and thus counteracts the snake venom thanks to the euphorbone in the plant's sap. Interestingly, the animal does not even taste spurges during its usual daily grazing. This implies that these bezoar goats know the spurge's chemical structure and that it will heal them if they are bitten by a snake. How did the goat acquire this knowledge? Of course, a goat cannot eat all available herbage when bitten by a snake, hoping to find, by trial and error, which plant will cure it. So how does it know which plant will counteract the snake's venom and how to treat itself? Who teaches it this knowledge? There is only one answer to these questions. These goats act by the inspiration of Allah, as do all other beings in the world. Allah is the One Who reveals how they should behave.

87. The evolutionists argue that a primitive bacterium cell started photosynthesis as a result of natural conditions and evolved into plants over time. Is such an assertion even possible, or could such a complex process have come about by chance?

The evolutionists argue that primitive bacteria started photosynthesis due to food requirements. However, this argument is simply impossible, for although all living things can go without food for various amounts of time, the inevitable end of a living being that cannot find food is death. The evolutionists' claims, when joined with this fact, give rise to an interesting question: How could an organism deprived of food survive for millions of years? Moreover, they

claim that as a result of this starvation, bacteria transformed themselves into much more advanced beings and started photosynthesis, a process that is still not fully understood even today and has never been successfully imitated.

Plants could not possibly have evolved from bacteria, for bacterium cells and plant cells are quite different from each other. One merely has to examine the DNA structures to see how different they are. For example, a DNA molecule in a plant cell is packed with a double layered membrane, whereas that of bacterium cell is free within the cell. There are few proteins in the DNA of a bacterium cell, whereas the DNA of a plant cell is attached to proteins from one end to the other. A DNA molecule in a bacterium cell has the information of a single cell, whereas the DNA in a plant cell has the information of the whole plant.

Bacteria have no organelles, while a plant cell has many organelles, each of which possesses quite complex structures. The evolutionists are aware of this fact, and Professor Ali Demirsoy, a well-known evolutionist scientist, acknowledges it quite frankly, as follows:

Complex cells have never come into existence by means of developing from primitive cells in the evolutionary process. (Ali Demirsoy, *Kalitim ve Evrim* (Inheritance and Evolution), Ankara: Meteksan Publishing Co., 1984, p. 79)

88. Evolutionists claim that water moss evolved into land plants. Is this claim true?

This claim, like all others, is baseless. They claim that the sea's tides caused water moss to hang on the shores, where

they were transformed, over time, into land plants and then moved over the land. How close is this imaginary assumption to reality?

To begin with, numerous factors make it impossible for water moss to survive on land, even if we were to suppose their transition from water to land to be true. Let's briefly review the most significant factors:

- 1- Risk of Withering: For a sea-dwelling plant to survive on land, its surface needs to be protected against excessive water loss or else it will wither. To avoid withering, land-dwelling plants are equipped with special systems that are very complex. It is simply impossible to state that such a precise system came into being by chance. A plant cannot wait for millions of years for this system to develop itself, because its absence causes the plant to wither, decay, and die. Moreover, these very special systems are too complex to have been developed by chance, no matter how many millions or billions of years have passed.
- **2- Nourishment:** Sea plants take the water and minerals they need directly from the surrounding water. Therefore, water moss will experience problems when looking for nourishment when it tries to live on land. It cannot survive if this problem is not solved quickly.
- **3- Reproduction:** Water moss cannot reproduce during its brief lifetime on land, because just as it does for all other tasks, it uses water to distribute its reproductive cells.
- 4- Avoiding oxygen's destructive effect: Water moss used to take in oxygen dissolved in water. Yet according to the evolutionists' claim, once it began to live on land, it should have developed an entirely new way of taking in oxygen: directly from the air. Scientists have shown that

under normal conditions, oxygen in the air has a destructive effect upon organic substances. Land-dwelling creatures have systems that were designed specifically to protect them from this effect, whereas water moss, which dwells under water, does not have the necessary enzymes to protect itself from oxygen's negative effects. Given this fact, how could it protect itself while on land? Needless to say, it cannot wait for this system to develop over great stretches of time. Without it, it will soon wither, decay, and die.

As seen, water moss cannot possibly make the transition from water to land and then live on land. In order to live on land like a land-dwelling plant, it has to acquire many mechanisms instantaneously. One can easily conclude that a seadwelling plant cannot evolve into a land-dwelling plant, no matter how many years pass or what the conditions are.

To sum up, the theory of evolution, which asserts that life came into being as a result of countless coincidences, is nothing but an unreasoning superstition. The fact is that Allah created all living beings.

They said, "Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."

(Surat al-Baqara, 32)