



HARUN YAHYA
ADNAN OKTAR

CHARACTER- TYPES of the UNBELIEVERS

... 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)

7he Qu'ran was revealed by Allah, Who created human beings, and Who is their only judge and master. Therefore, it is only by way of the religion Allah has revealed in the Qu'ran that people may improve their lack of knowledge, and become cognizant enough to save themselves from the ignorance they are surrounded by.

The collective of those who are far removed from the religion, ignoring its important reality, compose the nations of ignorance. But the ignorance we mean here has a far different meaning than the one in every day use. These peoples may be sophisticated, cultured and educated; they may be experts in many branches of science; they may have read hundreds of books, succeeded in numerous discoveries, and may even be famous for their accomplishments. But, neither the status they have attained, nor their accomplishments, nor the formulas they have discovered, nor the books they have read are enough to counter the ignorance that surrounds them. The ignorance we mean here is the fact that these nations do not know our Creator, or recognize His power as they should; they do not know what He expects of them, and do not know the kind of moral quality they should aspire to. This pervasive type of ignorance adversely effects them in every aspect of their lives.

The purpose of this book is to explore several examples of the kind of life and the type of character that the nations of ignorance have produced, and to show that every approach it has formulated has come to an impasse. Moreover, it will attempt to show that the typical character produced by the nations of ignorance can never attain the contentment and peace of mind they seek.

In addition, this book will demonstrate that the character of a believer, as described in the Qu'ran, is superior to any other of the thousands of character types that emerge among ignorant nations, and show how excellent the life lived by a believer compared to the life of ignorance.

About the Author



Adnan Oktar, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on faith-related, scientific and political issues. He 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.

All of the author'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. His more than 300 works, translated into 63 different languages, enjoy a wide readership across the world.

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

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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Abbreviations used:

(*saas-sall-Allahu 'alyahi wa sallam*): May Allah bless him and
grant him peace (following a reference to the Prophet Muhammad)
(*as- 'alayhi 's-salam*): Peace be upon him (following a reference
to the prophets or angels)

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Character-types of the Unbelievers

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HARUN YAHYA
2010

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 unservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, pessimistic arguments that create doubts in the mind and deviations in the heart.

Character-types of the Unbelievers

**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 fine 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 63 different languages, constitute a collection for a total of more than 55,000 pages with 40,000 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 (saas), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet [saas]), 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 (saas), 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 Maldives), Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, Indonesian, Bengali, Danish and Swedish.

Greatly appreciated
all around the world,
these works have
been instrumen-



tal 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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FOREWORD

This book gives an account of various character types and the aspects of these characters that are incompatible with the Qur'an. However in reading the book, one should keep the following issue in mind: The descriptions and definitions in this book surely do not include every member of that specific community. Just as every stratum, professional group and community has good-intentioned, prudent and scrupulous people, there may also be people displaying bad morals and attitudes. What is dealt with in this book are the wicked behaviors and attributes of people who do not live by the morality of the Qur'an. Besides one should keep in mind that every individual has the opportunity to abandon the wicked deeds in which he has engaged throughout his life. A person who sincerely gives up engaging in wicked deeds, heartily submits himself to Allah and decides to live by the morality of the Qur'an will, by Allah's leave, find Allah to be forgiving and merciful. Indeed, one of the goals of this book is to be instrumental in making people recognize the vices of their situation, abandon these attitudes and turn towards the morality of the Qur'an.

INTRODUCTION

Our guidance to the truth with which we can discover the purpose of creation, distinguish right from wrong, and learn the true meaning of life, is the Qur'an. Because, the Qur'an was revealed by Allah, Who created human beings, and Who is their only judge and master. Therefore, it is only by living by the morality of religion Allah has revealed in the Qur'an that people may improve on their lack of knowledge, and become cognizant enough to save themselves from the ignorance they are surrounded by.

The collective of those who are far removed from the morality of religion, ignoring its important reality, compose the nations of ignorance. But the ignorance we mean here has a far different meaning than the one in common use. These peoples may be sophisticated, cultured and educated; they may be experts in many branches of science; they may have read hundreds of books, succeeded in numerous discoveries, and may even be famous for their accomplishments. But, neither the status they have attained, nor their accomplishments, nor the formulas they have discovered, nor the books they have read are enough to counter the ignorance that surrounds them. The ignorance we mean here is the fact that these nations do not know Allah, our Creator, or recognize His power as they should; they do not know what He expects of them, and the kind of moral and personal quality with which one ex-

pects Allah to be pleased. This pervasive type of ignorance adversely affects them in every aspect of their lives.

The only sure way to escape this ignorance is for them to turn to the Qur'an, the remedy to their lack of knowledge, and edifier of the hidden realities of this life and the next, and our Prophet's (saas) Sunnah. Otherwise, there is no other source of truth. But, because they fail to refer to it, they have concocted numerous false ideologies and belief systems. All have different conception of the purpose of life; different ideals and different concepts of what is moral. Each is so in conflict with the other that it is often impossible for them to exist together in harmony. Each defends his own particular belief while criticizing the others. Because they suspect one another, and are often at odds with one another, they are fraught with many difficulties.

As stated earlier, the only solution is for them to conform to the kind of life prescribed by the true religion. And Allah, Who created human beings, has again revealed for them in the Qur'an the ideal life, which will allow them to derive the greatest amount of benefit from all things.

The purpose of this book is to explore several examples of the kind of life and the type of character that the nations of ignorance have produced, and to show that every approach it has formulated has come to an impasse. Moreover, it will attempt to show that the typical character produced by the nations of ignorance can never attain the contentment and peace of mind they seek.

In addition, this book will demonstrate that the character of a believer, as described in the Qur'an, is superior to any other of the thousands of character types that emerge among ignorant nations, and show how excellent the life lived by a believer compared to the life of ignorance.

THE BASIC MAKEUP OF THE SOCIETIES OF IGNORANCE

Who Are the Societies of Ignorance Composed of?

The English word “ignorance” comes from a Latin word which means “not to know.” It is used in the Qur’an to refer to a nation that does not know Allah, or acknowledge His qualities and eternal power as it should; a society that is unaware of the spiritual values, the truths of religion, and the high moral character Islam presents to mankind. Whatever society that does not live by the principles of the morality of religion can be referred to be a “society of ignorance”. At first glance, these societies may seem to be very different; their members may follow a particular way of dressing, different habits, likes and dislikes, or have their own manner of speaking. Nevertheless, they share a common philosophy and beliefs. Every member of these societies ignores the religion of Allah and, although they realize that He created us, they do not live the kind of life that He has prescribed. They neglect His religion, substituting for it their own false beliefs. These false religions are not founded on love towards Allah, but rather on the love for this world. Instead of seeking to gain Allah’s favor, they strive to gain the approval and acknowledgement of other human beings. Instead of giving thanks to Allah, and seeking help only from Him, they are grateful to

human beings and establish bonds of intimacy with them. They forget that Allah possesses all power, and instead of fearing only Him, they fear other human beings and the rules they have established.

But, when referring to a society of ignorance, it is not only those who are completely uninstructed in the morals of the Qur'an we speak of; there are those who know the true religion very well, but still cannot escape the ignorance into which they have fallen. These individuals may perform some acts of worship enjoined by Allah, but do not come close to feeling the devotion of a believer, or adhering sufficiently to the moral teachings of the Qur'an. The reason for this is that their hearts are not deeply devoted to Allah, or adequately fearful of the Day of Judgment. It is the love they feel for this world that has caused them to develop personalities contrary to the demands of the Qur'an; still, even if they did know something of the morality taught by the religion, they could not save themselves from the society of ignorance.

These societies exist in every corner of the world. However, although they are entirely independent of one another, and their members have beliefs completely different from them, we can recognize common traits, and a specific pattern of belief pervading all of them. For this reason, before discussing the personalities of the citizens of societies of ignorance, it will be useful to examine these common false beliefs that form the basis of these different types.

The Life-Goals and Ideals Common to the Societies of Ignorance

The common aim that drives societies of ignorance is to maximize the pleasures of this earthly life. No matter where you go in this

world, you will find that each member of the societies of ignorance—rich or poor, villager or city-dweller, young or old—does not waver in the pursuit of this goal. Because they are of the corrupt opinion that life is limited by death, they seek to derive maximum enjoyment of this brief and fleeting existence.

This notion, of course, is completely false. The life of this world has been created to test us. Allah has created this world to be particularly appealing to human beings by endowing it with many blessings. Few realize that these blessings are from Allah, and that they are fleeting. They give thanks for them, because their aim in this life is to do the good that will earn Allah's favor, and, ultimately, eternal life. Others forget that these blessings derive from Allah; deceived by these illusory adornments, they put any thought of the Afterlife out of their minds.

Therefore, a society of ignorance is composed of individuals that choose the second alternative, placing all their hopes in this life alone. The life of this world to come does not figure in any of their future plans. Allah revealed the reason for their choice in the Qur'an:

That is because they prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter and because Allah does not guide disbelieving people. (Surat an-Nahl, 107)

As related in this verse, the life of this world deceives them by appearing more pleasant than it actually is. All that Allah has created as a blessing and a test for human beings deceive the ignorant who forget their responsibilities to Him, and lose themselves in this life.

That which lures the ignorant into heedlessness, as they indulge their various passions, is obvious. They want to live a "good life," possessing wealth, respect, status, a good marriage and successful

children, and numerous similar things the ignorant prefer to eternal life.

Of course, all such blessings are desirable and legitimate things that one can possess in this world. But, in this regard, the ignorant fall into great error. They forget that all such blessings belong only to Allah, and that Allah has granted them for the purpose of showing gratitude towards Him; they also forget that what is at stake is the Afterlife.

The fact that the ignorant fail to recognize this reality causes that ultimately their lives are dull and ordinary. Many people in the world are in pursuit of these several main ideals. They may often compromise basic moral principles in order to rise above others, earn more money or take greater advantage of what the world has to offer. But, these things are not the “good life” they think it is; on the contrary, it causes them anxiety. No matter how much they are blessed with, those who have corrupted themselves by placing excessive value on this life can never experience the pleasure they had hoped to gain. The further pursuit of more and more, prevents them from enjoying what they have come to possess. Becoming overly selfish about that which they possess, they are never satisfied with what they have.

From their excessive ambition to reap greater and greater profits, they begin to show signs of ill health and early aging. Finally, they confront death and encounter the next world, where, contrary to the life of this world, wealth, status and renown are of no value, and where rewards are tabulated according to one’s efforts to earn Allah’s favor. The great sorrow of those who had neglected Allah during their time in this world, when they are confronted with this reality, is related in the Qur’an:

It may be that those who are disbelievers will wish that they had been Muslims. Leave them to eat and enjoy themselves. Let false hope divert them. They will soon know. (Surat al-Hijr, 2-3)

Belief in Allah in the Societies of Ignorance

Those who comprise the societies of ignorance do not share the same lifestyle and outlook on the world. There are some among them who are totally ignorant of the morality of religion, and others that are known to be aware of the morality of religion and are knowledgeable of many commandments of Allah. Many among them would respond, if asked, that they believed in Allah.

Say: "To whom does the Earth belong, and everyone in it, if you have any knowledge?" They will say: "To Allah." Say: "So will you not pay heed?"

Say: "Who is the Lord of the Seven Heavens and the Lord of the Mighty Throne?"

They will say: "Allah." Say: "So will you not fear Allah?"

Say: "In Whose hand is the dominion over everything, He Who gives protection and from Whom no protection can be given, if you have any knowledge?" They will say: "Allah's." Say: "So how have you been bewitched?" The fact is that We have given them the truth and they are liars. (Surat al-Muminun, 84-90)

But, in their hearts, they reject the truth that they affirm with their lips. For this reason, they do not live in a way pleasing to Allah. Instead of doing that which will earn Allah's favor, they live to satisfy their desires. They utter with their mouths that they believe be-

cause they recognize the reality. Everywhere they look, in whatever research they conduct, and in every aspect of every detail they observe, they encounter a superior intelligence. They comprehend clearly that nothing in this world is the result of chance, that every being, in its minutest detail, has been designed by Allah, the All-Mighty Creator, and that everything that happens is put into motion by Allah's power and dominion. For this reason, they affirm Allah's existence. However, in spite of that, they do not aim to conform their lives to the morality of the religion. The reason is explained in the Qur'an:

And they repudiated them wrongly and haughtily, in spite of their own certainty about them. See the final fate of the corrupters. (Surat an-Naml, 14)

Several among the societies of ignorance would wish to reject Allah openly. But, they also know that the perfection of the universe they live in cannot have come about by the operation of chance. Spiritually, they are in a quagmire; the solution they have devised for themselves is to ignore the proofs of Allah's existence, and to keep the matter from their minds. Their conscience is constantly reminding them of the truth, but they provide various excuses to suppress it. But, none of these excuses is in any way valid; their only purpose is to disguise their rejection of Allah.

What the Members of the Societies of Ignorance Believe about Death and the After-life.

Although many among the societies of ignorance know of the Afterlife, in their own way they try to run away from it by avoiding thinking of it. They also disregard the fact their beliefs are grounded

without consideration to it. Indeed, they look only to the life of this world to fulfill their aims and wishes, seeking fulfillment in mundane affairs. Due to the attachment they feel for this world, they would hope it to never end. In the Qur'an Allah tells us that they do not want to believe that death is real, and therefore, the Afterlife never enters their minds:

No indeed! We have given these people enjoyment, as We did their fathers, until life seemed long and good to them... (Surat al- Anbiya', 44)

Belief in the Afterlife would not allow them to be excessively attached to this world.

In the Qur'an, Allah tells us that this life is a distraction, and that the real life is in the next world:

The life of this world is nothing but a game and a diversion. The abode of the Hereafter—that is truly Life if they only knew. (Surat al-'Ankabut, 64)

In spite of this, they avoid giving careful consideration to this. They fail to realize that they have nothing to lose, but everything to gain, if they believe in the Afterlife. If they believed, they could gain not only the blessings of this world, which they would enjoy in the best possible way, but they could also hope to gain Allah's good pleasure and an eternal life in Paradise. And, in the life in Paradise, they will live an eternal life in which concepts like boredom, wearisome and monotony are not created. In this life they will be surrounded by unlimited good, an endless variety of blessings and, most importantly, that life will be eternal. That is, a person who desires the Afterlife will gain the benefits of this world and of the world to come. But those who are satisfied only with this world will

certainly lose the Afterlife. This is related in one of the verses of Allah as follows:

... (he) loses both the world and the Hereafter. That is indeed sheer loss. (Surat al-Hajj, 11)

By such an example, it is easy to discern the difference between real loss and gain. But, the people of a society of ignorance have difficulty in grasping these facts since they do not think giving due consideration. According to their shallow thinking, they are already enjoying the benefits of this world. Nevertheless, lacking a sure faith in the Afterlife caused them to doubt. In the Qur'an Allah gives the following response to this hesitance of the people of ignorance:

Whatever you have been given is only the enjoyment of the life of this world. What is with Allah is better and longer lasting ... (Surat ash-Shura, 36)

... They rejoice in the life of this world. Yet the life of this world, compared to the Hereafter, is only fleeting enjoyment. (Surat ar-Ra'd, 26)

But, merely because they do not want to sever their attachment to this world, the ignorant refuse to consider the reality depicted in the verses of the Qur'an. Rather, they offer unfounded excuses in order to deceive themselves and quiet their consciences. Throughout history, each prophet related to the community to which he was sent about the truth of the Afterlife, Heaven and Hell, and warned them to heed his message while they still had time. But, most turned a deaf ear to the warnings of the messengers, denying the Afterlife with responses related in the following verses:

**... "Who will give life to bones when they are decayed?"
(Surah Ya Sin, 78)**

... "When we have been absorbed into the earth, are we then to be in a new creation?"... (Surat as-Sajda, 10)

"We and our forefathers were promised this before. This is nothing but the myths of previous peoples!" (Surat al-Muminun, 81)

And, Allah responded in the following way to their rejection: Say **"He Who made them in the first place will bring them back to life. He has total knowledge of each created thing; He Who produces fire for you from green trees so that you use them to light your fires."** Does He Who created the heavens and Earth not have the power to create the same again? Yes indeed! He is the Creator, the All-Knowing. His command when He desires a thing is just to say to it, **"Be!"** and it is. (Surah Ya Sin, 79-82)

We can see that, whether or not the ignorant believe, the reality of Heaven and Hell cannot be denied. By refusing to believe, they deceive themselves. However, when they are finally faced with this reality, they will know its truth:

On the Day when those who were disbelievers are exposed to the Fire, they will be asked, "Is this not the truth?" They will say, "Yes, by our Lord." He will say, "Then taste the punishment for having been disbeliever." (Surat al-Ahqaf, 34)

THE CHARACTER OF MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETIES OF IGNORANCE

The lives led by members of the societies of ignorance which are far removed from the Qur'an cause them all to be in difficulty and error throughout all stages of their lives. The greatest of these difficulties, however, is suffered within themselves. Because of their corrupted understanding, the character they develop causes them discontent and anxiety.

During their childhood, these ignorant persons chose others to model themselves after. And, as they grew up, they try to be like them. The role-models they choose may be a parent, a sister or brother, a close friend, a neighbor or someone they have seen on television. The identity they want to emulate may lead a very different life and under different circumstances; the quality of the environment the role-model lives and his level of cultivation may also be different. While some may believe that the best life is attained by being rebellious and irresponsible, others, influenced by trends of his environment, may believe that the best attitude is to be aloof and arrogant.

Though, when they finally meet their role model, they realize that their personality is not as they had originally considered. From then on, they spend their lives in search of another way of life to satisfy their expectations — but, without any results. As they become older, and their circumstances and their environment change, so do the personalities they wish to emulate also change. They are influenced by every fashion and novelty; they hope to find the fulfillment they are seeking by imitating these people, trying them one after the other. This search for identity lasts throughout their lives, but they can never find the attitude and contentment that they were created for. That is because, everything they try is always merely a product of their ignorance.

After a certain time, some will settle into a particular identity. But, this is not because they have found their ideal role-model and attained happiness. On the contrary, they realize that their problem cannot be solved within the web of ignorance in which they live, and accept defeat.

In the coming pages, we will present the features of the types of character that pervade the societies of ignorance; we will try to define them, and show the difficulties they suffer. By investigating this important condition, we will come to recognize the tremendous difference that exists between the character of a believer and that of one mired in ignorance. Therefore, however ardently they may try to find a way out, those who live in ignorance are already lost. Their only salvation is, we repeat, to live the moral life of a believer.

But, before we continue, we must recall an important point: The types of character we will describe here represent the members of the societies of ignorance in general. Of course, there will be some

exceptions that, for some reason, do not conform to the norm. Such individuals, under particular conditions, may not display any of the qualities predicated by these conditions. Therefore, we cannot say that all individuals in a society of ignorance acquire the character we will describe. We are not referring to these individuals, but only those who reflect the endemic corruption that plagues the societies of ignorance.

The Character of the Female in the Societies of Ignorance

In a society of ignorance, there is a silent, unnamed power that directs all the people. From the moment he is born, a member of such societies submits himself to this power, and orders his entire life according to its edicts. This power dominates this member of the society of ignorance, to such an extent that he does not depart from its laws, even though they go against his own desires and expectations; and, come what may, he remains loyal to it.

What is this power, then, to which the ignorant are so attached, and which commands them so absolutely?

As we have said, it does not have a name; it is the totality of the false laws that the ignorant refer to as "tradition." It is not known who formulated these laws and determined whether or not they were valid. No one, however, would dare to question or alter them. Anyone who attempts to question these traditions is despised, and attempts are made to prevent any who are thought to be violating these laws or disrupting the established order.

Members of this society are firmly devoted to the rules they have adopted; if one wanted to tell them that these rules may be

wrong, they would reply that they came down to them from previous generations and, therefore, cannot be abandoned. They do not dare to examine what they do, or why they do it, because their forebears did the same. In the Qur'an Allah describes this distorted point of view characteristic of a society of ignorance:

When they are told, "Follow what Allah has sent down to you," They say, "We are following what we found our fathers doing." What, even though their fathers did not understand a thing and were not guided! (Surat al-Baqara, 170)

The character and way of life required of a member of a society of ignorance has been predetermined according to the false and formalistic nature of tradition. Take, for example, a child: No matter how mature he may be, he must act like a child. There are specific expectations as to his behavior, mode of conversation, and other every day matters. Any type of behavior that does not conform to these expectations is regarded as strange.

So, in the same way, the "female character" is defined by the characteristics regarded as acceptable for women in the society. The society of ignorance has accepted a mode of behavior for women, and they are not permitted to venture beyond these parameters, and must develop their own personalities within it. However, the kind of behavior prescribed for women by an ignorant society is rife with corruptions.

Surely, the worst form of corruption is the belief that, because women are physically weaker than men, they must also be weak of character. Girls are brought up from a very early age with this idea instilled in their minds. Women in a society of ignorance accept,

without question, this notion imposed on them and, as a result, develop a feeble sense of identity. They believe that they cannot match the power and endurance of a man. Great majority of women never think of themselves as one who can protect and care for others; since their childhood, they have always been the ones who were protected and looked after. They think it normal for themselves to be emotional, to cry and become angry as they are “weak” in character. This character type has been accepted as extremely natural in the societies of ignorance. Some women have accepted this model, without considering its validity, and the detriment it causes them, and, thereby, do not recognize the need to reform themselves.

Compared to this convoluted understanding of the society of ignorance, the way revealed by the Qur'an is simpler and far more straightforward. A Muslim does not make any distinction between the character of a man and that of a woman. Therefore, a woman is first of all a Muslim, and then a woman. Her identity is not determined by her sex, but according to the morality proclaimed in the Qur'an. In the Qur'an, Allah describes only a one type of character. Man or woman, all are held responsible for aspiring to this character. Accordingly, a female believer, who is aware of this, develops fortitude, balance and superior character.

When the character of a Muslim woman and that of a woman which has developed under the sway of ignorance are compared, the superiority of the character molded in the light of the morality described in the Qur'an becomes apparent.

Indeed, the Qur'an is the unique source that all people, regardless of their gender, should refer to, as our Prophet (saas) also indicated in his following tradition:

"The Qur'an is a strong rope of Allah, meaning that it is a reliable means of linking with Allah and a firm charter of guidance. It is the straight path. The Qur'an is the clear truth that keep thoughts from straying." (Tirmidhi)

The Housewife in an Ignorant Society

Among the most prominent types of identities inherited by the society of ignorance from their ancestors is that of the housewife. This identity is known by almost all the members of the society, and, no matter what the culture, it is found among the majority of women throughout the world.

This identity is cultivated in almost every girl, from her childhood on, with the expectation that she will one day certainly have to conform to that model. It is usually their mothers, the person usually closest to them, who provides them with that example. They observe their mothers and other women in the community, and little by little, they begin to adopt the identity in their own minds. The role-model is that of a woman who marries well, who is a good housekeeper, and gives birth to healthy children; she receives visits from relatives and friends, and meets with other women to have tea; she brings up her children, does the shopping, cleans the house, and other similar domestic duties.

Surely it is a beauty and blessing for someone to make a good marriage and have a good family life. Believers also desire to have such a blessing. However what is flawed here is the desire to possess them with a worldly greed, without adopting the morality and attitude proclaimed by Allah.

These young girls know nothing about the world, and believe this occupation to be the ideal for a woman. And, in the future, without

questioning, that is the life they will choose.

Certainly, it is not a blameworthy thing for a person to be interested in their home. But it is erroneous to confine one's entire world only within four walls, and to forget her real purpose of life which is revealed in the Qur'an. Indeed, these people limit their thoughts to the location in which they reside and start to live in this small world. They have small targets, small aims, small expectations and small calculations. They possess a kind of character far removed from that of believers described in the Qur'an who fulfill their duties as servants to Allah in the best form possible, aim to display best of the attitudes and conduct hoping to earn Allah's good pleasure, constantly turn to Allah and remember the abode of the Hereafter.

In the society of ignorance, however, the most important issues occupying the mind of a typical housewife are herself, her family, kids and future plans. In a middle-income family these plans include owning a flat and thus ceasing to be a tenant, covering monthly electricity and water bills or kids' school payments, being able to possess a car one day or renewing furniture. The goals of a housewife with better living conditions are no better than the ones cited above. Her plans are likewise made upon her home, family and kids. What makes her life meaningful is to be able to boast about the beauty of her house, the quality of education her kids get or the new car her husband has purchased.

It deserves mention here to say that all the deeds cited above are surely requisite, but the error of ignorant women here is not setting ideals for themselves beyond these few ordinary pleasures. If their lives were established on higher spiritual ideals, even if they lived in the same conditions, they would not be content to be confined to such an identity. The best example of this can be the pious woman.

A person who believes in Allah, whether man or a woman, has high ideals and broad horizons. A woman with a believer's character takes responsibility, not only for her house, family and relatives, but for the whole world. When necessary, she may live within four walls doing her housework, and organize meetings with her friends, but her thoughts, goals and responsibilities are never limited to that. She would never let herself be an insignificant person concerning herself with minor issues. From where she is, she seeks solutions to the world's problems, develops ideas, and bridges impassess.

An ignorant housewife, who conforms to the model determined for her by society, never desiring to venture beyond it, leads her life within the parameters drawn for her. One of the main reasons being that she assumes there is only one place for her to be in this world, and neglects to consider the fact that the day is coming when she will be called to account before Allah. Indeed, one who does not think about what happens beyond death spends his life struggling to maximize the benefits that it has to offer. Our Prophet (saas) has indicated the importance of thinking about death: "Speak a lot about death. Because this removes a man from the world. And makes him free of sin." (Ahmad Diya'al-Din al-Kamushkhanawi, Ramuz al-Ahadith, Vol 1, 80/16) One who fails to keep himself occupied with the remembrance of death strives only to live without overstepping the limits set by those around him. They seek not the favor of Allah, but the approval of others. The result is a backward and ignorant way of life. The basic principles on which this way of life is founded are clear.

Why Do They Yearn to Be Housewives?

When the word “housewife” is mentioned, everyone immediately brings a specific picture to mind. They think of a person who wakes up early in the morning and sends her husband and children off, cleans and tidies up the house, does the laundry, thinks about what to have for supper, and spends most of her day in the kitchen preparing meals... This is the stereotypical image of a woman.

Surely there is no harm for a woman to engage in these actions. Many devout women may also do these works as a part of their daily routines. However what distinguishes a faithful woman engaging in these deeds from the one abiding by the morality of ignorance is her morality, thoughts and intentions. For a devout woman preparing food for her family or cleaning her house, is a way to earn Allah’s good pleasure and His mercy. Her thoughts, the way she interprets incidents is, in no way, confined to a realm comprised of this routine alone.

Indeed, for many, such daily work expected from a housewife is considered boring and tiresome. But, in spite of this, a great many ignorant women aspire to one day living such a life.

So, what renders this lifestyle which will bring no benefits in the Hereafter so attractive for some people? Do people yearn for it only because it is tradition? Or, is it because, according to them, they make life more fulfilling?

All the above reasons may be true. However they are not the only reasons. These reasons depend on the person and their circumstances. But, generally speaking, most of these women can be categorized according to several traits they share in common.

One of the most important reasons they aspire to be house-

wives is that most young girls believe that they will be freer when they are married. After having lived for years under their family's control, and according to the rules imposed upon them, they think that marriage is the easiest and the shortest way for change. For this reason, they often marry the first suitable man that comes along. Nevertheless, while ignorant women want to marry, they are also aware of the difficulties that come with marriage. But they are willing to ignore these difficulties with the hope that they will be able to live by their own rules.

In marriage, women enter into a situation where they are often burdened with more material and personal responsibilities than they had to deal with before. Besides, they cannot be always free to live according to their own rules, because, based on the norms that govern ignorant societies, the master of the house is the man, and he commands the woman according to his rules and beliefs. So, nothing changes; the husband takes on the role her family once did.

There is another important reason for some women's desire to become housewives: the assumed material means that marriage provide. Especially for some girls from families with scarce means, marriage is considered the primary opportunity to improve their circumstances. For this reason, young women are often advised by their families to marry accordingly. And so, often the only criterion a young girl considers in marriage is wealth. Rather than marrying one she admires for his standards of morality and character, she chooses a man who will offer her a prosperous future, or a better life than she had known with her family. In return, she is prepared, if necessary, to get up early every morning for the rest of her life, cook meals, do the laundry and housekeep.

We can see that it is because of that which they expect to gain from being a housewife that so many ignorant women choose this lot. Women with such mentality think they can escape family pressures, raise their standard of living, and secure their future; in addition, they believe they will also help their families and relatives to benefit from their improved circumstances. At first, being a housewife may appear attractive, because of the many benefits it would appear to offer, but later in life it becomes monotonous, until they are finally filled with regret.

The Personality of the Housewife in the Ignorant Society

Although they may vary in level of education or quality of moral characters; and although where they live and their means may be different, the identity of all housewives in a society of ignorance is much the same.

The women in the societies of ignorance are influenced from the outset by the expectations placed upon them by the society. From the time of their childhood, they may have observed thousands of housewives and, whether they know it or not, have recorded their observations subconsciously. And, when they find themselves in similar circumstances, they conduct themselves unaware of the influence they have acquired and which, in a sense, they allow to determine their identity. For this reason, the character of the average housewife is composed of the same basic aspects. They all lead their lives according to their early observations and experiences. Even the ideal of a young woman, who has studied at university, and though she has a network of friends, may become an

entirely different personality after she marries. The week before her marriage she may have been a lively and outgoing person but, suddenly, when she takes on the role of housewife, she may assume an identity that her former friends not longer recognize.

It is the corrupted notion of marriage in a society of ignorance that makes them adopt such a personality. This is important to keep in mind as we examine the personality of the housewife. In the formation of this identity, which we will explore in detail in the following pages, the fact that marriage is “ignorant marriage,” that is, that it is a component of the society of ignorance, is of important significance.

Under the influence of all such factors, this specific identity is formed according to all the corrupting influences of the ignorant system. We must also add that a society of ignorance does not regard these distortions as unusual, nor does it regard the identities it produce as undesirable. On the contrary, they consider them normal and legitimate. It is the society in which they live that determines the character of individuals, and so it is to be expected that they would tolerate and accept the expectations placed upon them and that they should comply by them.

Display of Emotion

A trait considered natural among ignorant women is their emotionality, though such behavior is totally at odds with the moral teachings of the Qur’an. And, according to the expectations of a culture of ignorance, a woman must be meek and needs to be protected and looked after by a man.

For this reason, whenever a housewife is confronted by some

difficulty, she immediately becomes overly emotional. And, she does not regard such a response as weakness, but makes an exhibition of her emotions, thinking that it will make others feel sorry for her. This mode of behavior is encouraged by the community. In an ignorant system, people behave as if they feel sympathy for one overcome by emotion, and the person exhibiting her feelings usually attracts the attention she wants.

In addition, there is a more powerful emotion that some ignorant women tend to display which takes hold of her whole character. It is a kind of emotionalism that pervades every aspect of the lives of the women in question; it derives from unhappiness and not submitting to Allah or her fate. So, because of this emotionalism, she becomes irrational, unable to arrive at intelligent decisions or to act prudently. She sees everything in negatively, considers herself sufferer of some injustice; and, therefore, deludes herself with false scenarios, sinking further into an unhealthy spiritual quagmire. What she expected from marriage did not materialize; the initial exhilaration, love and respect disappeared. Such disappointment led to her despondence. Her behavior becomes an external manifestation of her condition; her eyes are constantly brimming with tears, she is melancholic and sorrowful. If she does not receive a compliment on a meal she has carefully prepared, or no one notices her new outfit, or if she does not immediately get she is after, she becomes overly emotional. A misspoken word, a joking remark, or sometimes, just the wrong word will fix in her mind, and lead her to become emotional. She will remember the offense throughout the day, and let it become something in her mind that was never intended of it. But, the guilty person was probably not even aware of what he had done.

Nevertheless, an ignorant woman who has let emotionalism become a part of her character loses the ability of judgment to recognize the fact.

As a result, another dominant feature among ignorant women is their tendency to weep. Everything that happens in their home may be an occasion for sorrow and weeping. Financial difficulties in the family, difficulties in raising the children, soap operas, or many other factors, may provide the excuse for them to yield to this side of their character. This sort of woman is so mired in her emotionalism that she will find any excuse to cry and be miserable, even if there isn't one. For example, if one of the characters on a television series dies she will cry afterwards for several minutes. Or, if she hears a song she had enjoyed with a friend many years ago, she will suddenly become emotional and begin to cry. Examples like these are many.

Women who harbor these ignorant tendencies may experience both spiritual and physical breakdowns. This is one of the consequences of the distress they experience for choosing life of ignorance over the moral teachings of the Qur'an. Allah has said in the Qur'an that only those who remember Him, submit to Him and prepare themselves for the Afterlife, will lead a good life in this world and find peace in their hearts. But, characters such as those we have described here have forgotten Allah, by Whose eternal power they were created, and, for this reason, have fallen into melancholy.

They Are Easily Offended

One of the most definite features of a housewife's character is the ease with which she takes offense. These women harbor many

subconscious fears, and are afraid of being neglected, abandoned or deceived. Recognizing that members of the society of ignorance are not trustworthy, they are in constant fear of betrayal. So, they interpret every thing that happens, and every word they hear, in this perspective.

If her husband or her children forget a wedding anniversary, birthday or another special occasion, it provides an opportunity for them to become overly sensitive and emotional. They will try to find a hidden meaning behind the slightest oversight, and feel a deep fear of being unappreciated or neglected. This psychological condition creates tension and often leads heated arguments.

However, a woman who is a believer does not have this defect in her character. Above all, in compliance with Allah's command, she is not suspicious about others or that which happens. If someone says something or acts in a way she does not understand, she will try to sort it out in her mind; she will try to understand that person's intention and act accordingly. But, she never takes offense because of something she does not understand, or suppose the meaning of a word spoken. She knows that being touchy is not in compliance with the morality of the Qur'an. Moreover, because a female believer's marriage and friendships are within the community of other Muslims, confusion does not arise to such eruptions. Because, it is the responsibility of believers to speak the truth clearly and correctly. Allah forbids believers from using in their conversation the off-color innuendo and tasteless humor that is characteristic of the wicked morality of a society of ignorance. We can see that a woman who is a believer makes her life conform to the Qur'an, and so is content and secure, and untouched by moral defects.

Complaining About Everything

Ignorant women often speak about the conditions they live in and their unhappiness brought about by their characters which are far removed from the morality of the Qur'an. This tendency though, is also reflected in the men around them. After all, women regard this kind of behavior as appropriate to a housewife. In their opinion, spending the whole day making meals, cleaning the house saps their energy, and, for them, it is to be expected that they should complain. They believe that complaining is their right, and that those around ought to tolerate it. They believe that they, more than others, know the monotony of their marriage. Some men think that complaining is the only way their wives can vent their tensions, and so they accept their behavior to a certain point. But, it must be noted that these women knowingly chose this life themselves. Nevertheless, they never cease in their incessant complaining.

This habit of often complaining, as is found among housewives, and which they regard as their right, manifests itself at every minute of the day. They become so accustomed to complaining about everything, great or small, that they even complain to themselves when they are alone in the house. Such a woman tidies up the house grudgingly and, if a member of the family contributes to the mess, she assaults him with words of reproach. She will even complain to the first person who comes along, even a complete stranger.

This habit of complaining makes one argumentative. The most insignificant matter is magnified and a quarrel ensues; even for minor issues, the women become contrary and stubbornly insistent. They take every word the wrong way, and respond with an opposite assertion. These women live with a lot of anxiety because of

their tense irritability. Their most common complaints are of headaches, stomach aches, and insomnia; and, ultimately, they begin to show early signs of aging.

All this is the result of the corrupt society in which they live. There is only one way out of this disturbed spiritual state brought on by their lack of faith and trust in Allah: To submit to the moral teachings of the Qur'an, and to live a life pleasing to Allah. Other than that, there are no other options.

Most often, ignorant women who display such a base form of behavior look for a solution by visiting some type of specialist or another, trying every new medication, therapy, or may even try to escape by ending their marriage. But, none of these remedies is a real resolution to the miserable lives they lead. As long as they do not live by the morality of the Qur'an and become devoted to our Lord with a sincere heart, there will be no change to their way of life, even though in actuality they would have had nothing to complain about, no one to grumble at or another house to live in.

However, compared to all the base forms of behavior typical of the majority of the women of the ignorant societies, the comportment of a woman of faith is reflective of a character that is positive in outlook and well-balanced. For example, she realizes that complaining is a bad habit. She does not forget that, even if things appear to be going badly, there is a reason for it in the Sight of Allah. So, no matter what comes her way, she sees no reason to be discontent or anxious. Even in her most difficult moments, she shows to those around her a tolerant, forgiving and compassionate character. And, even if she must criticize someone, in accordance with the dictates of her conscience, and by observing the Prophet's (saas) warning,

“Whoever is not merciful towards people, will not be treated mercifully by Allah.” (Ibn Ahmad Hanbal), she does so with language that is appropriate. Also, as the Qur’an commands, she knows that in this way outcome will be more positive. This is the behavior required of believers, as revealed in the Qur’an:

Make allowances for people, command what is right, and turn away from the ignorant. (Surat al-A’raf, 199)

Do you do not see how Allah makes a metaphor of a good word: A good tree whose roots are firm and whose branches are in heaven? (Surah Ibrahim, 24)

Say to My servants that they should only say the best. Satan wants to stir up trouble between them. Satan is an outright enemy to man. (Surat al-Isra’, 53)

Jealousy and Mistrust

Jealousy exercises an important influence in an ignorant society, where it is not regarded as a negative trait. Such a society tries to present jealousy as a mark of love and devotion. If an individual is not jealous of the one he loves, he thinks it is not real love. According to this erroneous way of thinking, in order for an individual to be sure that his partner loves him, the partner must love him exclusively.

But this idea is completely wrong. Because, ultimately, love is a profound feeling and a superior moral trait. For an individual to be jealous in a loving relationship is contrary to the teaching of the Qur’an. A person shows his love to the one he loves through his faithfulness, devotion and tenderness, and by speaking and acting appropriately towards the object of his affection. This creates the idea in the mind of the other person that he or she is really loved. It is very selfish for an indi-

vidual to want to be loved exclusively.

In societies of ignorance, jealousy, especially in married life, causes much anxiety. A woman of such a tendency, who hears of the love her husband has for his mother, father, sisters, friends and even his children, may become a cause of misery for her. Such women do not want their husbands to love anyone else more than, or even as much, as he loves them.

A second type of jealousy that such housewives experience comes from the fact that they are aware of the corrupted perception of marriage in ignorant society. There is no genuine love or faithfulness in any union that is not based on the love and fear of Allah, and on seeking His pleasure. It is because ignorant women are aware of this that they expect being deceived at any moment, and live in fear of being neglected. For this reason, they regard everything that happens with suspicion, becoming overwhelmed with tense feelings and jealousy.

Instead of improving the situation, their behavior makes things worse, and often makes even the problem itself worse. They try to send their partner a message with their erratic behavior, contrariety and irascibility. They tend to derive complicated insinuations from the most trivial circumstances, and then form definite conclusions on the basis of the scenarios they imagine. But, this behavior only makes their lives more miserable. Moreover, contrary to the desired results, they succeed only in driving their partner farther away from them. Because living with a person without knowing when the next outburst will occur, and what kind of false conclusion she will jump to, makes for a very unhappy co-existence. For this reason, the obsessive jealousy of housewives in the ignorant societies usually ends with the breakup of the marriage.

However, the solution is very simple. In the Qur'an Allah informs us that everyone has feelings of jealousy, but these feelings have to be eliminated:

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

For this reason, a believer, who dutifully practices the moral teachings of the Qur'an, does not harbor jealousy. The mutual faithfulness and trust that comes from the fear of Allah prevents any such tension from occurring.

The Habits of a Housewife

When the term "housewife" is mentioned in the societies of ignorance, a specific stereotype enters the minds. Because, the system that fosters this kind of character has, in a sense, become entrenched. Of course, there are some housewives who do not conform to the mould for one reason or another. But, in the sense of the morality of ignorance dealt with here, this is the model of a housewife that is widely recognized in society.

In ignorant societies, the life typical of a housewife is one filled every day with monotony. Usually, her days are taken up with basic duties, such as tidying up the rooms of other family members, doing the laundry, preparing meals, shopping and other chores that need to be done around the house. Of course, everyone must do such things. But, the mistake they make is disregarding the problems pervading this world, forgetting the Afterlife completely, one's responsibilities towards Allah, and instead performing their duties in the expectation of some worldly gain. They base their whole lives, their thoughts, and plans, on the work they do and, instead of seeking the

favor of Allah Who created them, they try to find satisfaction in trivial goals of their daily lives.

In addition, during all this daily activity, there are several habits, usually shared by all housewives who are members of the ignorant society, in which they tend persist. In their own eyes, they think these will improve their lives and alleviate their anxiety and thus they fill their spare time with them. However, when considered carefully, it becomes evident that all such habits only mire them in what is a very ordinary and mundane life.

The most common of these habits are:

Gossiping

One of the most common traits of housewives in a society of ignorance is their love of gossiping. Even if they do not have the time or the occasion, they will surely find some bit of time for gossip. We can see them devoted to it in doorways with their neighbors, on the telephone for hours with their friends, and sometimes at tea and coffee parties. These people living by this morality derive a great deal of pleasure from gossiping, because they can humiliate a person who has criticized them, and make themselves look superior. For this reason, even if there is a more useful or pleasant topic to be discussed at a meeting of friends, they will insist on bringing the conversation around to gossiping. Anyone can become the fodder for their gossip: Their neighbors, friends, relatives, spouses, television stars or even a complete stranger passing in the street.

But, it is not right to say something behind someone's back that he would not appreciate. If there is some matter a person should be criticized for, and if there is any benefit in it, the best thing to do is to

inform the person in question. But if the matter is discussed by everyone, and the person being criticized is not informed, it cannot be said that there is any underlying good intention or intelligent purpose. Moreover, the individuals doing the gossiping are aware that the same thing would certainly happen to them because it is a common practice of ignorant societies. But they would certainly detest it. When they hear that other people have been talking about them, they are very upset by it. But, though fraught with such oversensitivity, they will nevertheless behave terribly towards others without caring whether they are hurting anyone.

However, Allah has forbidden human beings from gossiping. He explains to us in the Qur'an that gossiping is not part of a good moral character, and if there is something wrong, He commands that the offending person be told by "enjoining the good and forbidding the evil":

You who believe! Avoid most suspicion. Indeed some suspicion is a crime. And do not spy and do not backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat his brother's dead flesh? No, you would hate it. And fear Allah. Allah is Ever-Returning, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Hujurat, 12)

So, according to this command of the Qur'an, believers never criticize another person behind their back. They know that one of the greatest signs of real love and friendship is to act in such a way as to be of benefit to another person both in this life and the next. If they see a person behaving incorrectly, they will immediately tell them, and urge them to make up for their mistake. This is the basis of real friendship and loyalty. But, in a society of ignorance, the dearest relationships, like marriage, are not based on sound founda-

tions, and, because they do not rest on mutual love and respect, this negative tendency is then widespread.

Meeting with Friends

One habit that most housewives in the societies of ignorance could not live without is what they call their “day out,” when they meet together with friends for a meal. Surely it is a blessing for a person to come together with her friends and host them. However, it is very important that these gatherings become the times during which love and respect are expressed, friendships are solidified, and the name of Allah is remembered. However, they turn out to be meetings in which just a contrary morality is displayed. Usually at such gatherings, it is sufficient for women of the ignorant society to lift their spirits merely to receive a compliment about a cake they baked, but, if their husbands do not give them permission to attend one of these meetings, they would stay miserable for weeks. This demonstrates just how petty and narrow is the world of these people in question. The kind of conversation, and other things that happen during this kind of meeting, is far from being of any use to them for the Afterlife. In fact, such meetings usually draw them towards this world. Instead of reminding them about the world to come, the greatness of Allah Who created all things, and to live according to the moral standards commanded in the Qur’an, these meetings are full of idle chatter, arguments and banal criticisms. They do not judge what is good about each other according to the Qur’an; on the contrary, their praise for one another is usually insincere, far removed from their genuine convictions. They do not judge others according to how well they practice the moral teachings of the Qur’an.

Usually, among the more important topics talked in these gatherings is either gossip or what happened on the last episode of a television soap opera, or sharing recipes.

However, if the same meeting were composed of individuals that feared Allah, and were making their preparations for the Afterlife, then their conversation would instead be edifying and good for everyone. Believers are commanded in the Qur'an to refrain from idle talk, and non-productive activities, but to spend every moment towards doing something useful and thinking about how they may be helpful to others. This is emphasized in the following verses:

[T]hose who turn away from worthless talk. (Surat al-Muminun, 3)

[T]hose who do not bear false witness and who, when they pass by worthless talk, pass by with dignity. (Surat al-Furqan, 72)

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)

Idly Watching Television

A great part of a housewife's life in a society of ignorance is spent in front of the television. But, it is not only they who enjoy this habit; their husbands and children also spend hours watching television, it being one of the favorite forms of entertainment of a society of ignorance. However, what they watch is most often of no

value. The most important thing for them is to pass the time and, in their own way, enjoy some brief relief from the anxieties they suffer in their lives. Regardless of whatever else they might be doing, throughout the day, housewives leave the television on. Especially when the soap operas come on, then they are glued to the screen. The romance featured in these soap operas gives them particular enjoyment. For this reason, their daily schedule is organized around the times when these soap operas are broadcast, and if they have to go anywhere, they ensure that they record the episode on videocassette. If they can't, then as soon as they finish what they are doing, they eagerly find out the latest developments that took place on the program from friends or neighbors.

Even if they were offered better quality programming and documentaries in which signs leading to faith are displayed, with more intelligent content so as to broaden their horizons, these women, being far removed from the morality of the true religion, would still not give up their soap operas. Because these programs reflect their aspirations, pleasures and their outlook on life so well.

Of course, there would be nothing wrong with watching television, if there were better programming; then people could learn Islamic values from it. But, it is wrong as it stands, because of its mindless content, leaving a person heedless of the existence of Allah and the Hereafter. Especially, it is wrong if the housewife cannot tear herself away from watching television to do something more important or useful. These women could do something positive, but never do, nor are they uncomfortable about it, because their lack of sense of purpose and their self-image as housewife is so ingrained.

Unnecessary Telephone Conversations

A woman in a society of ignorance spends most of her day on the telephone. She calls her friends, one after the other, to learn the latest news and gossip. She relates what has been going on in her family, the arguments she had with her husband, what she bought at the store, who came to visit, and what they talked about. These telephone conversations go on for hours but, generally, they accomplish nothing fruitful.

Believers, on the contrary, as we saw in previous sections, avoid all kind of idle talk and futile activities. They never allow themselves to debase their level of conversation. If they have to, they can spend much time on the telephone, but to discuss an important matter. If there were no such need, they would not talk on the phone just out of habit; they would instead engage in more useful and educational pursuits.

The Character of the “Society” Woman

In the societies living by the morality of ignorance, the character of a woman brought up within the group called, “high society” is still no different from that of a housewife. Their characteristics and habits are similar. But the circumstance and possibilities in this environment, being better disposed of by financial means, are different from those of the middle-income housewife. This difference results in different habits among them.

These women are overwhelmed with anxiety about fitting in to their milieu. For this reason, they behave according to the expectations of those around them, rather than according to their own desires, disposition or inclinations. The expectations of the majority of the members of high society are usually based on money and pretense. Therefore,

those women who adopt this lifestyle spend their days mainly in “high society” doing the “in-things,” trying their best to fit in to that way of life. The world of such women is one of pretence and putting on airs; to this end she will go to holiday resorts, wear clothes considered “high fashion,” gossip at a spa or high-class beauty salon, meet her friends for lunch in an expensive restaurant, or buy things imported from abroad.

Although they appear to have brightly colored lives from the outside, their lives are in fact at least as monotonous and dull as those of housewives. After sleeping until lunchtime every day, they then glance at the magazine gossip pages and begin drawing up their program for the day. Over the course of the day they prepare what to wear to wherever they are invited to that evening, go to the hairdressers and then attend these parties, remaining there until the early hours. The time they spend there is troubling and distressing, full of false show, artificial laughter and people showing off to one another. The following day, due to the tiredness and physical fatigue resulting from this night life, they wake from an uneasy sleep with a raging headache.

Preoccupations such as housework and looking after the children play much less of a role in their daily lives compared to housewives. They enjoy the irresponsibility of having handed such matters over to their assistants. But the fact that they assume no responsibilities leads to the development of an even more uncaring character. The fact that everything they want in life is laid out on a platter for them, that their children and homes are managed by others and the fact that they themselves hope for nothing apart from being part of “high society” soon leads them to dissatisfaction and a terrible emptiness.

All this eventually causes them to become dissatisfied and draws them into a moral abyss. As soon as they acquire something they want, they no longer desire it anymore. Instead, some other things attract their attention, which they then pursue. They are wealthy in material possessions, but they can never achieve spiritual happiness. They cannot attain trust, love or respect, either in their marriages or in their friendships.

Even though they have whatever they want, they are not content. The moral degeneration of a certain section of the high society is reflected in their own lives. Lying, fraud, deceit and all sorts of other moral deficiencies are usually regarded by them as normal. There will come a point, however, where this corruption will turn on these people living by this wicked morality. For instance, while they are themselves gossiping, others are talking about them. Every detail of their private lives, and even unfounded hearsay, becomes the subject of rumors. A secret they share with a friend becomes the headline in a magazine the next day. They approach others with feigned affection, and false friendship, and they are approached in the same way by others. They can never enjoy real genuine friendship. They rarely have intimate conversations, to share their sincere feelings. They never experience loyalty, either in their friendships or in their marriages; they do not trust even their husbands. This life they have chosen for themselves, as in other roles in a society of ignorance, is the product of an environment far removed from the morality of religion. For this reason, these women find themselves at a significant impasse. But, in spite of the fact that they have lived their entire lives in anxiety, they are unable to recognize the contentment the religion and a good moral life can provide. They seek the solution to their

predicament in the corrupt social system they live in, but their efforts are futile; they are digging themselves deeper and deeper into a rut.

This is all because these people in question have turned their backs to the Qur'an. Because they do not live in the way that Allah, our All-Mighty Creator, has commanded, they will never be able to find peace of mind. As is stated in the Qur'an, **"... Only in the remembrance of Allah can the heart find peace."** (Surat ar-Ra'd, 28) their hearts will never find ease, and they will never escape from their anxiety and misery. They have fallen into this condition because they chose a lifestyle that does not suit the purpose of their creation. If they had lived a life pleasing to Allah, and kept to the moral precepts that He has commanded, they would certainly have enjoyed the reward that comes from living a good life. In the Qur'an, Allah has promised:

When those who fear Allah are asked, "What has your Lord sent down?" their reply is, "Good!" There is good in the world for those who do good, and the abode of the Hereafter is even better. How wonderful is the abode of those who guard against evil. (Surat an-Nahl, 30)

It is obvious that a person who lives by the morality Allah commands in the Qur'an and makes her friends among righteous believers would not have had to live with such insecurity. They would have been able to enjoy a society of individuals who are trustworthy, loyal, honest and sincere, and would not have experienced the insecurity and fears plaguing a society of ignorance. In a community where the moral teachings of the Qur'an are adhered to, every believer is eager to live a good moral life, and to receive the reward that comes from it.

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)

The Character of the Male in a Society of Ignorance

The false customs of a society of ignorance also have their influence on the perception of the role of male. Although a definition of this identity is not written, nearly every member of the society of ignorance knows its features well. Even before children are born into a family, the parents have already imagined how they will instill this character into a baby if it happens to be a boy. Above all, in such a society in which people abide by such a morality, having a male child brings a great deal of pride.

The foremost quality of a man, as far as they are concerned, is that he be of strong character and superior to women. These expectations lead of course to a stronger personality in a man than a woman.

Having a strong character is of course a good thing, but the concept of strength referred to in the society of the ignorant is a far cry from the strong character described in the Qur'an. Ruthlessness and strictness, far removed from affection and compassion, and even an understanding of superiority and strength that is rooted in violence is regarded as natural in the male character in the society of the ignorant. Other factors in the society help to support this notion of male superiority. Women in the society of ignorance usually adopt a defeatist character and regard themselves as second-class. In such a society, there is none superior to the male. This creates the idea that male self-sufficiency is absolute. For this reason, men are generally not open to suggestions and criticism from anyone else, particularly women.

In addition, every man feels he must conform to what the society expects of him, and so expends every effort not to depart from the

mould he has been put into. In a society of ignorance, it is considered very humiliating for a man not to be able to do what is expected of him. He is expected to be strong and brave, from his childhood into old age, and may not show the slightest weakness, submission or anything else that does not accord with the male character. So, he is bound not to let his weakness be seen, even when he is sick or suffering for whatever reason. Because showing weakness is regarded as a feminine quality in a society of ignorance, it is not fitting for a man to appear helpless.

It must also be noted that the strength, bravery and other traits expected of a man in society are not negative characteristics; they are actually all good and positive. But, that which is valued as superior by a society that does not live according to the moral teachings of the Qur'an often becomes a matter for arrogance and pride. Allah warns people in the Qur'an against this vice:

Do not avert your face from people out of haughtiness and do not strut about arrogantly on the Earth. Allah does not love anyone who is vain or boastful. (Surat al-Luqman, 18)

For this reason, these qualities in ignorant men are not exercised towards positive ends, but become negative because of their tendency for arrogance. A type of character is produced who is certain of its own superiority, arrogant, and unwilling to respect the ideas of equals.

Various Examples of the Male Character in a Society of Ignorance

What we have said so far describes the aspects of the male character in a society of ignorance. There are many other types of male

characters whose basic characteristics are formed by their families, their community, living conditions and other such factors. We could describe them briefly as follows:

Some men who have adopted for themselves a character opposite to the type mentioned in the last section are called “henpecked” in a society of ignorance. They do not have the kind of character expected by a society of ignorance, that is, a character that asserts its own superiority; but are overly submissive and unable to stand up for themselves. These individuals do not conform to the mould outlined for them according to the stereotype created by the society of ignorance. Instead of being assertive, they prefer to be dominated by others, and fail to display a strong personality. They are regarded as weak and having no personality.

Another kind of character to be seen in a society of ignorance is the “macho man.” These individuals believe that men are definitely superior, and women are definitely inferior. They regard women as men’s possessions, like any piece of merchandise, and decide when they will treat them well, and when they should treat them badly. They think that their boorish behavior, coarse manners and crude language make them appear “masculine.” They are convinced that it is someone like them that women want to marry, that their behavior makes them attractive.

In a society of ignorance, there is also a male character type called the “party animals.” Their favorite entertainment is hanging around in bars, drinking too much and carousing. They do the same thing almost every night, with their regular group of friends, who share the same erroneous outlook. The reason why they are called “party animals” in a society of ignorance is because they are always

“partying.” During these festivities, which last late into the night, hardly one intelligent or significant topic is discussed. Under the influence of alcohol, men talk for hours about something that is totally inane, philosophizing about it, and offering one another lessons on life. Often, something will end an argument, at some point late in the evening, where those around them have difficulty controlling them and quieting them down. Such individuals will also reflect in their every-day life the aspects of the character type that they display in at night. Usually, they will ask for others not to bother them, putting forward the excuse that they are “hung-over,” or still under the influence of alcohol they consumed the night before.

What we have here described are only a few of the male character types to be found in a society of ignorance; there are hundreds of others. Because it is not founded on the Qur’an, a society of ignorance produces these kinds of character, all of which have a corrupted in understanding. When considered carefully however, we may recognize that men who live this kind of life cannot, in any real sense, find fulfillment in their lives.

The Character of Elderly Men

No matter what kind of character he adopts, when he becomes older, a man in an ignorant society settles into the standard set for him. But, before addressing this issue, we must first note one important point: The type of elderly man we will discuss in this section reflect the corruption that results from living a life distant from the morality of religion. We will see the corruption brought about in a man’s character by not living a life pleasing to Allah, by refusing to think in his later years about the life of the Hereafter, and by being

overly attached to this world.

Of course, there are degrees of these features found in one person or another, and the defective morality that we are about to discuss may be evidenced only partly by some individuals and more entirely by others. Essentially, what is important for our topic is the moral degeneracy caused by being distant to the morality of the Qur'an.

Once a woman in an ignorant society will have married off her children, and acquired grandchildren, she will take on the character of an old woman. Also, when men retire or become too old to work, they will tend to stay at home. Even those men who feel physically and spiritually fit are influenced by the rest of the society to think that they must behave as older men do. Their wives have grown old, as have all their friends. Acquaintances have retired and behave as old men. Their children are married, and then grow farther and farther apart from their parents, because they have to deal with their own problems.

Such individuals often pass their days watching television or napping. For a housewife, of course, such behavior is merely a continuation of much of what she had been used to. Their grumbling and irrationality increase steadily. Although both husband and wife live together under the same conditions, the responsibilities for looking after the house still fall to the woman, which makes her behavior even more contrary. Because the men now have nothing to do, they become bored sitting in the house all day with nothing to occupy themselves.

They do the same things every day, their lives becoming dreadfully monotonous. They hope for their children to break this monot-

ony who are immersed in their own lives. Occasionally, they visit their children on week-ends, but only stay for a few hours, which is not enough to rescue them from the tedium of their lives.

Sometimes, they visit friends, among whom the topic of conversation is usually limited to their children and their illnesses. They talk about the doctors they go to, the new treatments they are receiving and the medicines they take; and they give one another advice about health matters.

In spite of all the weakness and helplessness they encounter because of growing old, they maintain the kind of character and expectations that a society of ignorance has imposed on them and not ponder upon the Hereafter. They have lived in an ignorant society for years, and they see clearly that there is nothing to be gained, and no happiness to be had from it. The fact that they are still firmly attached to the world, even when death is so close, is a typical feature of the character of an elderly person who lives in a society removed from the morality of religion.

Also, these individuals are living in such an error that will cause them great harm. What they must do is turn to Allah, the Creator of all that exists. They may not have done this at an earlier age, but from the moment they realize that they will be called to account before Allah, and that their death is near approaching, they must advance awareness, and try to gain Allah's pleasure by repenting of their past lives. The lives they have lived until then, apart from the morality of the Qur'an, their anxieties, illnesses and other problems, must become the means for them to take heed.

In general, however, in the kind of ignorant society we have been describing, the aged do not do so; on the contrary, they become

more rebellious, and act as if they did not understand what was being said. Now, we will summarize the main features of the character of an older person.

They Are Easily Offended and Seek to Make others Feel Sorry for Them

Most elderly people are materially and psychologically dependent on others, usually their children, grandchildren or other relatives. Those they depend on are often not too well disposed towards old people; they may be regarded as good people, but, they usually regard the elderly in their care as an annoying nuisance. Old people usually do not have the means or the ability to live on their own in a separate dwelling. But, their relatives do not want to take them into their own homes on a long-term basis because of the care they require.

In a society in which people do not abide by the morality of the religion this situation to which elderly people are subjected is a natural consequence of the false system they have conformed for years. These people, most of whom have grown old, have likewise adopted an errant morality and lived their lives removed from Allah and His religion. And, they raised their children and grandchildren to adopt the same moral outlook. Instead of instilling in them the nobler morality that Allah has commanded, they have taught them the morality of ignorance. As a result, this has returned to plague them in their later years. And their children, who live in a society of ignorance, will often abuse them or abandon them without blinking an eye. Or, if the children agree to have their parents stay with them, they may not treat them well because they have been forced to take them in.

The parents are aware of the way their children feel towards

them, and this gives rise to one of the major character traits of the elderly—they are irascible. They know that their presence is not appreciated by those they have been taken in by, and so try as much as they can not to bother other members of the household. Nevertheless, they conceal the thought that they are being treated unjustly because they have spent their whole lives looking after their children, bringing them up well, and trying to make them happy. But, in return for all of their self-sacrifice, all they get is rejection. Actually, in one sense, they did these things thinking they would be an investment for their old age, when they would need to be looked after themselves by their children. But, the recompense they hoped for turned out quite different from what they expected. Therefore, they consider themselves to have been treated unjustly, and are easily offended.

As an outward expression of their discontent, they often speak with the insinuation that they are making the other people in the house uncomfortable. Most often, they cannot enjoy a pleasurable conversation with others because they find a hidden meaning in everything that is said, offering ambiguous responses to hide their resentment. They say reproachfully, "Don't worry, I won't be a burden." When they are offered something to eat, they either refuse or take very little; at times, they think that the other people in the house are hiding food from them and they sneak food from the cupboard when no one is watching. Or, when someone offers them a room to relax in, they surprise everyone by saying, "There's no need; I'll just curl up at the end of the sofa." They get angry about the slightest remark, collecting their things feigning to get ready to leave. But they have no other place to go. They behave in such a way only to make others feel sorry for them. Even when someone buys them a present

they find something to take offense at. They think either that their present was cheap, or that it was a last minute effort when everyone else had been bought for.

When guests come to visit, they try to give the impression that their relatives do not want them in the house, and that they are being abused and are left uncared for. When they are asked how they are feeling, they will go on about how miserable they are. In this way, they think they will be pitied, garner sympathy and that people will take more interest in them. Then again, perhaps the guests may be impressed that what they are saying is true. This may anger the other members of the household who will then be even less inclined to look after their elderly relatives.

They Try to Get People to Take An Interest in Them

In a society of ignorance, the elderly, both men and women, attempt to make other people take an interest in them. The main reason for this is the corruptive influence of the society. In the societies in which people abide by the morality of ignorance, people consider the concept of love not in relation to faith or morality but in terms of what they can get out of it. This explains why the love and interest in others goes only so far. Therefore, those elderly who are no longer in a position to offer anything to anyone try various other means to get the love and attention they want. They do so not by acting in a way that would get others to love them, but through the inappropriate methods encouraged by the society of ignorance. But, these methods do not inspire love in others; on the contrary, their amoral efforts bring just the opposite results.

One of the means by which the elderly who live by the morality

of ignorance aim to attract attention is to speak constantly about their health problems, telling others about how much pain they suffer, and how difficult their lives are. In this way, they hope to make others feel sorry for them. In their condition, they complain about their illnesses, because they do not trust in Allah, or give thanks. In order to move others with their stories, they stretch the truth. They think that, if they appear ill, they will gain more attention, and others will be more tolerant towards them. In fact, though their situation moves others to pity, it also makes them angry, because they know that these elderly persons are exaggerating. They know that the only thing they want is attention, and that, though they give it to them, it is still not enough. The elderly, who exhibit this morality of ignorance want all the time to be the center of attention.

For this reason, they at times sit in a corner pouting and refusing to eat or speak. They want someone to ask them what the matter is, but pretend not to want anyone's attention. When asked, they say nothing is the matter, thus trying the patience of other people. Sometimes they will go to a remote corner of the house, and stay there for hours hoping to arouse the curiosity of others. They will sit with a handkerchief in their hands weeping, and when someone asks them what is wrong, they will sob and say they are lonely or that no one loves them. Then the others will say, "But we're here," and give them some love and attention.

If the elderly persons are not satisfied with any of this, they will try to express their concerns to the others. They will resort to innuendo, using catch-phrases popular in the society of ignorance. For example, if no one is showing them any interest, they will say such things as, "I'm not going to stay where I'm not wanted," "If I had a

place to go I wouldn't be troubling you," or "Send me to a nursing home, you'll be happier." They say these things only to get the others to take more interest in them.

However, if they used all the energy they spend using these tactics instead towards behaving properly, they would get the love and attention they desired. But, trying to get what they want by resorting to inappropriate methods which are not in compliance with the morality of the Qur'an will never allow them attain their wishes.

They Won't Listen to Anyone

The elderly who live by the morality of ignorance share another interesting well-known characteristic—they won't listen to anyone. No matter what the issue, they only want to do things in their own way. They never trust what another person says, and look for some evil intent in everything that said. For example, when they are told they should not eat a certain food because it is bad for their health, they think it a lie invented to keep them from eating it. For this reason, when one gives them advice, they don't listen; they become angry, thinking that others want to refuse them a meal.

But, there are still more such examples; sometimes their behavior can reach the point where it becomes a concern. For example, they will want to treat their own health problems, and refuse to see a doctor. Or, they refuse to take medicine a doctor has prescribed for them, choosing instead some old remedy that are familiar with; or, they may make some concoction of their own. They trust their own knowledge and experience completely, believing that young know nothing.

They Do Not Think About What They Are Doing

These elderly individuals live their entire lives distant from the morality of the religion; they hide behind their perception as old, trying to find some excuse to act thoughtlessly — another bad habit in the society of ignorance. They believe they can excuse their moral deficiency by their age. Whatever the case may be, the society of ignorance accepts these deficiencies as typical of some old people. They will try to pass over an elderly person's eccentricities by saying, "Excuse him, he's old; he doesn't know what he is saying." However, that elderly person is completely aware of what he has done, and has probably done it deliberately. When their personal interest is at stake, they understand all too well what is owed to them; they know when they are not getting their due, or when a mistake has been made not in their favor. In any case, much of their tactlessness is often deliberate.

They know very well when to use talk insinuatingly, and whom to say it to. They use these tactics at almost every chance they get. They know how to have a normal, straight-forward conversation, but rarely do so.

If they are asked for the reason for their sickness when they fall ill, they say things like "because I have not eaten meat for a long time," "the room I slept in was cold" or "I get very tired," thus hinting that someone else is to be blamed for being neglectful.

At times, they will pursue minor forms of revenge. For example, when guests come to visit, they will bring up a subject that will embarrass the other members of the house, will speak the most inappropriate things for all to hear, although they know that it will hurt the people around. Then, they will hide behind their age, pre-

tending they did not know they had said anything unkind, and pass over the matter with an apology. But, they knew exactly what they were doing. They know that the best way for them to take revenge on someone who is angry with them is to humiliate that person with their lack of tact.

Their Attachment for This World

The majority of the elderly in a society of ignorance know well the helplessness and difficulty that old age brings but, in spite of their recognition of the fact, they do not take the lesson from it, and do not temper their attachment to the life of this world. Even though they have come so near to their death, they keep the thought far from their minds. They see their friends dying one after the other, but still act as if death will not come upon them. Rather, they save to secure their future. They fear some day having none to take care of them, or of running out of money, and therefore store food, clothing and funds. But, though they are afraid of finding themselves in dire circumstances, they never think about the Afterlife. They do not consider there to be any need to prepare for the world to come. However, a human being's true existence is in the next world. That is the one he should prepare for. Allah relates us the following in the Qur'an:

The life of this world is nothing but a game and a diversion.

The Hereafter is better for those who fear Allah. So will you not use your intellect? (Surat al-An'am, 32)

Believers, who believe this truth with certainty, will experience old age in a very different way. They have already lived their lives in the hope of gaining Allah's favor. The further time passes, the more

eager they are to meet the Hereafter and, by the will of Allah, to live their lives in the eternity of Paradise. Due to their hopeful expectation, they are joyful, contented and morally upright. They do not cause problems for those around them; on the contrary, they help to solve those problems, telling others about the moral teachings of the Qur'an, and helping them attain the kind of character that will be pleasing to Allah. Even if they become physically feeble, they remain mentally active, and try to be of benefit to their community.

This moral uprightness gains for them great love and respect from their community. Because they teach moral rectitude to those around them, and are morally upright themselves, they are always treated with respect. In the Qur'an believers are enjoined to be respectful towards those who are advanced in years. In the Qur'an, Allah says:

Your Lord has decreed that you should worship none but Him, and that you should show kindness to your parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age with you, do not say "Ugh!" to them out of irritation and do not be harsh with them but speak to them with gentleness and generosity. Take them under your wing, out of mercy, with due humility and say: "Lord, show mercy to them as they did in looking after me when I was small." (Surat al-Isra', 23-34)

We have instructed man to honor his parents ... (Surat al-'Ankabut, 8)

We have instructed man concerning his parents. Bearing him caused his mother great debility and the period of his weaning was two years: "Give thanks to Me and to your parents. I am your final destination." (Surah Luqman, 14)

Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him. Be good to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to neighbors who are related to you and neighbors who are not related to you, and to companions and travelers and your slaves. Allah does not love anyone vain or boastful. (Surat an-Nisa', 36)

THE IDENTITIES THAT DEVELOP UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE PROFESSIONS IN IGNORANT SOCIETIES

The personalities of all who live in a society of ignorance are subject of certain influences. One of these influences is their line of work. Because, a person's work or profession is an important factor in shaping identity and status in a society. Every individual who lives in a society divorced from the morality of the Qur'an is evaluated according to his profession, social status and degree of prosperity. Although these are not formally recognized, the ranking of all professions, in terms of the respect they command, is nonetheless known to all. For example, the respect commanded by a professor is different than that of an administrator; a doctor's is greater than a fashion designer's; and an architect's is greater than a teacher's.

For this reason, those in a society of ignorance who are faced with making a decision about what profession to pursue make their choice not only on the basis of what interests them, or what their talents are, but also consider the social status it will bring.

When a person chooses a profession, his sense of identity changes accordingly. If he really wants to "make it" in the society and achieve real status, he will have to take on the identity deter-

mined for him by the ignorant societal mores he find himself under.

Almost none of the members of the society find fault with such a change of personality; on the contrary, the more a person behaves according to his new identity, the more respect he receives. The way he dresses, his manner, the way he sits and walks, and his tone of voice are all to be reflective of his profession.

Moreover, he is expected to adopt a particular interpretation of the world around him according to his profession known as “professional ethics,” with which he must conform in order to be successful and advance in the profession he has chosen.

What is being referred to here is not, of course, the ethics or moral rules exhibited by an honest, genuine and industrious person. The professional ethics referred to in the society of the ignorant is a concept that regards illicit earnings, occasional professional pride and obstinacy, or being dishonest, or loss of self-respect as occasion demands, as perfectly legitimate, and has in fact nothing to do with real moral virtue.

Besides, it must also be stated that there are those in a society of ignorance who, for various reasons, do not conform to these rules of behavior. Because of their principles, they may not allow their profession to dictate their sense of identity. Though, such people are but a small minority. The main purpose in describing these character types is not to criticize them specifically, but to show the distorted perception of the greater part of the society divorced from morality of the Qur’an.

Before proceeding on the topic of professions, there is an important matter that must first be considered. In the detailed account to be given in this section, we do not mean to criticize any profession. Indeed, if people are to live together in society, everyone must have a line of work and use his talents to be useful to the rest of society. However, it is im-

portant to recognize the error of judging others and ranking them according to their profession. Moreover, it is wrong for a person to alter his personality depending on his profession. People will be judged according to the criteria that Allah has revealed in the Qur'an:

Humanity! 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 most fear of Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.
(Surat al-Hujurat, 13)

We can see from the verse above that individuals will be held responsible for their degree of devotion to Allah. Whether man or woman, young or old, doctor or secretary; that is not the criteria by people will be judged on the Day of Judgment. No matter what a person's circumstances may be, all must obey the Qur'an. Everyone is responsible for living as Allah has commanded, and developing their personalities according to the morality taught in the Qur'an.

So, in this section, we will draw attention to this error: People forget Allah, the Day of Judgment, Allah's religion, become overly enamored with this transient world, and develop their own values. In time, they become ever more entrenched in their identities depending on the values they have determined. Before discussing in detail the example of the ignorant person who alters his character according to his profession, it will be useful to consider the basic character of the business man and woman because of their dominance in the society.

The Character of the Working Woman

A working woman in a society abiding by the morality of ignorance receives more respect in society than the housewife. Because ac-

according to the criteria set by ignorant societies, they are thought to have higher ideals, and more important responsibilities than housewives. Indeed, the main reason why a woman decides to have a career is to avoid being a housewife, and the negative perception some people attach to it, and, in her own way, to rise to a more respected position in society. For a person possessing such a mentality, being a working woman will, above all, grant her a different identity; it will allow her to stand on her own two feet, which will bring her a greater measure of equality with men.

Indeed, this is exactly what is expected of a working woman in a society of ignorance. For those who live their lives divorced from the morality of religion, the most important thing is the financial independence that wealth offers. For this reason, such people consider an independent woman superior to other women. Their level of morality is not an issue; what is important is their bankbooks, assets, company privileges and reputation.

Working women who are aware of these perceptions in their society abiding by the morality of ignorance ambitiously cling to their work. The more successful they are in their profession, the more, they believe, they achieve for themselves. For that end, they will do their utmost to prove themselves to others in their workplace.

Rising to the management level, alongside other men, they regard as a major success. They regard this as a very important opportunity. They can order others around; if some complete a job incorrectly, or are late finishing a project, these women do not hesitate to berate them publicly. On one hand, they do so to try to prove themselves to the men; on the other hand, they are competing with the other women in the company. They will seize any opportunity to ad-

vance themselves by pointing out the failings of the other women.

They think they are in gain because they do not have the image of a housewife in society. But their lives are not as different as they imagine. Fundamentally, their character possessing the morality of ignorance has not changed much. The only things different are the environment and the people around them. No longer the housewife concerned about her house and her family, and arguing with her husband or her mother; in her place is a working woman concerned about her work, competing with her fellow workers and proving herself. Otherwise, the gossiping, arguments, jealousies and emotional outbreaks persist. Because the way to escape a life-long anxiety and a somber spiritual state, is not to change one kind of ignorant identity for another; it is only possible by making a change in one's spirit, according to the teachings of the Qur'an. The character of the working woman adhering to the morality of ignorance ignores this essential fact, and so continues to experience all the trouble and torment of the morality of ignorance.

However, a woman who is a believer is aware of this important truth. In order to reform herself, she does not just make superficial adjustments in her life, but devotes her attention to developing her spirit, and her moral character. For this reason, she is always progressing.

And, unlike the majority of women in a society of ignorance, they do not suffer from complexes. They do not stoop to getting into competition with other women around them, men in their workplaces or other people for material and mundane values. After all, such competition is meaningless. According to the morality of the religion, there is no such thing as superiority or inferiority of the male or female over

one another, and therefore no competition between men and women. Both men and women behave in the way that suits to their creation. They do not try to imitate each other, but to conform to the model of a believer described in the Qur'an. It is only the measure of faith and morality that is of any value in the Sight of Allah. And men and women, all believers compete only for good.

The Character of a Working Man

As described in many verses of the Qur'an, in the societies having the morality of ignorance, the majority of working men are consumed with concerns of this earthly life. Their world, their work and their goals are focused on their becoming successful at their jobs. They will discuss little with their family and friends; they either talk about their work, or sit for hours thinking in silence about how they can make more money. Their minds are so occupied with their work that they often forget their moral liabilities towards their spouses, children, families and friends.

Everything people having this morality think about is in connection with their work. Their social relationships are based on what they can profit financially from them. They base their friendships, and even their marriage, in this way. They nurture the relationships they think will bring them gain, and consider it a waste of time to maintain friendships with those who cannot be of any use to them.

At home, and at work, they are tense and stressed. After a bad day, they become extremely irascible, ready to explode if anyone were to so much as even touch them. When someone does not show proper consideration for their mental state, their irritability increases.

They especially blame their wives for not being sensitive and understanding about their work.

They are usually very confident and sure of themselves in all they do; they think themselves clever, and do not respect another's opinion. They are proud of their years of experience, always insisting they know better. It would be impossible to convince them they were wrong about something. Even if they were aware that they have made a mistake, or had a bad idea, they would not apologize; it is very difficult for them to admit to an error.

As stated earlier, the basic reason why they attain this kind of character is their attachment to this world. This attachment has caused them to lose many of their more humane qualities, and made them incapable of thinking about anything other than financial gain. We must here state at the outset that it is normal for a person to desire money, to be successful in his career, and to hope to improve his situation; but, it is a mistake for him to forget about the Afterlife, becoming overly passionate in his desire for the things of this world. On the other hand, one may have great wealth, but he may use it to please Allah or to achieve some high purpose.

There is no such pious intention in a working man of a society of ignorance; on the contrary, he has a passionate attachment to this world. But, the money he so desires is just a transient pleasure of this life. A man may be the richest person in the world, or the most successful in his profession, but he will one day die and leave behind him everything he had gained in the world. The wealth he amassed will be of no use to him when his body lies rotting beneath the earth. Then, he will be called to give account of that which he has done in this world. On the Day of Judgment, he will not be asked how hard he worked to

acquire his wealth, or how much he accumulated; he will be asked what he did for Allah to earn His favor. So, all the efforts he had put forth for worldly gain, will have been in vain.

Allah speaks of the vanity of such efforts in the Qur'an:

Say: "Shall I inform you of the greatest losers in their actions? People whose efforts in the life of this world are misguided while they suppose that they are doing good." 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. (Surat al-Kahf, 103-105)

The Character-types of Managers and Directors

In societies divorced from religion, you can find several different types of characters in a single workplace. Every one of these character-types is influenced by the position he has been given, and determined by his responsibilities, salary and rank in relation to other workers. One of the characters shaped by these factors is that of a manager. Those who are of this kind of character are of a disposition regarded as otherwise quite normal for a person in their circumstances, but which is the product of a corrupt way of thinking; they can be two characters at once, changing according to the particular situation. They show one side of this character to those who are their superiors; and show the other to those who are their inferiors.

When they are with their boss, people having this morality in ignorant societies are humble and submissive; they treat him with deference, sometimes bending over backwards to please him. They do everything he wants immediately, being careful not to make the least

mistake. The boss, on the other hand, has the right to say anything he wants to his subordinates and, if necessary, to berate them. Managers do not mind being treated in this way, and regard it as the boss's right to criticize them. They do everything they can to get the boss to like them, and to get on his good side. They will even fulfill menial tasks outside of work to gain his favor. The purpose of all this self-sacrifice is definite: The boss is the one who pays their salary, and exercises the final authority in the workplace. Therefore, all the manager's wages and benefits are determined by him. Gaining support and sympathy from the boss is extremely important for the manager's career and future. For this reason, a person with such morality will not hesitate to compromise his honor and integrity.

It will be useful at this point to make an important distinction: It is good for people to respect and esteem those who are in a higher position or senior to them or to fulfill their requests. But, in doing so they must seek the pleasure of Allah, acknowledging that person's level of morality, and not seek any material benefit from him.

But, people in a society of ignorance do not acknowledge the level of morality of another. They respect a rich man even if he is morally weak. They try to oppress those who work with them, with no regard for their moral qualities, because their criteria by which they judge others is not based on earning the pleasure of Allah. According to the distorted way of thinking of a society of ignorance, these individuals regard themselves as superior to those they oppress, and they think they have the right to treat them badly. Now, this manager, who was so meek and mild when the boss was present, becomes arrogant, over-confident, a "do what you're told" dictator. He is very harsh and uncompromising towards those under him. He barks out orders, and if a

problem arises, he does not hesitate to publicly berate the person responsible, because these people he deems to be of no advantage to him. Besides, he wants to inflict the arrogance on those under him as the boss inflicts on him. In this way, he hopes to deny the meek character he shows when the boss is around.

The contradiction in these two different character sides is generally regarded as normal in the workplace and in a society of ignorance. This is the way the system works: according to this false system, the owner of the company can treat a manager any way he wants; a manager can do the same to a secretary and a secretary can do it to the janitor. The reverse is also true; everyone behaves as best he can towards a superior, and is careful to do what is expected of him. But when the superior is absent, the others do not hesitate to express their hatred of him. The respect they show is false.

This moral system is evidently corrupt. These people know how to behave respectfully, but they do not feel they have to behave in such a way towards each other, because there is no material benefit to be derived from it. Not only this vice not considered controversial, but it is not even noticed in the corruption of a society of ignorance. However, according to the Qur'an, one who behaves this way has no conscience. Without being in an expectation of a mundane benefit, a human being is responsible for behaving as well as his conscience will allow under all circumstances, and Allah has commanded all to be tolerant and humble.

A human being possesses nothing of his own that would raise his stature among those around him. Rank and status come only from Allah. He bestows upon those of His servants He chooses, and raises the stature of those whom He wishes to raise. When He wishes, He can

reverse the situation; He has the power to take back every blessings He has conferred. For this reason, a human being must always act humbly before Allah. In the Qur'an, Allah reminds us of this truth:

Do not strut arrogantly about the Earth. You will certainly never split the earth apart nor will you ever rival the mountains in height. (Surat al-Isra', 37)

A believer lives aware of this reality. No matter who he has to deal with in this world, he is never boastful and does not forget that he is responsible to Allah. For this reason, he does not believe that such alternating and insincere behavior is acceptable, and adopts in all times and in all places a moral character pleasing to Allah. No matter what the rank or position of another, he always acts towards that person with respect and courtesy. He does not expect a reward for his politeness; on the contrary, he expects recompense only from Allah for every good he performs. He severs Allah, and works to win His favor.

The Character of the Secretary

In a society of ignorance, some professions are considered more noble and some more ordinary than others. The job of a secretary is regarded as more ordinary than many other jobs. One of the main reasons for this is that secretaries are merely someone else's assistants. For this reason, in a society of ignorance if you ask secretaries what they do for a living, they will often make themselves appear more qualified by saying that they work as personal assistants. Because being a secretary does not command a lot of respect in some circles of the society, they boast about their employers and the assistance they give them. However, it should satisfy a person that he works at a legitimate business and that he earns money by legal means. No one ought

to be attributed superior status, as in the ignorant society, or need to be regarded with respect by those around them. What makes an individual worthy of good in this world and the next are what he has done to win the favor of Allah.

As stated earlier, morality based on ignorance offers a totally different and erroneous way of interpreting reality. Secretaries who adopt this erroneous value system revere their employers. Their employers consider themselves their benefactors and think that they have all kinds of rights over them. Secretaries do not take it personally when their boss treats them badly, orders them around or makes them do all sorts of jobs; in fact, it actually pleases them. They do much more than is expected of them, and try their best to make their boss happy. Because, in a sense, their boss is their future. They consider their boss to be the only one who can improve their prospects, expand their network of acquaintances, and bail them out of difficulties.

Actually, most of the tasks secretaries do are not defined in their job description; in a society of ignorance, they have to do everything they are told to do. Their bosses take advantage of this and work them very hard. When they become irritated during the day, they shout at their secretaries who do not say a word in response; they just smile in return. But, at the first chance they get, they criticize them behind their backs.

As well, secretaries behave the same way towards other employees as their bosses behave towards them. They will surely find someone else in the workplace to order around and put to work, these usually being the janitors.

Those who work as secretaries for high-level bosses act especially arrogant towards other employees, because they see themselves as the person closest to him. According to the mentality of ignorance, the

secretary to the boss of a major company occupies a high position. All the managers are obliged to go through the secretary if they want to see the boss. Most often, they ask the secretary what kind of mood he is in. These secretaries take advantage of their position by constantly ordering other people around and speaking harshly to lower-level personnel.

In such a character living in a society of ignorance, we can discern types of ignorant behavior such as lying, ignoring bad habits, being hypocritical and criticizing others behind their back. They do all this to get one person to like them and for the advantages that they believe they will derive from it.

However, the only power that can benefit human beings in this world and the next is the power of Allah. Those who try to ingratiate themselves with others, and to make themselves liked, forget that Allah is the only One whose pleasure has to be earned. They forget that Allah exists. But a believer is one who strives only to win Allah's favor. Believers never make the mistake of exaggerating the importance of other human beings, or attributing to them any real power; and, they never entertain the hope of gaining anything from them. They are aware that their fate is in the hands of Allah.

The Character of the Doctor

In today's society doctors are the most respected professionals. Indeed, to work to promote the health of others is a serious undertaking and requires a self-sacrificial spirit. But, in societies divorced from the morality of the Qur'an, the way people regard doctors and the character doctors develop out of this are somewhat different.

Firstly, some people mistakenly believe that their lives are in the hands of their doctors. For this reason, they look at them for help. Most

families want their children to be doctors and instill this idea in them. For this reason, almost every child says that he wants to be a doctor when he grows up. Of course, it is good for a family to want their children to have a useful profession for humanity but, in a society of ignorance, the main purpose of a family that directs their children to this profession is to win adulation from their community. Another reason is that, when a family member gets sick, their children who are doctors will be able to look after them and this gives them a sense of security. And besides this, doctors make the best candidates for marriage.

This way of looking at doctors in a society of ignorance begins as soon as a student enters a faculty of medicine. The students who navigate the corridors with their white lab coats have only one model in mind. According to the model they are taught, doctors are above all sure of themselves and think they know everything. When they talk to patients they use phrases containing medical terms which the sick person cannot understand. Of course, these doctors know that their patients cannot understand this language but they continue to use it thinking that this is the way a doctor speaks. In the societies living by the morality of ignorance, after they start practicing, the majority of doctors have only a few goals left; they want to be a famous specialist or a professor, to have a luxury office and earn as much money as possible.

The greatest suggestion that people are indoctrinated with in some societies is the error that people's lives are in the hands of their doctors. It is this subconscious suggestion that underlies the respect and awe in which doctors are held in such a society. Members of ignorant society who are totally unaware of the Might and Power of Allah, Who created them from a drop of water and feeds them, are deceived

to perceive doctors as beings with superhuman powers (surely Allah is beyond that). For this reason, they feel ignorantly that they are of less value than doctors and that, as we said before, doctors are their only hope for recovering from an illness. However, Allah warns human beings that they are only servants:

Those you call on besides Allah are servants just like yourselves. Call on them and let them respond to you if you are telling the truth. (Surat al-A'raf, 194)

Of course, it is right for a person to go to a doctor and follow his advice. But, in doing this, that person must not forget that it is Allah Who restores them to health. It is only He Who knows where and when an individual will die. Allah has set the time of everyone's death and all people approach that day without knowing when it will come. Many people make the great error of ignoring this reality; they forget to pray to Allah and look to their doctors for help. And because so much is expected of them, doctors, who are far removed from the morality of the religion, develop certain arrogance.

The difference between how some doctors act in their private offices and how they behave while working in a hospital well illustrates the distorted values of ignorant society. Because the office is private, the patients that come there are usually well-off. An ignorant person's love of money requires him to act politely to those who are financially comfortable and some doctors are overly polite to those who come to their offices. The patient who comes to the doctor's office has chosen him and if that patient does not like the treatment he gets, he may pay his bill and go to another doctor.

There is another aspect to this discussion; doctors' attitude to those patients who have no money. In a society of ignorance it is ac-

cepted that those who have no money are always treated without respect and some doctors who work in hospitals are very good at treating such patients in compliance with this flawed mentality. The patients that doctors have to deal with in hospitals are most often poor. For this reason, the doctors acting in compliance with the rationale of ignorance regard themselves as the most important people in the hospital. Due to the same flawed rationale, they do not often look at their patient in the face because they think that the sick person is of no value. Even most of the hospital personnel have the same point of view. They ignore someone asking for directions or for a doctor's name. They get established in their environment, become used to its sights and forget about mercy and compassion. Even as patients are entering the door of the hospital, they encounter the irritable attitude of security guards who treat them badly.

In the societies living by the morality of ignorance, majority of doctors work in a hospital more or less to earn their salary. After working there for years, they have at most a waiting room and a treatment room that doubles as an office. This is the ideal of a great many doctors. No doubt, helping people is something to appreciate. However, for the character of a doctor in a society of ignorance in the basis of such diligent efforts lie mundane expectations such as ranks, status and fame. The fact is, however, no matter what one's profession may be, what will make a person honorable, respected and esteemed will be his efforts to win Allah's good pleasure, love and the infinite life in the Hereafter and his awareness of his weaknesses.

We should keep in mind that, no matter what their profession may be, after living in this world for a short time, every person will come face to face with the next world. After his death it will not matter

how many patients a doctor has treated, whether or not he knew his medical terms well enough or what title he earned; he will be asked what he did to earn Allah's favor. In societies divorced from the morality of religion, most doctors are not aware of these realities because they are living under the strong influence of ideas instilled in their minds by the ignorant society they live in. It is very important for them to win society's approval and be respected in its eyes.

Every deed done in accordance with the teaching of the Qur'an is directed towards winning Allah's approval and, no matter what their profession may be, believers exhibit high moral standards. Believers are the best supporters and helpers of those in their community who are sick, weak and helpless. This behavior comes from their adherence to the Qur'an and their unwavering dedication to the morality that Allah has commanded. A person who embraces the Qur'an knows that medical knowledge can only be gained by the will of Allah and that He has created everything that brings healing. He sees clearly that, if it were not according to Allah's will, he would not do what he does or know what he knows. He never forgets that he may become ill at any time and that, if that happened, he would have no helper or healer other than Allah.

The prayer of the Prophet Ibrahim (as) related in the Qur'an in this regard is a fine example of the high moral standards that everyone should take as an example:

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', 78-82)

A Nurse's Character

It must first be made clear that there are many nurses who work devotedly day and night caring for their patients, despite their inadequate salary. However, we will discuss here those nurses who abide by the morality which is far removed from the true religion. Such persons have become calloused to their patients' problems, because of the numerous hours they are required to spend under adverse conditions caring for the sick. Some have lost all feeling for their patients and, instead of treating them with understanding and compassion, behave harshly towards them, often forcing them to wait for their care. It is not unusual for a nurse to even criticize or chastise a patient. Such individuals think that most patients are mere hypochondriacs, that they exaggerate their illnesses, and may even withhold the help that patients ask for.

Aware that the sick are helpless and in need of their assistance, nurses, who are ignorant of the morality of the Qur'an, behave arrogantly towards them. They look down on the patients, humiliate them and sometimes even berate them. They are in a position of being needed and, as far as they are concerned, "important people" ought to act haughtily towards ordinary people.

And, the way these people living by these wicked morals treat one another is not different from the way they treat their patients. They will behave towards others according to their station; for example, they show great respect towards the head nurse, but belittle other nurses.

Just as the lives of some housewives living by the morality of ignorance are confined within the four walls of her house, similarly, nurses confine much of their world to the hospital. They think quite

highly of themselves in their situation. They think it to be themselves who heal people, not realizing that they are only the means. However, if they were themselves sick, they would not be able to cure themselves, and therefore should recognize that they cannot prevent illness from themselves. However, majority of them are obstinate in this false belief. In the Qur'an, Allah tells us that no one other than He has the power to cause good or harm.

If you ask them, "Who created the heavens and the Earth?" they will say, "Allah." Say: "So what do you think? If Allah desires harm for me, can those you call upon besides Allah remove His harm? Or if He desires mercy for me, can they withhold His mercy?" Say: "Allah is enough for me. All those who truly trust put their trust in Him." (Surat az-Zumar, 38)

Allah has revealed to us that we should trust only in Him. As discussed earlier, from the Prophet Ibrahim's (as) prayer related in the Qur'an, believers should learn to trust only in Allah and look for assistance from Him alone. They sincerely believe that Allah ordains both good and harm and, apart from Him, there is no other power that can prevent such things from happening. They do not forget that Allah created every cure, as well as all doctors and nurses in the world, as the means for healing people.

The Character of Merchants

A large number of individuals in society are grouped under the heading of merchants. This group includes a wide spectrum of occupations, from shopkeepers to small businesses and street vendors. In the societies where people abide by the morality of ignorance, people who are called as merchants share some common features like many other groups of professions.

As with many other characters of ignorance, that which most influences the character of the merchants in the society of ignorance is, again, the values of materialism. Majority of these individuals tend to be middle-income earners, and are of character types dedicated to acquiring wealth no matter what because they live by the values of ignorance and fail to abide by the Qur'an. That is because it is only possible for them to earn respect and to gain a name for themselves if they become wealthy. This is due to the fact that, in a society of ignorance, being wealthy is more highly valued than morality. When it comes to money, it makes no difference how ignorant, or impolite a person is. Material means may always open all sorts of means.

For this reason, the majority of merchants living by the criteria set by the ignorance seek ways to earn money and their whole being becomes consumed with the desire to make money.

Surely there is no harm in making effort to acquire financial gains. However meanwhile, he should keep in mind that it is Allah Who is the actual owner of wealth and possessions, that Allah renders whoever He wills well-off or poor, and that there is wisdom in this. He should be contented with what Allah grants, and demand wealth merely to earn Allah's good pleasure and approval. Besides, he should put his possessions, which are again Allah's blessings, into best use in the path of Allah. When this is not the case, a person may develop a selfish and self-seeking character. For this reason, the character of merchant in the society of ignorance lacks any high ideals, or any broader concerns for the lot of humanity. Their sole aim is to become rich. They usually become overly opportunistic; and, the more they can exploit others, the more clever they think they are.

As a result, as would be expected, many regard merchants as

being a form of occupation for the dishonest and fraudsters. Of course, among them you could find honest individuals, who adopt the morality of Islam, and follow the commands of the Qur'an; it is certainly not necessary for merchants to compromise their morals. The fraud and dishonesty expected of them is the result of the absence of religion in an ignorant society. For example, many merchants in such a society would not hesitate to sell damaged merchandise without properly informing the client. And, because their conscience does not bother them to do such a thing, they make it a regular mode of operation. They buy defective goods and sell them to customers at the normal price. The other merchants in the area know what these people are doing, but turn a blind eye because they regard it as a requisite of business practice. For some of them, their idea of a customer is a one they can swindle. However, Allah has commanded in the Qur'an that all should be honest in business:

Give full measure when you measure and weigh with a level balance. That is better and gives the best result. (Surat al-Isra', 35)

He said, "He has wronged you by asking for your ewe to add to his ewes. Truly many partners are unjust to one another—except those who believe and do right actions, and how few they are!"... (Surah Sâd, 24)

Throughout the history of these societies of ignorance, there have been those who refuse to obey Allah's commands; they act unjustly and consistently cheat others. Allah has warned them through His messengers. Allah informs us in the Qur'an of the warnings offered by the Prophet Shu'ayb (as) to his people:

And to Madyan their brother Shu'ayb. He said, "My people, worship Allah! You have no god apart from Him. Do not

give short measure and short weight. I see you prospering and I fear for you the punishment of an all-encompassing Day. My people! Give full measure and full weight with justice; do not diminish people's goods; and do not go about the Earth, corrupting it. What endures with Allah is better for you if you are believers. I am not set over you as your keeper."
(Surah Hud, 84-86)

But, in general, because of their moral turpitude, members of a society of ignorance have failed to heed these warnings. For this reason, they experience anxiety in this world, and will be called to render account of their actions in the world to come. In the society of ignorance people with such characters will tend to be unscrupulous when it comes to making a profit. Such a tendency is also discernible among clerks. In compliance with the morality pervasive in the society of ignorance, they will resort to anything in order to sell something to customers. They will go on at great length, lying to convince a customer to buy an outfit that is otherwise unattractive on him or her.

They respect most those rich businessmen, and are, in their own way, honored to have the opportunity to serve them.

As is the case with some people in a society of ignorance, they are aware of the teachings of Islam. However, in spite of this, they disregard its commands and prohibitions, devoting themselves solely to the pursuit of profit.

In addition, they are highly ambitious, and will go to all sorts of extremes to earn money. However, they are not disposed to obeying the commands of Allah, Who has created them and provided them everything they have gained. In several verses of the Qur'an, He has warned them, and all others of a similar disposition, about becoming

so caught up in this world that they forget the one to come.

You who believe! Do not let your wealth or children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. Whoever does that is lost. (Surat al-Munafiqun, 9)

Say: "If your fathers or your sons or your brothers or your wives or your tribe, or any wealth you have acquired, or any business you fear may slump, or any house which pleases you, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and struggling in His Way, then wait until Allah brings about His command. Allah does not guide people who are deviators."

(Surat at-Tawba, 24)

But, the difference of believers and their superiority in the Sight of Allah is right at this point. Although they too would have to devote much of their day to working to earn money, they do so to win Allah's favor, and spend it in His cause. Moreover, no matter what they do, they never neglect their prayers, or forget to remember the Afterlife. In compliance with the command of Allah, they always treat others justly, as they deserve to be treated, never infringing on their God-given rights. In the Qur'an, Allah relates to us the virtue of this character:

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, 37)

The Character-type of the Public Servant

According to the ignorant way of thinking, public servants are of a specific different character-type, so one should be able to recognize

them right away. What gives them away is not what they do as part of their occupation; it is their manners and expression on their face.

The rationale that dictates the way these people with the morality of ignorance act is the fact that they have a secure job and determined salary. Therefore, even if they make some special effort, they gain nothing in salary, position or respect. They think that, if they take on an extra task, they will have merely extended themselves out for nothing. In any case, in a society of ignorance, it is considered foolish for them to make any extra effort if there is someone else to do it. They do not care how they behave towards their clients, because they would regard as doing something extra.

For that reason, most public servants possessing the morality of ignorance show little concern for those around them. They do only what they are told, and if anything is asked of them beyond that, they either ignore it or pass it on to someone else. When someone asks them a question, they may not even look at the person, or they may look at them without answering, nod their head and continue what they were doing. They feel no qualms about treating people harshly. This aloofness of the public servants abiding by the moral values of ignorance is well known. They have no respect for others and, because they do not want to be bothered, they will keep people waiting in line for hours without an excuse, and wandering about the office. They see no reason to be considerate, polite or tolerant towards people. No matter how they behave, they will continue to receive the same salary. In any case, as far as they are concerned, they will never see those people again anyway. For this reason, they perform all their tasks methodically; speak little, hardly smile, think little, and just fulfill what is expected of them. However, one who abides by the moral commands of Allah would never behave

this way. He or she takes an interest in everyone, and is always respectful and polite. They will do all they can to help a person in difficulty and, even if they cannot be of assistance at that time, they will at least be supportive to the individual.

Another character trait of the public servant is that he conforms to a stereotype; that is, he always behaves the same way, and his responses to things are always predictable. His every-day life, the people he speaks with, that which he talks about, his habits and tastes, are all according to this stereotype. He still dresses as he did when he was young, wearing the same hairstyle. He is narrow-minded and does not want to interfere with the status quo. He cannot be persuaded to take on new methods of doing things, even though they may be better. He persists in old-fashioned ways, though it wastes much time. Still, he will not abandon his old habits.

It can be seen from these explanations that majority of public servants possessing the morality of ignorance exhibit a laxness in character not only in their moral make-up but also in their social lives. As long as he sees nothing to gain, he will not alter his behavior. However, the job of a public servant is to serve the public. A public servant, who practices the morality of Islam, will serve those who come to him with respect. He will never cause them difficulty or waste their time. He knows that anything he does of good will not be for nothing. For him, his work is an act of worship, in which his intention is to earn Allah's favor, by maintaining the best level of morality he can. All his good works are kept in a book in the Presence of Allah, to be opened on the Day of Judgment.

In the Qur'an, the Prophet Luqman (as) reminds his son of this truth:

My son, 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)

The following are other verses where Allah reminds us of the same: Say: "Servants of Mine who believe! Fear your Lord. For those who do good in the 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)

... If anyone does a good action, We will increase the good of it for him. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Thankful." (Surat ash-Shura, 23)

Not so! All who submit themselves completely to Allah and are good-doers will find their reward with their Lord. They will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Surat al-Baqara, 112)

Allah does not wrong anyone by so much as the smallest speck. And if there is a good deed Allah will multiply it and pay out an immense reward direct from Him. (Surat an-Nisa', 40)

Those who produce a good action will receive ten like it. But those who produce a bad action will only be repaid with its equivalent and they will not be wronged. (Surat al-An'am, 160)

Certainly, human beings will have to expend much effort to behave appropriately, but the reward they will receive, as we ought to understand from these verses, will be a life in this world, eternal Paradise and thus Allah's good pleasure.

FURTHER EXAMPLES OF IGNORANT CHARACTER TYPES

The Character-type of the Rich Person

Social environment is a major influence in the development of character types in a society of ignorance. Each society offers a different social environment, and this environment develops traits in a character type that are life-long. A person's personality may vary according to the city, or even the area of a city, which he lives in.

In discourse typical of the ignorant, a new acquaintance may be first asked his name, then where he was born and brought up, and then, which part of the city he lives in. The purpose of this interrogation is to find out under what circumstances he brought up under, and thereby to acquire a basic idea of what type of character he ought to be. Because, the ignorant are very aware of the influence a specific environment can have on a person's character.

One type of character formed by specific social environments is that of a rich person. This character-type is that of one who has been brought up in wealthy surroundings. Compared with other members of the society, these individuals have benefited from much more favorable circumstances, not having experienced any difficulty or hardship. They

have always had little problem getting what they want; everything is at their disposal. When they are hungry, food is put before them; if they make a mess, it is cleaned up for them; they get what they want immediately; their cars are bought for them and money is put into their wallets. And, they do not have to put forth the slightest effort to get any of these things. However, there are many “behind the scenes” who are required to expend much physical and spiritual effort to provide them these things. There are those who work to earn the money, determine their needs, provide what is required, prepare it and offer it to them. But, a great majority of the people living by the morality of ignorance do not recognize these efforts, and therefore show no gratitude for them.

A fundamental characteristic that attends this ingratitude is a lack of sympathy. Because majority of these people have nothing to worry about, and experience no difficulties, they have no appreciation for those who live in lesser circumstances.

Another prominent characteristic of some of the people living by the morality of ignorance is their lack of faithfulness. They do not appreciate the virtues of others, and therefore see no reason to be loyal towards them. Such individuals can never establish sincere relationships; they rely too heavily on their material wealth, and think that, even if they were to lose one friend, through it they could find others. What they regard as important in another person is not his good character, or the fact that he practices the moral teachings of the Qur’an; that which is important to them is what material gain he may be. They do not value friendships on the basis of love and good morality, and so can never establish real ones. They keep company with others whose money they want to take advantage of, or with other inconsiderate and wealthy people like themselves, who also do not know the real meaning of friendship.

Indeed, it is because of all these vices that they are unable to find happiness easily. Majority of them are used to getting everything easily, and so take the advantages of their material wealth for granted. And, they fail to derive due pleasure from good that is spiritual because they cannot recognize it. Compared to other character-types, their deviance is more blatant. One who is not accustomed to recognizing such subtleties, will not appreciate an act of kindness done towards him, and will soon forget it. For this reason, he becomes one who is hard to satisfy.

Because they are not able to appreciate the good in others, they cannot experience love or respect for them. It does not enter their minds that others appreciate that the good in them and love they are ready to show to be recognized.

Evidently, these people have developed for themselves a type of character contrary to the values otherwise considered acceptable. But, it must be pointed out that, even though they were to be exiled from the social milieu, or lose their wealth, they would continue in their debased morality. Therefore, this character type does not refer merely who are wealthy. Merely the fact that they have been brought in such a milieu and under specific circumstances, is sometimes enough for them to acquire such character traits.

However, being brought up in a wealthy environment is no reason not to have a good moral character. On the contrary, wealth is a blessing from Allah. The important thing is to thank Him for these blessings, and to use them in a way that will please Him. We can see examples of this morality in the lives of the prophets. We are told in the Qur'an that the Prophet Sulayman (as) asked for wealth from Allah so that he could worship Him, and show gratitude for His blessings:

He (Sulayman) said, "Truly do I love the love of good, with a

view to the glory of my Lord until the Sun disappeared behind its veil.” (Surah Sâd, 32)

Moreover, one who appreciates the blessings that Allah has conferred upon him will have the breadth of insight to enable him to acknowledge the good in the others around him. Therefore, such a person, even if he were to be the wealthiest person in the world, and have everything served to him on a silver platter, and even if he had never experienced any difficulties or troubles in his life, he will nonetheless be sympathetic and considerate, exercising a good conscience. He knows the emotional and material needs of those who are poor and troubled. He shows a deep sense of compassion and respect. He knows what friendship is. Because, he is a believer and, no matter how prosperous he may be, he will never act carelessly or against his better conscience. A believer is always looking toward what is good and just, and searches for ways to win Allah’s favor. For this reason, prosperity does not lead him into moral depravity.

Such people are truly racing towards good things, and they are the first to reach them. (Surat al-Muminun, 61)

The Character-type of the “Nouveau Riche”

Those called “nouveau riche” in a society of ignorance are usually people in the middle income bracket, who have become suddenly rich, either as the result of an inheritance or some other fortuitous cause. Among them are those who are divorced from religion, and who want to appear superior in the eyes of others; nor do they give thanks to Allah for the blessings they have received. When speaking they continually make reference to how rich they are, how they spend money without keeping track of it, what they have bought and where they have been on vacation. If they buy clothing, it will be from a designer label. They will have their

pictures taken in all the prestigious locations they have visited, and display them conspicuously in the house. Whether they enjoy it or not, they do what rich people are known for, trying in all cases to imitate their way of life. For example, to give the impression that they know a foreign language, or that they have just come from abroad, they will use foreign words in their conversations, even though they do not know what they mean. Rather, they tend to show their ignorance by using words out of place. They want to appear to be cultivated but only embarrass themselves. They wear clothing that does not suit them, just to have the image of a person wearing latest styles.

They are unable to be critical of themselves. That is, they cannot see themselves through the eyes of others. They cannot see how ridiculous they look, or what suits them or is more becoming for them. They go out of their way to imitate what the wealthy are known to do.

It is clear that it is Allah Who has provided their new-found wealth. Perhaps, until that time, they had often prayed that Allah would increase them in wealth and possessions. But, when their prayers are answered, they immediately forget their former circumstances, and the prayers they have made. Allah describes in the Qur'an those who show bad morality after they have already been conferred with blessings:

When We grant blessing to a man, he turns away and draws aside but when any evil touches him, he is full of endless prayers! (Surah Fussilat, 51)

They resort to various methods to ingratiate themselves to the wealthy, but this just makes them despised. Actually, their attempts have only sunk them into a trap. Instead of seeking to win Allah's favor, they try to make others like them. But, for this, Allah has prepared for them a dire reward. They will lose not only the love of Allah, but also the estimation of other people.

The Character-type of the Intellectual

That which is recognized in society as “intellectualism” is a non-religious character type, and it influences a significant segment of a society of ignorance. Before proceeding with the attributes of this morality of ignorance one point deserves mention: the character of an intellectual dealt with here does not include intellectuals who deserve respect. It is of utmost importance and value to be an intellectual, to enjoy free thought and to develop ideas for the community of which an individual is a member. The character-type of an intellectual related here, however, is the one that bases its philosophy upon faithless lifestyle and rationale and makes it his goal to make it dominant in all spheres of life, and struggles to show himself as someone of great intellectual capacity despite not being a person of such caliber. But, most, especially the young, are unaware of this agenda; they want to become “intellectuals” because they think it will bring them prestige.

This milieu is usually located in the university setting. However, there is also a common notion that those lovers of the “fine arts” also fall into this category. For this reason, one who behaved quite otherwise in high school, changes as soon as he enters a university program such as Fine Arts in university. He begins to dress differently, changes his hairstyle, and assumes the air of an intellectual in his habits and tastes. The ignorant society he lives has instilled in him the idea that all successful artists act this way.

From then on, they are prepared to do everything to meet up to these expectations. They spend their days in cafes where “intellectuals” meet, in dark and dingy places filled with cigarette smoke, or in bars having “intellectual” conversations. They believe themselves to represent the enlightened and progressive segment of society, and dream up schemes to “save

the world.” But, most of their pretense is nothing but irrational, futile and incessant prattle. For these people, the important thing is to be “radical,” and lead a life accordingly, in order that they can stand out from others. They aim to express a certain “mood” in their paintings, sculptures, books and music, however, when you look at the work they produce, you can see that, under the guise of “intellectualism,” most of them express the same shallowness. They have no real understanding of high art, or of the depth of beauty and truth it can express; usually their art reveals their somber, melancholic and confused state of mind.

The films they watch, and the books they read, all must reflect this “intellectualism”; or they can’t enjoy them. To look like “intellectuals,” they will wander around with a book in their hands, that they have supposedly read. Though, they have not really read it; nevertheless, they try to gain prestige by repeating a few sentences that they have memorized from it.

They memorize certain phrases they have gleaned from the philosophers, using them as often as they can in their cafés. If you ask them, they will say that they have studied all philosophical movements, and even pretend to be experts on their subjects. However, they usually do not have any in-depth knowledge in any such field.

Their obsession with being “non-conformists” is the reason for which they develop strange ideas with regard to morality. They insist that family and marriage are unnecessary, and that a life lived without respect for bounds of decency is a sign of modernity and civilization.

Their confused state of mind dominates their whole lives. They enjoy dark and dingy places and disorder. Their own dwelling also reflect their errant notions; fast-food containers are scattered everywhere, books are piled on top of another, living amid filth.

But, generally speaking, they do not fully enjoy their lives. Unbelief is a delusion permitted by Allah from which man can derive no pleasure and joy. They aspire to a society where there are no rules, where all can infringe upon the rights of others, in which there is no order or limits, and in which there is an absence of the humane and moral qualities that religion brings. They only harm themselves in the end by that which they promote. Even just a brief experience of that which they desire would ultimately cause them harm.

The only thing that can bring honor and edify human beings is the true religion that Allah revealed for them to live by. It is only by living according to this religion that human beings can achieve contentment.

Concerning All the Character-types of Ignorance

Since the beginning of this book, we have examined the character types, moral qualities, personalities, worldviews and habits that dominate a society of ignorance. Keep in mind that among them we found nothing that was positive or well-balanced, and nothing that could contribute to real contentment. Because, all of these character types derive from a system devoid of religion. Allah has created human beings who are able to attain happiness only by living a life of faith based on religious morality. If thousands more character types were to be developed, as long as they were to be apart from religion, the result would be the same—distress, conflicts and confusion. In the Qur'an, Allah provides examples of the condition of human beings who are apart from the morality of religion:

Those are the people who have sold guidance for misguidance. Their trade has brought no profit; they are not guided. Their likeness is that of people who light a fire, and then when it has

lit up all around them, Allah removes their light and leaves them in darkness, unable to see. Deaf, dumb, blind. They will not return. Or that of a storm-cloud in the sky, full of darkness, thunder and lightning. They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps, fearful of death. Allah encompasses the disbelievers. The lightning all but takes away their sight. Whenever they have light, they walk in it but whenever darkness covers them, they halt. If Allah wished, He could take away their hearing and their sight. Allah has power over all things. Humanity! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those before you, so that hopefully you will fear Allah. (Surat al-Baqara, 16-21)

In these examples, Allah provides an important account of why the ignorant will be at loss. They were given the opportunity to follow the right path, but they chose another way, disbelief. They made their choice based on certain worldly expectations, but they have been unable to find the true happiness, peace and any other thing that they have been looking for by the means they have chosen.

On the contrary, their choices have rendered them spiritually deaf, blind and dumb. For this reason, although they are lost, they cannot turn away from what they have chosen.

Allah uses the example of lightning to explain their state; every time lightening flashes it illuminates the surroundings. The travelers move on but immediately the surroundings become buried again in darkness, and they are confounded. So, the ignorant are deceived by thinking that they can manage alone this brief journey they have set out on. However, as stated in the Qur'an, salvation comes only by turning to Allah, serving Him and living by that which He wills.

WHY THEY CANNOT BE HAPPY?

We have seen that those who live in a society of ignorance derive no enjoyment from their lives, professions or social status. The following are the main reasons why:

They Do Not Look for Answers in the Qur'an

Not looking for answers in the Qur'an is one of the first errors made in a society of ignorance. The majority of these people see clearly that the situation in which they find themselves is a dead end. They recognize that the lifestyle they have adopted and the character they have assumed have not led them anywhere; that these things have been unsatisfying and even disappointing. In response, they experiment with other alternatives provided by the society of ignorance, but find that these too bring them nothing. Because, one ignorant pattern of behavior is basically no different than another. People, places and conditions may change, but the false expectations and anxiety remain the same; the "intellectual" and the "socialite" are both focused on this world.

However, this earthly life is too brief to be worth becoming overly attached to. There is nothing to be gained from this world; when a person dies, everything he had will be taken from him. For this reason, every kind of undue devotion to this world gives rise only to anxiety.

A human being can find happiness only when he turns to Allah. A person can be saved from his troubles only by being Allah's friend and leading the kind of life He wills.

In the Qur'an, Allah reveals this important secret:

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)

One who had become the friend of Allah strictly obeys the Book sent down by our Lord to guide him. From that point on, his personality and lifestyle are determined only by the Qur'an. Therefore, by the will of Allah, the Qur'an can lead human beings from darkness to light:

Alif Lam Ra. This is a Book We have sent down to you so that you can bring humanity from the darkness to the light, by the permission of their Lord, to the Path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy. (Surah Ibrahim, 1)

For this reason, there is no anxiety, discontent, worry or confusion in the personality derived from the teachings of the Qur'an. Instead, there is beauty, balance and faultless manners. Allah has promised such believers that He will offer them the finest reward for the good they do.

So that Allah can reward them for the best of what they did and give them more from His unbounded favor. Allah provides for anyone He wills without reckoning. (Surat an-Nur, 38)

They Want to Gain Acceptance from other People and Not from Allah

People in a society of ignorance cannot attain happiness, nor can they find a way out of their discontent, no matter what they do. One

reason being, that they do not live for Allah, but for other human beings. If a person decides what is right and wrong, on the basis of what other people will say; if he is saddened by what makes other people sad, and pleased by what makes them pleased; if he tries to be appreciated by others and adjusts his behavior so as not to be embarrassed, then this person is living for others.

He then finds life difficult because everyone's expectations are different. If we were to imagine one subjected to the whims of hundreds of other people, then clearly he would have to work hard to please each one of them. He would want to be animated in the presence of one, grave and sober in the presence of another. Behavior that pleases one person would not suit another. These differences would reach into the thousands. Under such circumstances, one individual who lives for others would have to meet thousands of different types of demands at the same time. Only in this way could he satisfy everyone and make them appreciate him.

Allah offers an example of their anxiety in the Qur'an:

Allah has made a metaphor for them of a man owned by several partners in dispute with one another and another man wholly owned by a single man. Are they the same? Praise be to Allah! The fact is that most of them do not know. (Surat az-Zumar, 29)

Essentially, there is only one way out—to submit to Allah's eternal knowledge and intelligence. Allah is the Creator of human beings and all other things. And it is only Allah Who knows what is best for human beings and what they must do to be happy. He has revealed to them in the Qur'an the way to salvation: Fear Allah alone and seek His pleasure.

Allah says, "Do not take two gods. He is only One God. So dread Me alone." (Surat an-Nahl, 51)

Failing to do so not only makes human beings unhappy, it also a grave sin against Allah. To seek the pleasure of other beings apart from Allah is called in the Qur'an "ascribing partners to Allah." One who ascribes partners to Allah chooses to worship a god other than Allah, and devoting himself to that god. But, they will encounter disappointment in the next world. Allah warns them so that they will not go to Hell and suffer repentance that will bring no respite.

It has been revealed to you and those before you: "If you associate others with Allah, your actions will come to nothing and you will be among the losers."

No! Worship Allah and be among the thankful. (Surat az-Zumar, 66)

Allah does not forgive anything being associated with Him but He forgives whoever He wills for anything other than that. Anyone who associates something with Allah has committed a terrible crime. (Surat an-Nisa', 48)

Another thing that must be remembered is this: One may dedicate his entire life to the pleasure of others, abandoning Allah; in the Afterlife, however, it is He Who will abandon them. Everyone will be called to give account of the things he has done, and no one's deeds will suffice to save another. This important fact is revealed in the Qur'an:

Each of them will come to Him on the Day of Rising all alone. (Surah Maryam, 95)

You have come to Us all alone just as We created you at first, leaving behind you everything We bestowed on you.

We do not see your intercessors accompanying you, those you claimed were your partners with Allah. The link between you is cut. Those you made such claims for have forsaken you. (Surat al-An'am, 94)

On that day, those fearing of being alone will ask those they called their nearest and dearest in this life—their children, spouses, friends—to offer ransom for them that they may escape the torment of Hell. Allah reveals this truth in the Qur'an:

No good friend will ask about his friend even though they can see each other. An evildoer will wish he could ransom himself from the punishment of that Day, by means of his sons, or his wife or his brother or his family who sheltered him or everyone else on Earth, if that only meant that he could save himself. But no! It is a Raging Blaze. (Surat al-Ma'arij, 10-15)

In light of all the information provided in the Qur'an, we can see that a life based on pleasing others will not just bring unhappiness; it will also cause one to be at loss in the Afterlife. The way to escape this is evident: Submission to Allah and living to seek His pleasure.

Because They Do Not Remember That this Life is a Trial

Another reason why those who have adopted a character type of ignorance cannot be happy is because almost all forget the reason why they are in this world. Human beings are being tested to see whether they will appreciate the intelligence, power and other su-

perior qualities of Allah, or become oblivious to these truths, become caught up in this world. Allah reveals to us the purpose of this life:

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)

For this reason, Allah has permitted human beings a limited lifespan. From the time they reach the age of maturity onward, they are responsible for everything they believe and do. Each will be examined in the Afterlife about whether he followed his conscience which was continually dictating to him what is right and what is wrong. Because what a person's conscience dictates is correct, if he does not obey it, he follows the desires of his lower-self instead. The lower-self constantly commands a person to do what is wrong. So, there is a constant battle taking place within a person, determining whether he or she either acts on the side of his lower-self, or on the side of his conscience.

This trial takes place at every moment of his life. It takes place in school, at work, at home, in the street; while he is alone, or in public; it goes on when he is sick or well; and even if he goes to the other end of the world, he will be tested there too. There is no moment when he is not tested. In the Afterlife, he will come face to face with everything he has believed, said and done. He will certainly be recompensed for the good and the evil he had done; everything will receive its due reward and, finally, all will be sent to the place they deserve.

Forgetting that everything that happens in this world has been foreordained as a trial hinders one from submitting Allah. In a soci-

ety of ignorance you often hear such complaints which indicate a corrupted moral understanding: "Why did this happen? I wish it wasn't this way" " Things aren't going well," "I'm ruined," "Everything's going wrong," "If I hadn't done that, I wouldn't be in this situation." But, the basis of them all is a lack of submission to Allah.

Anxiety and malcontent are clear results of this lack of submission. Because they do not consider the reasons behind that which happens, people complain when the even smallest obstacle impedes their way. As a result, they are always mired in false concerns. However, human beings must be satisfied with every moment Allah has created for them. Even if things seem to be going wrong, they must behave morally and be determined to remain faithful to Allah. Most importantly, they must not forget that the purpose of their creation is to be tested by all these circumstances. Those who live according to the high morals commanded in the Qur'an, are happy and content because they know that the patience they show in all their adversities will be turned in their favor in the world to come.

CONCLUSION: AN INVITATION TO LIVE BY THE MORALITY OF THE QUR'AN

Since the beginning of this book, we have examined in some detail the character types that inhabit a society of ignorance, and we have seen that, without exception, those who adopt such character types are in loss and deep anxiety. Besides, we have seen that not one of these character types can develop a balance, or achieve real contentment.

The purpose in examining these character types in detail has been to demonstrate that concepts and notions developed by a society of ignorance are ultimately fruitless. Believers are responsible for revealing this important truth announced in the Qur'an to those who do not know it, and for inviting them to embrace that truth while there is still time.

It must be stated that the only solution, for every human being, is to completely remove himself from the ignorant social system, and to begin living by the morality of believers. Then will Allah increase their blessings and guide them to happiness. The Creator has announced in the Qur'an the best manner of life human beings are to lead.

It must not be forgotten that the gate to all this good and beauty

is open to everyone without exception. At every moment, each has the opportunity to gain hold on these blessings. To do so, he does not need to make a great sacrifice, exhaust himself with days of work, or surmount some difficult obstacle. To open this door, a person needs only to be sincere in his intention and to take refuge in Allah. This is a decision that can be made instantaneously.

One who wants to avoid all such corrupt character types must realize that the way is an easy one. While reading these words, a person can, with a single act of intention, obtain a disposition that will win for him the mercy of Allah. Allah listens to everyone and knows what is in their hearts; He is closer to a person than his jugular vein. Allah knows the moment when a person changes his intention and, if He wills, he increases that person's blessings.

In the Qur'an, Allah has revealed the following about sincere repentance in one verse:

Except for those who repent and believe and act rightly: Allah will transform the wrong actions of such people into good—Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Furqan, 70)

This book, then, is an invitation to accept the opportunity, while there is still time, to escape all the harm influenced by ignorant societies, to attain the blessings promised to believers and, most importantly, to win Allah's favor by giving up the vices of ignorance and by adopting the character type of a believer.

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 inva-

lidity 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."**¹

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 outstandingly 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 10^{950} for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10^{50} 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 a magnificent 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.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.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 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 neandarthalsensis 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 1 in 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, thou-

sands 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, 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 stu-

dents; 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 the Prophet Abraham (as) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or some among the people of the Prophet Moses (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, in the Qur'an Allah relates the incident of the 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 the Prophet Moses (as) to meet with his own magicians. When the Prophet Moses (as) did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

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 the Prophet Moses (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 Moses: "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, 117-118)

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.

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21. Malcolm Muggeridge, *The End of Christendom*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980, p. 43.

*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)*